

Beat injury and keep running strong

Find out how kinesiology tape can help you reduce pain and run with more power



MEET THE EXPERT

Paul Coker is the Medical Director of Rocktape UK, a premium kinesiology tape brand designed for athletes and proud sponsors of the SkyrunningUK series and T60/184 races. Paul is an experienced physiotherapist and, he says, a very average ultra and trail runner. For more info and to buy tape see

rocktape.net

Kinesiology tape is an elastic tape made of tightly woven elasticated cotton (97%) and nylon (3%) fibres. The glue on the tape is acrylic, highly durable and waterproof so tape can be worn for up to a week withstanding vigorous movement, sweat and total emersion in water. When applied in a vaguely correct manner research has shown that tape can lead to various positive changes including reduced pain, improved movement, more power and better muscular endurance. It increases blood flow to muscles and joints, and generally supports weak or tired muscles.

The tape does not contain any medication or drugs. Different colours are cosmetic only, all colours of tape have the same elasticity and, therefore, benefits.

Taping is not a replacement for sensible injury management and thorough rehab, so if you are in doubt about what causes your pain or you have a pain that's not getting better go to see an experienced, qualified therapist or professional.

We've identified four common trail running injuries and conditions. Here's how you tape them up to reduce pain and improve performance. It's hard to explain just with words and pictures, so see the **Trail Running** website for videos of each. trailrunningmag.co.uk

STICK WITH US

Some athletes like to shave the tape area - it helps the tape stick better and it's less painful when removed. Once you've taped up your injury, rub your warm hands all over it to activate the glue and make it stick for the duration of your run.

ITB (ILIOTIBIAL BAND) OUTER KNEE

You need One thigh-length strip and another strip approx one third of that length.

How to do it

- Stand with the leg stretched (ideally crossed) behind other leg and foot rolled in. Maintain this stretched position throughout taping.
- Long strip: apply end of tape just below the sore spot on

the outside of knee, lay the tape, without stretching it, directly over the ITB on the outside of thigh.

- Short strip: Tear the paper in the centre of the tape, peel it back to expose the middle half of tape and stretch it 75%.
- Lay this directly over the sorest spot and lay each end down with no stretch.

ACHILLES TENDON

You need One strip of tape long enough to go under your heel and up both sides of your calf.

How to do it

- Apply the middle of the tape under your foot just in front of your heel.
- Pull your toes and foot upwards to stretch the calf muscle. Apply the tape with 25-50% stretch diagonally over the

Achilles tendon. Now apply the rest of the strip, without stretching it, over the muscle on the opposite side to your start point.

- Repeat with the second half of the strip. The two sides of tape should cross over at the point of maximum pain.
- Apply ends of the tape but do not stretch it and rub all over tape to activate glue.

ANTERIOR KNEE PAIN (FRONT OF KNEE)

You need Two equal length strips of tape approximately the length of your thigh.

How to do it

- Apply the base of the tape diagonally over the top of your shin bone with no stretch
- Then flex your knee to 90° on a chair to stretch the quads. Curve the tape around

the edge of your knee cap with approx 50% stretch.

- Once the tape has crossed the centre of your leg above the knee cap, lay the rest over the opposite side of your quads, applying no stretch.
- Repeat on opposite side. Remember to apply the ends of the tape, without stretching it.

SHIN SPLINTS (MEDIAL TIBIAL STRESS SYNDROME)

You need One shin-length strip and one strip that's about 10cm long.

How to do it

- Stretch your foot and toes up and out. Remember to maintain this stretched position throughout the taping process.
- Apply the long strip of tape, with no extra stretch, carefully along the border

of your tibia (shin bone), being careful not to wrap around the calf muscle.

- Now take the short strip of tape and stick the end of it over and extending behind the long strip.
- Be sure to add a firm stretch as this strip crosses the sore spot in order to 'pull' the tissue towards the bone.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL TAPING

