Effectiveness of Kinesio Tape in Treating Low Back Pain: A Critical Appraisal

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Effectiveness of Kinesio Tape in Treating Low Back Pain: A Critical Appraisal

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CLINICAL SCENARIO
Low back pain is a musculoskeletal disorder that is expected to affect 80% of the population. There are several therapeutic interventions including modalities and rehabilitation exercises that have been used in standard treatment of low back pain to improve pain and disability. However, few studies have been done on the effects of Kinesio Tape (KT) on pain and disability in patients with low back pain. It should be a primary goal of clinicians treating patients with low back pain to understand if KT is an appropriate alternative intervention in treating pain and disability associated with low back pain.

FOCUSED CLINICAL QUESTION
What effect does Kinesio Tape have on pain and disability associated with low back pain in adults?

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS
Four studies were located that met the inclusion criteria that was set forth by the authors. Three studies noted statistically significant reductions in pain and disability when treated with KT, while one study showed reduction in pain but was not considered "statistically significant." Three studies showed that KT applied with tension increased both pain and disability and KT applied without tension improved pain. Two studies showed that when KT is worn for 3 days there are statistically significant reductions in pain and disability both after post intervention measurements and at follow ups. Two studies show statistical significance in at least one aspect of functionality. Five studies included “I” striped Kinesio Tape in their application methods.

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE
Kinesio tape worn for at least 3 days in conjunction with physical activity has shown to improve pain and disability both at post intervention assessments and thereafter. The patient should Therefore, providers should instruct patients to leave the KT on for a minimum of three days to see improvements in pain and disability. The available level of evidence to answer this clinical question is set at a minimum of 1B.

STRENGTH OF RECOMMENDATION
The collective findings to answer this clinical question align with a letter A strength of recommendation.

KEYWORDS: Kinesio Tape, Pain, Disability, Chronic Low Back