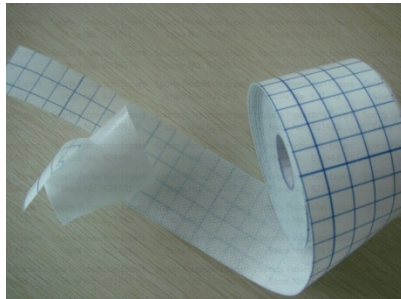


Quick Guide to Strapping Tapes

There are so many different types of strapping tapes, it can get confusing. Below we run through the various tape types and describe how they are used on athletes.



Hypoallergenic Undertapes or Underwraps



Tapes such as Fixomull, Hypafix, Fixit and Medifix are used to provide protection to the skin from the other strapping tapes. The adhesive used on these tapes is hypo-allergenic, which means it reduces the risk of skin irritations when used underneath other strapping tapes. When used under tapes, they can also increase the adhesion of the strapping.



The other option is the non-adhesive foam, which provides the ultimate in protection for the skin from the tape adhesive. This is a super light foam that wraps seamlessly around limbs with no adhesive. Be aware though that what you gain with skin protection you do lose with support as there is non direct contact of the tape onto skin. But in some circumstances, this is better than nothing.

Rigid Strapping Tapes



Rigid Strapping tape is the primary tool to use when strapping to support joints. The fabric is of a rigid construction with no give or elasticity. These tapes come in various sizes 50mm, 38mm, 25mm and 12.5mm depending on what part of the body is being strapped. By far the most popular tape is the 38mm rigid. The adhesive used in these tapes can be quite aggressive, so ensuring that players/patients do not have an allergy to the tape is important. If someone is allergic to fabric bandaids, there is a fair chance they will be allergic to the

rigid tapes and an undertape will be required.

It is important to ensure you do not tourniquet limbs if strapping circumferentially, and to avoid prominences with tape edges. As rigid tapes have no elasticity they will not give and allow for movement or muscle swelling, potentially causing a serious injury and discomfort. The available brands are Leuko, Elastoplast, Strapit and Medisportz.

Elastic Adhesive Bandages (EAB) Strapping Tapes



These tapes have a high elastic component to them which makes them stretchy. These strapping tapes can be used over the top of rigid strapping tape to reinforce the taping that has been applied to an area or used as an anchor point for rigid strapping tapes, around areas such as thighs and upper arms. This avoids the tourniquet effect that may occur from using a rigid circumferential anchor. These elastic tapes are available in 75mm, 50mm and 25mm widths, used differently depending on where they are to be applied.

Within this class of tapes there can be variation in the amount of "stretchiness" and "feel" of the tapes. Some

EAB tapes are white and may be a little stiffer and less stretchy than others, but offer greater support. Other tapes are flesh coloured, are made from a softer material and have a little more stretch. Another variation is EAB tapes that are white with a yellow centre line and have fluffy edges that are also quite stretchy.



Some EAB strapping tapes are also hand-tearable. These tapes are also stretchy but are made from a hand-tearable material that makes application easy and quick, although they may not be as tough and supportive as the non-hand-tearable types.

Premium and more cost effective alternatives are available in the full range of EAB strapping tapes. Leuko, Elastoplast, Medisportz and Strapit are the brand options with regards to EAB strapping tapes.

Kinesiology(Kinesio) Tapes



Kinesio tapes are rapidly becoming popular in rehabilitation and athletic circles. They are extremely elasticated tapes that are applied to the body to facilitate movement and enhance muscle activity, rather than providing a restrictive mechanical support to the body as is the aim with regular strapping tapes. Rocktape and Kinesio Tex Kinesiology tapes function in this way. They are different in their appearance too, with both ranges coming in bright colours and designs.

There are many brands such as Rocktape, Gripit, Leuko K, Medisportz Wave Tape and Kinesio Tex.

Under each category of tapes there are the premium options as well as the more cost effective options. At APE we understand that there are financial restrictions at clubs/clinics so we can offer all options, for all budgets. If you need help with anything please contact us. Our physios have worked with sporting teams for nearly 20 years so know a thing or two about tapes!