

## Rock Tape, Kinesiotape, McConnell Tape...

*What does taping do and how can it benefit you and your condition?*

There are many kinds of tape used in the world of physical therapy. Some tape is applied to limit motion such as athletic taping but, in physical therapy we use tape to limit motion, increase motion and decrease swelling depending on its application technique. You may have seen tape applied to professional athletes or Olympians over the years and wondered *what does that do? How could it possibly work?*



Over the course of years as a physical therapist performing both manual therapy and exercise therapy interventions, it has become apparent to me that a great deal of what I do is targeting the nervous system, whether intended or not! I believe tape placed on a patient's skin is just that, mostly a neurological input.



For years I think healthcare practitioners hoped and believed that taping techniques changed the way muscles move by pulling on them through the skin. If we think about this it really seems unfathomable that tape could create force changes in muscle tissue. So, I often half-jokingly tell my patients that "tape is tape on the brain. It can change your nervous system's input to the brain about pain, swelling, muscle or joint position and allow it to respond with

improved movement in that area.” I stop short of making claims that tape could actually pull hard enough to physically change a muscles ability to contract or markedly change joint position.

One thing I have positively seen with taping (as in the crisscross pattern) is reduction in swelling when applied to the affected area. So much so that visible changes in edema and bruising can be seen easily. In this case, the tape must be lifting the skin enough to allow the lymphatic system to drain more effectively or so it is believed.



The best part about taping is that it can be left on for up to 5 days helping to retain any affect your therapist is trying to achieve, it is inexpensive, it can be applied by the patient at home and very few patients ever report a negative side effect from its application.

*Ask your therapist if this could be beneficial to your treatment here*

**at Pemi-Baker Community Health!!**

**Matt Scagliarini, PT, DPT**

**Pemi-Baker Community Health**

## **Rocktape – How to maximize your experience with taping!**

### **Prior to application:**

- Ensure your skin is free of oils or creams
- Excess body hair may need trimming or shaving
- Alert your therapist if you have reactions to topical applications – Rocktape is *latex-free*.

### **Take Care of your tape!**

- Rubbing gently over the tape application heats the glue and increases adhesion. You can do this over the course of its application to ensure it stays put.
- Avoid exposing the tape to excess heat – that will cause it to markedly adhere to your skin and make removal difficult.
- Gently pull clothing over the edges of the tape to prevent it from peeling off.
- Rocktape can be worn when swimming, showering and working out. To ensure it stays adhered pat it dry.
- Peeling edges of tape can be trimmed off instead of removing the entire application.

### **Removing your tape:**

- Rocktape can be worn for up to 5 days.
- When removing your tape you can gently pull off dry, or with soapy water, or even a small amount of baby oil applied can help loosen the adhesive.
- Use one hand to pull the tape and the other hand to press the skin down.
- Do not remove quickly as this can irritate the skin.
- Avoid putting topical lotions on the site where tape was recently removed.
- Some minor itchy can be expected after tape removal which can be reduced with a light washing of the area with soapy water.

***Please do not hesitate to contact Pemi-Baker Community Health about your tape application –***

***(603) 536 – 2232.***