

Muscle Testing

(from the *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996)

INFO AT A GLANCE

Names. Applied Kinesiology (AK), Touch For Health (TH), Behavioral Kinesiology (BK)

Description. Muscle testing is often a combination of chiropractic and Chinese acupuncture theory plus “muscle-testing” practices. It involves physical diagnosis, e.g., testing the supposed “strength” or “weakness” of muscles which are believed to be related to organ systems. And it may employ treatment or healing by acupressure, meridian tracing, “cosmic energies,” or other dubious methods.

Founder. George Goodheart (AK), John Thie (TH), John Diamond (BK).

How does it claim to work? Muscle testing claims that disease can be evaluated, at least in part, through specific patterns of muscle weakness. It also claims to manipulate alleged body energies to produce and maintain healing. By supposedly “unblocking” congested energy along meridian pathways, or by infusing energy into deficient organs or bodily areas, practitioners believe that physical health can be maintained.

Scientific evaluation. Discredited.

Examples of occult potential. Manipulating invisible energies can easily become an occult practice, e.g., a form of psychic healing. In addition, many muscle testers employ pendulums, dowsing instruments, and other radionics devices.

Major problems. Muscle testing rejects the known facts of human anatomy by accepting undemonstrated connections between muscles and specific organs and diseases; it also claims to regulate bodily energies whose existence has never been proven.

Biblical/Christian evaluation. Muscle testing is often based, in part, upon Taoist philosophy or other Eastern metaphysics, is scientifically discredited and potentially occult. It should be avoided on this basis.

Potential dangers. The attendant hazards of misdiagnosis and occult influences.

Note: This material is general and introductory. Modern “New Age” muscle testing methods must be distinguished from the scientific discipline of kinesiology proper. *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* both define formal kinesiology as “[the] study of the principles of mechanics and anatomy in relation to human movement.” *Webster’s New Twentieth Century Dictionary* defines it as “the science or study of human muscular movements, especially as applied in physical education.” While New Age muscle testing may or may not employ some of the methods of formal kinesiology, scientific kinesiology never employs the methods of New Age muscle testing. The two disciplines are based on an entirely different approach to physiology and health.

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