

# Clinical Practice and Effectiveness of Kinesio Taping for Lower Limb Musculoskeletal Disorder: A Systematic Appraisal

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## Abstract

Kinesio tape (KT) is a proprietary product that purports to offer a range of benefits in the treatment and prevention of various musculoskeletal conditions. Kinesio taping involves the application of elastic adhesive tape to areas of pain or dysfunction. It has a diverse mechanism of action including reduction of pain through stimulation of sensory afferents and increased range of motion (ROM) due to enhanced local circulation. Despite a recent increase in its public profile due to use of KT by athletes at major sporting events, the clinical benefits of the intervention remain unclear. The main objective of this Systematic Appraisal (SA) is to review a clinical practice and level of effectiveness of KT application for lower limb musculoskeletal disorders. Electronic databases including Cinahl, Nora, Web of Science, Cochrane and Medline were searched for studies conducted since 2008. The studies were selected on the basis of the research questions and objectives. The list was narrowed down to six studies, of which five were randomised controlled trials and one was a cross-over research design. The studies used baseline data to determine the effectiveness of KT for lower limb musculoskeletal disorders. The results of two studies revealed that KT might be beneficial in rehabilitation for musculoskeletal disorders. The results indicate that KT proved to be a highly promising application for reducing pain when compared with sham and athletic tapes. In one study, while comparing KT with sensory motor training for proprioception, sensory motor training showed better results than KT, but KT was better at reducing pain on a short-term basis. The remaining two studies on ankle sprains reported that KT did not reduce swelling or improve functional performance. Kinesio tape may play a role in reducing short-term pain in lower extremity musculoskeletal disorders, however in future high quality studies that contribute to the evidence base for its use are needed with large datasets.

**Keywords:** Kinesio tape, clinical, lower limb and musculoskeletal

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