

KINESIOLOGY TAPING FOR HORSES

GOT A PROBLEM? PUT SOME TAPE ON IT!

JULIA MERRITT IS A CERTIFIED EQUI-BOW PRACTITIONER AND PRE-CERTIFICATION EQUI-TAPE PRACTITIONER BASED IN SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO YOU CAN REACH HER AT:

julia@firehorseperformancebodywork.ca

Ever wish you could have your bodyworker fix your horse while you ride? Want to extend the results of your last session for maximum impact? Kinesiology taping for horses can help with that!

Kinesiology taping is commonly used by human athletes for training, injury prevention, and rehabilitation. And it is equally applicable for the equine athlete. Human-grade kinesiology tape won't work for horses, so in 2005 Dr. Beverly Gordon launched the first kinesiology tape and protocol for horses and named it Equi-Tape. Equi-Tape has been designed specifically to be flexible enough to handle a big range of motion, with an adhesive that's effective on the horse's hair coat and is resistant to weather, sweat, and equipment use. Certified Equi-Tape Practitioners follow a standardized methodology for applying the tape to ensure that the tape placement is biomechanically appropriate and maximizes its benefits.

Equi-Tape works by affecting the nerve endings that exist in the root of each hair. The elastic tape lifts the hair, which in turn lifts the skin and accesses the circulatory and nervous systems.

In an embryo, the skin and the central nervous system develop together, which is what makes the Equi-Tape modality so effective. By gently affecting the nervous system, Equi-Tape can impact the body's perception of movement, inflammation, and pain.

There are two main goals in applying tape: Training and Therapeutic.

Training tapings help when the body is in active work, to facilitate the optimal use and recovery of the muscles, joints, ligaments, and tendons. Examples of training applications include: gluteal muscle contraction taping; suspensory ligament support, and sacroiliac joint support



In both cases tape can be used as a precaution, to prevent a re-injury or to support a weakness that is at risk of being damaged.

THE MAIN BENEFITS OF EQUI-TAPE ARE:

1. Improved circulation: decompressing the skin, fascia, and muscle tissues allows for increased circulation. This causes greater uptake of oxygen and faster excretion of metabolic toxins, enabling muscles to work more efficiently during exercise and heal more quickly from work or injury.

The decompression function also reduces pressure on the pain receptors embedded in the skin. The reduction in pressure then reduces the perception of pain by the brain and central nervous system.

2. Correct movement: tape will cue the nervous system to produce biomechanically correct movement with an increased range of motion. The advantage of the tape is that by providing constant proprioceptive feedback, it interrupts faulty patterns and assists the brain and body to develop a new pattern

that is consistent and appropriate.

Depending on the application, tape will change muscle function by encouraging muscles to either relax or contract, supporting either the training or the recovery process. The elastic

decompression properties also mean that it supports joints, tendons and ligaments without being restrictive. Again, the tape's ability to access the nervous system makes it possible for the body to support and realign itself with a seemingly minimal amount of intervention.

As increased healing ability and pain reduction are key components in achieving health and athletic goals, kinesiology taping is a powerful tool. Equi-Tape is effective alone and also works very well in combination with other bodywork modalities because it extends the effects of the initial work. You can find out more information at www.equi-tape.com. Give it a try and see for yourself!