

## **ABSTRACT**

### **The Use of Taping to Facilitate Stability or to Change Dysfunctional Mechanics about a Joint: An Intensive Review of the Literature**

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#### **Purpose**

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which existing research is sufficiently sound methodologically to validate the treatment effectiveness of selected joint taping techniques. A secondary but related purpose was to determine the extent to which the conclusions validly represent the findings proving the mechanisms by which taping is effective.

#### **Methodology**

The research design employed in this study was an inductive analysis in which the researcher reviewed the methodologies of selected empirical studies that addressed joint taping, but which reported either inconclusive or contradictory findings. Contents of instrument used as the basis for the review was derived primarily from an article on the elements of research in physical therapy.

Sources of data were articles from four professional journals, identified through a computerized literature search of the Medline data base, among others. Reports of experimental and quasi-experimental studies were the kinds of data reviewed.

The data analysis technique involved two parts: (1) asking each question contained in the review instrument of each study selected for inclusion; noting if information pertaining to the question appeared in each article, noting the presence/absence of the information; if the information was present in the articles, then determining if it met the criterion contained in the question; and (2) determining which of the studies, if any, met the criteria set forth in the instrument.

#### **Findings**

Of the seven research reports chosen for this intensive literature review, three were found to be stronger methodologically than the other four. Those studies which were deemed to be stronger had several commonalities. They possessed well defined purposes, inferred (if not directly stated) hypotheses, solid research designs, excellent instrumentation and objective data gathering procedures, and appropriate statistical analyses.

## **Conclusions**

While none of the research reports reviewed was perfect, still it was clear from the analysis that some were stronger than others and thus their findings were more worthy of confidence. Recommendations for further research focused on incorporating the strengths of each of the studies into future research efforts, plus larger sample sizes, true blinding, true randomization, and true control groups, measurements that achieve standard reproducible movements, and matching treatment conditions to activities of daily living for each subject, among others.