

Applied Kinesiology

Status Statement

Applied Kinesiology is an interdisciplinary approach to health care, which draws together core elements of complementary therapies, creating a more unified approach to the diagnosis and treatment of functional illness. The origin of contemporary Applied Kinesiology is traced to 1964 when George G. Goodheart, Jr., D.C., first observed that in the absence of congenital or pathologic anomaly, postural distortion is often associated with muscles that fail to meet the demands of muscle tests designed to maximally isolate specific muscles. He observed that tender nodules were frequently palpable within the origin and/or insertion of the tested muscle. Digital manipulation of these areas of apparent muscle dysfunction improved both postural balance and the outcome of manual muscle tests. Goodheart and others have since observed that many conservative treatment methods improve neuromuscular function as perceived by manual muscle testing. These treatment methods have become the fundamental Applied Kinesiology approach to therapy. Included in the AK approach are specific joint manipulation or mobilization, various myofascial techniques, cranial techniques, meridian therapy, clinical nutrition, dietary management, and various reflex procedures. With expanding investigation, there has been continued amplification and modification of the treatment procedures. Although many treatment techniques incorporated into AK were pre-existing, many new methods have been developed within the discipline itself. AK uses muscle testing to examine how the body is functioning and to make a diagnosis. A patient's health history is required, along with examination and laboratory findings, to determine the treatment required. AK uses functional assessment measures such as posture and gait analysis; manual muscle testing as functional neurologic evaluation; range of motion; static palpation; and motion analysis. These assessments are used in conjunction with standard methods of diagnosis such as clinical history, physical examination findings, laboratory tests, and instrumentation to develop a clinical impression of the unique physiologic condition of each patient. When appropriate, this clinical impression is used as a guide to the application of conservative physiologic therapeutics. The practice of AK requires that professionals trained in clinical diagnosis use it in conjunction with other standard diagnostic methods. As such, the use of AK or its component assessment procedures is appropriate only to individuals licensed to perform these procedures. AK exam is designed to enhance standard diagnosis procedures, not replace them. The Applied Kinesiologist finds a muscle that tests weak and then attempts to determine why that muscle is not functioning properly. The practitioner will then evaluate and apply the therapy that will best eliminate the muscle weakness and help the patient.

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