

# HISTORY OF KINESIOLOGY

The foundations of kinesiology can be attributed to the muscle testing methods of American physician Robert Lovett during the 1930s. Lovett applied his methods to trace the root of spinal nerve damage in patients with disabilities. The results of his tests highlighted weak muscles with a common spinal nerve.

Kinesiology developed further in the 1940s through the work of two physiotherapists, Henry and Florence Kendall. Taking Lovett's methods and ideas, the Kendalls published a pioneering book on the subject titled 'Muscle Testing and Function' that included more than 100 manual muscle tests. However, it is American chiropractor George Goodheart that is considered the father of kinesiology.

In 1964, Goodheart proposed that muscle testing can be therapeutic as well as diagnostic. His 'Applied Kinesiology' used Lovett's and Kendall's muscle testing methods and also utilised the Traditional Chinese Medicine philosophy of meridian channels. Goodheart's kinesiology system uses correctional techniques, massage and nutritional advice to create a holistic therapy.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Kinesiology primarily uses muscle testing to gather information about the body's physical, chemical and emotional function and identifies any imbalances. In doing so, kinesiology can then aid the body's natural healing process by helping to correct these imbalances.

Kinesiology proposes that each muscle has a connection to an organ and also to energy that flows around the body through pathways (known as meridian channels). If a muscle test highlights an imbalance in the muscle, there could be stresses placed on the related organ and a blockage in the flow of energy. This affects a person's physical and emotional well-being.

A kinesiologist aims to correct imbalances using techniques such as massage and acupuncture. Kinesiology will also use nutritional supplements and relaxation methods to help return the body to its proper functioning state. The type of treatment received is dependant on the information the muscle gives during the muscle test.

## A TYPICAL APPOINTMENT

Be prepared - It is advisable to choose a kinesiologist who is a member of, or is accredited by, an association or professional body. This ensures your therapy session is carried out in a suitable environment and by someone who has received formal training and ongoing development. Members are also bound to a code of ethics and practice. The main kinesiologist organisations are listed at the foot of this article.

Before your appointment, spend time thinking about your condition and what you expect to achieve with kinesiology. Make some notes before you attend about your expectations and concerns. If you have a few conditions, put them in order so the kinesiologist can address the most severe first. Secondary problems can then be addressed further down the line.

You will not need to undress for your appointment but it is advisable to wear loose, comfortable clothing. You may be sent a lifestyle and health questionnaire to complete and return before your appointment. Some kinesiologists ask clients to keep a food diary before attending. This will be discussed when you make an appointment.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

During your first appointment the kinesiologist will take a case history from information provided by you about your health, symptoms and diet. You will then be asked to take off your shoes and lie down on a couch. If lying down is difficult, the session can take place with you in a seated position.

The kinesiologist will position your arms, legs or head and apply light pressure to the muscles to determine if there are any imbalances in the body. They may also ask questions or ask you to think of words or phrases. Your responses and the feedback your kinesiologist receives from the muscle testing will determine what course of treatment is recommended.

The kinesiologist may employ massaging and acupressure techniques during your session and use essential oils or flower essences. They will discuss this with you before beginning treatment. The techniques your kinesiologist uses are gentle and many people find the experience of kinesiology extremely relaxing.

Once your session has ended, the kinesiologist will discuss the experience with you and suggest nutritional supplements, dietary changes or exercises that will aid your therapy. They will then recommend a follow-up appointment. The natural remedies and balancing techniques can cause detoxification in the body and a shift in energy. You may experience headaches, tiredness, flu symptoms or diarrhoea after treatment but this will usually last only a couple of days.

## TIMINGS / SESSIONS / COSTS

Your first session should last about 90 minutes as the kinesiologist takes your medical history, discusses the treatment and then carries out the muscle testing. Subsequent sessions will last around 60 minutes but can depend on the techniques the kinesiologist will use. They will discuss this at your first appointment.

As a general guide, a first session can cost from £30 - £60 with subsequent sessions slightly lower but be aware that prices vary from town to town and practitioner's overheads vary so check first before making an appointment. If nutritional supplements are recommended, these will usually incur an additional cost.

The number of sessions you require will depend on your condition and progress but the kinesiologist will discuss this with you at your first appointment and then during any further sessions. On average, many people have six sessions of kinesiology and return for recommended routine balances two or three times a year.

## IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?

Kinesiology is a non-invasive and safe therapy with proven results in treating a variety of conditions. Because of its adaptable nature it is suitable for everyone. Consult with your local practitioner to see how kinesiology can help you.