

Applied Kinesiology—Your Muscles Say It All

By Craig Rubenstein, D.C.

How does the testing of various muscles in the body correlate with the health of a patient?
That's What Dr. Goodheart asked himself over a quarter of a century ago.

IN 1964, DR. GEORGE GOODHEART made a discovery that was fundamental to the hands-on healing arts. He discovered that postural distortion could be explained by a specific muscle weakness, and that both muscle weakness and its associated postural distortion could be corrected with hands-on technique. Although Dr. Goodheart was trained as a chiropractor, he was proficient in many other procedures such as meridian therapy, osteopathic cranial technique, and clinical nutrition. Dietary and lifestyle considerations were also part of his approach. More important was his extensive knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry—which provided him a solid background for applying and integrating existing techniques. In addition, Dr. Goodheart studied the findings of other researchers, concentrating not only on the body's structure, but on its chemical and mental components as well. Along the way, he came across the findings of Dr. Chapman, an osteopath, who had observed that various reflex points on the body relate to specific organs and glands. Dr. Goodheart took Dr. Chapman's observations a step further, and upon experimentation, pointed out that these "neurolymphatic" reflexes also correlate with specific hypotonic muscles (muscles that test weak upon manual muscle testing). The technique of testing muscles to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of a patient became known as "applied kinesiology".

Over the past thirty years, the field of applied kinesiology has grown tremendously, and is able to offer an integrated analysis of each patient, incorporating various practices of alternative healing arts, such as:

- The meridian system of Chinese medicine.
- Chinese and Indian herbs, as well as herbs from all over the world.
- Classical and complex homeopathy (the use of very dilute doses of substances that at their full strength would cause the same symptoms that they are treating.)
- Nutritional supplementation.
- Chiropractic spinal and extremity work.
- Cranial sacral techniques of osteopathy. (Cranial sacral manipulation was developed with the understanding that the bones of the cranium have a slight but predictable movement, which, if altered, can cause remote or local problems.)
- Reflexology.
- Traditional medical diagnostic procedures such as blood and urine analysis, blood pressure evaluation, as well as orthopedic and neurological testing.

Manual Muscle Testing

The use of manual muscle testing has become the signature of applied kinesiology, and is used to evaluate the functional status of the nervous system. Since the nervous system controls all major body functions, it is imperative that a doctor be able to evaluate its function. A general evaluation of the peripheral nervous system (that controls muscles and allows us to sense our environment via hot, cold, and touch receptors) and of the central nervous system (that allows us to sense our environment via sight, sound, smell, and taste), has been performed by doctors for quite some time. Applied kinesiology gives further insight into the nervous system, allowing an evaluation of the function of the nervous system that controls organs, glands, and other tissues.

Manual muscle testing is a great tool to help determine a patient's nutritional needs, as well as substances that he or she must avoid—

The use of manual muscle testing has become the signature of applied kinesiology, and is used to evaluate the functional status of the nervous system.

including allergens, chemicals, and heavy metal toxins. It can also help assess whether the body has a problem with pathogenic bacteria, yeast, or parasites.

The Triad of Health

As in all holistic approaches, the applied kinesiologist treats the *whole* patient in order to help him or her achieve optimal function of all body systems. The holistic physician looks beyond symptoms in order to understand the reason a patient's system is dysfunctional, and to determine the basic underlying cause of the disease. Specifically, applied kinesiology includes three components within its paradigm: structural, chemical/nutritional, and emotional. This combination is quite unique, particularly because structural and emotional considerations are rarely integrated in other health approaches.

Structural: The structural portion of treatment involves the spinal and cranial sacral systems. Without proper structure, the body cannot function optimally. This may lead to vitamin deficiencies, acupuncture disturbances,

as well as gland and organ dysfunction. Migraines, bowel irregularity, and reproductive problems are among the long list of conditions that may be instigated by poor structure.

Chemical/Nutritional: In order for the human machine to function optimally, it needs optimal fuel at optimal rates. Balancing our intake of nutrients, and ensuring that our digestive system assimilates and uses the nutrients efficiently are paramount to achieving health.

Emotional: Applied kinesiologists often use structural corrections, meridian therapy, as well as nutritional and homeopathic approaches to impact a patient's emotional state. Though emotional conditions are often ambiguous and difficult to pin down, physical treatment that eliminates imbalances in the body is sometimes very effective in helping a patient overcome negative emotions.

The conditions for which people seek an applied kinesiologist vary greatly. Injured athletes, people suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome, chronic pain, temporomandibular joint (jaw) problems, and hormonal disorders are primary examples of those who turn to applied kinesiology for treatment.

Keep Your Muscles an Arm's Length Away from Untrained Professionals

If you choose to consult an applied kinesiologist, keep your eyes open. Many muscle testing systems have been developed over the years, some of which are inconsistent with the approach advocated by the International College of Applied Kinesiology. Many lay persons and professionals alike are performing muscle testing without proper training. Some fail to coordinate the muscle testing findings with other standard diagnostic procedures. This may lead to improper diagnosis and treatment, and may have dire consequences should you be suffering from a serious illness. Make sure to check if the person you are consulting is a licensed health care professional, and has been trained in courses offered by the International College of Applied Kinesiology.

To find an accomplished applied kinesiologist in the United States or abroad, call the International College of Applied Kinesiology—USA at (913) 384-5336.

Craig Rubenstein, D.C., is a licensed chiropractor specializing in applied kinesiology, and a Fellow and Diplomate of the International Academy of Clinical Acupuncture. He practices in New York City and Medford, Long Island. For more information call (212) 213-9494, or (516) 696-2039.