

Muscle testing

Based on the concept of internal energy fundamental to traditional Chinese medicine, muscle testing is a noninvasive way of evaluating the body's imbalances and assessing its needs. It involves testing the body's responses when applying slight pressure to a large muscle, to provide information on energy blockages, the functioning of the organs, nutritional deficiencies, and food sensitivities, among other things. It can also be used to test the body's responses to herbs and other remedies.

In a typical example of muscle testing, you're given an herb to hold. You extend the other arm and are asked to keep it straight. The practitioner presses down on this arm and the opposite shoulder with equal pressure (to facilitate balance). If the herb is something you need, you'll be able to resist the downward pressure and hold your arm rigid. If not, you won't. The same procedure can be used to determine how often you should take each herb and how much each time. It can also be used to test the body's responses to foods (for allergies), thoughts, sounds, colors, and emotions.

Some practitioners test with your arm straight out to the side, which relates only to the lung meridian. (The meridians are energy channels recognized by Chinese medicine.) Others use the central meridian for testing, with your arm toward the front and at an angle below horizontal. All the meridians intersect with the central meridian, so testing this way encompasses more body systems than testing just the lung meridian and is less fatiguing for both parties. Testing can also be done while you're sitting or lying down.

Although muscle testing is simple, responses may be inconclusive if your energy is blocked. Testing your polarity before doing anything else reveals whether energy in the central meridian is flowing in the right direction. If not, it must be corrected before proceeding. The same polarity check is used with each product tested, to make sure the product doesn't interfere with your polarity. The selected products are also tested as a group, because a product may test well individually, but combining it with others may produce a synergistic effect that reduces or eliminates the need for it.

Muscle testing is often referred to as applied kinesiology, although the two are not the same. Applied kinesiology originated with the work of Dr. George Goodheart, a chiropractor, in the sixties, based on earlier work by others. Offshoots of this technique, referred to as "specialized kinesiologies," have also been developed. Perhaps the best known is a program called Touch for Health (TFH), created by a colleague of Goodheart's, Dr. John Thie, which is taught worldwide. (Thie's illustrated book, *Touch for Health*, has sold over half a million copies. Another classic in the field is *Your Body Doesn't Lie*, by John Diamond, M.D.)



Touch For Health involves a specific series of tests with each limb in different positions, to ascertain how well each of the organ systems is communicating with the brain. It also involves balancing energy flow in meridians that are deficient, by holding pairs of points on the body and working lymphatic massage points. The International College of Applied Kinesiology, in Switzerland, promulgates the Touch For Health curriculum, which consists of several levels, and certifies instructors and their students.

By contrast, "muscle testing" often refers to a technique of testing points on the body to ascertain particular vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Donald Lepore, a naturopathic doctor, explains some of this in *The Ultimate Healing System*. It's also possible to learn a simple technique for self-testing.

Self-Testing

Self-testing can be done in various ways. One way is to touch the thumb to the middle finger of each hand to form two rings, linked through each other. Say something true — for example, "My name is [give your name]." At the same time, pull the linked fingers of the right hand against those of the left, but don't allow them to separate.

Then say something false — for example, “My name is [give someone else's name].” Do the same thing as before with the fingers, but this time deliberately separate them, as though they were flying apart or repelling each other. (You don't need to make the true and false statements aloud — silently is okay, as long as you do it each time.)

The idea is to train the mind in different responses for truth and falsehood. If you practice this 10 or 15 minutes a day, you should be able to develop the response within a few weeks.

You can also check your responses by holding something detrimental while self-testing — sugar, for example — and seeing what response you get. Put the container in your pocket or hold it under your arm and test.



Then hold something good for you — an herb you need or an organic vegetable — and test that. If you think your mind is influencing the results, you can have someone else put equal weights of both items in identical nonmetal containers.

An important element of muscle testing is your polarity. If it's not correct (indicating that your energy is blocked), the results will be inaccurate. A discussion of polarity and its effect on muscle testing is beyond the scope of this article, but you can (and should) check your polarity by self-testing, once you learn it. Test while saying “My polarity is 100 percent” before testing anything else. The response to this statement will always be correct, even if your polarity is off. This is the only response you can be sure is correct under those circumstances.

Polarity can be corrected in a number of ways. One way is to hold a bottle of chlorophyll or spirulina while testing or take a few drops of chlorophyll in water. You may need to remove any metal you're wearing. You can also be off if you're hungry or thirsty. Drink a glass of water and/or eat something.

Your polarity should be correct most of the time. If it isn't, you may want to consult someone who knows about muscle testing to find out what you can do about it.

Muscle testing will not provide accurate responses to certain statements: about the future, for example. You'll get a response, but if you say, “This answer is reliable,” the response will be no. Muscle testing can be helpful for testing your responses to relationships and occupations, among other subjects. Keep in mind that statements are taken literally, so they have to be worded precisely.

Further Reading

Diamond, John, M.D., *Your Body Doesn't Lie* (Illustrated book on techniques of muscle testing)

Hawkins, David, M.D., *Power vs. Force* (Discussion of philosophical issues arising from muscle testing and this technique's transformative potential for society)

Levy, Susan, D.C., *Your Body Can Talk* (Illustrated book on techniques of muscle testing)

Thie, John, D.C., *Touch for Health* (Illustrated book on techniques of muscle testing)