

# THINGS TO CONSIDER

## Before Taping Your Athlete



According to NATA, “Ankle injuries are the most common injury, with some estimates attributing upward of 20% of all athletic injuries to ankle sprains.” However, with the many options on the market today to protect ankles, it can be hard to know what is best for the athlete.

***To empower stronger athletes, it is critical to properly prepare and protect them before the game.***

Before you select a system to protect your athlete, read this consideration guide.

# 5 THINGS TO CONSIDER

## Before Taping Your Athlete



### 1. Not all Taping Systems are Created Equal

#### STRENGTH. ADHESIVE. TEAR. UNWIND.

All these factors contribute to the quality of the product. However, it can be hard to know what to look for. When holding and comparing products here are some simple tests to consider.

**Pull Test** - This test is used to evaluate the strength of cohesives. First, have you and a partner hold opposite sides of the product with two hands about a foot or two apart. Second, begin to pull away from one another. The product will eventually tear, but it should not easily give out when tension is applied.

**Drop Strain Tests** - These separate tests are used to test the quality of both the adhesive and the tape.

- **Test 1:** First, tear off a 15" to 20" strip of each of your tapes. Second, stick them to a table where the remaining tape does not stick to a surface. Finally, leave the tapes for an extended time, such as overnight.  
*Results:* A low-quality cotton tape will curl back towards itself and/or present a wavy or rippling affect. A high-quality synthetic tape should stay completely flat.
- **Test 2:** First, take the rolls of tape you want to compare and stick them to a wall in a row. Second, pull each roll down a foot to a foot and a half. Finally, leave the tapes for an extended period, such as overnight. It is best to video tape this test so you can see the rate at which the rolls fall.  
*Results:* If a tape drops down the wall a lot, it means it has a lower-quality adhesive. When you check your recording, if the tapes fall at an inconsistent rate, it has a poor unwind from the result of a low-quality adhesive. (For example: It could drop slowly for the first hour and then drop a foot in the next second.)

**Unwind Test** - This test is used to determine the product's consistency to the core. Unwind a whole roll of tape, stopping every 8" to 12" to tear. The product should unroll at the same rate with the same amount of tension applied. If it "flies" off the roll, there is too little adhesive. If it is very hard to pull, there is too much adhesive. During the process, you should also look for a "crisp, but easy tear." The tape should not tear too easily, like paper. If it tears too easily, then it will be not strong enough to support your athletes.

## 2. The Difference Between Taping vs. Bracing

Some athletes choose to brace themselves. It is important to remember that soft braces mostly lack customization and the ability to fully restrict and stabilize.

With taping, you can customize your application based on the injury you are treating. All injuries are not the same, so why treat them that way?

## 3. Material Matters

While cotton may be more comfortable, when moisture such as sweat or rain is introduced, it will stretch out and lose 99% of its support on your athletes in 30 minutes or less.\* Additionally, research has shown that cotton tape can have up to three times decreased strength when wet compared to synthetic alternatives.\*\*

The material of the tape will also determine the compression of the application. A cotton tape needs to be applied tightly since it will stretch out when wet. In contrast, a synthetic tape needs to be applied with even unwind tension; you do not have to strain or pull hard when applying. This is because synthetic tapes do not stretch out when wet so they will remain at the compression they are applied at.

## 4. Manufacturer-Supported Training

While sports medicine programs provide education and training on the art of taping, it's beneficial to continue training on specific taping systems. One way to ensure proper taping methods is to ask the manufacturer to in-service your staff. An experienced professional can support the athletic trainers and provide resources that will educate on various application methods.

## 5. Total System Value \$

When it comes time to order supplies for the year, it is important to remember that various systems require different amounts of products. Additionally, these products can vary in cost. For example, a traditional pre-wrap product, used as a base layer in an ankle taping, can require the use of ancillary products, such as spray adhesives and heel & lace pads. Cohesive bandages in the same application can replace several traditional items, reducing the overall cost of the system being used.



# WHY CHOOSE

Andover by Milliken



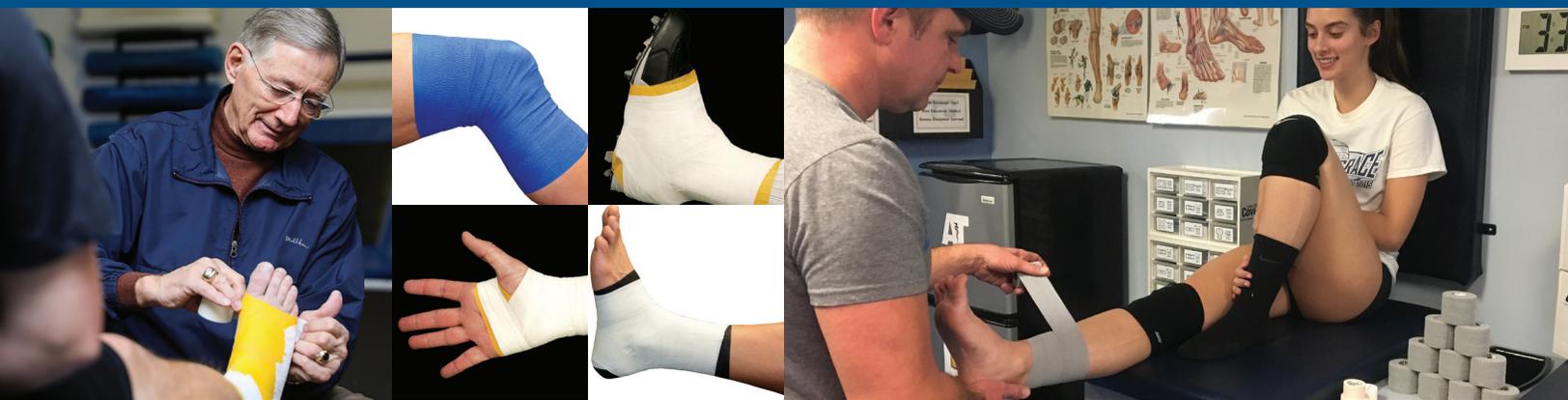
**POWERPRO™**

Synthetic Adhesive Tape



**POWERFLEX®**

Self-Adhering Sports Wrap



## Quality

Andover by Milliken has been delivering taping systems for more than 40 years that empower athletes to perform at their best. Proudly made in the USA, our synthetic tapes provide:

- Superior strength
- Consistent adhesive
- EasyTear technology

## Performance

Our synthetic tapes and cohesive wraps are all sweat and water resistant, offering all day support and protection for your athletes. Benefits include:

- Tapes offer less than 1% stretch
- Cohesives offer controlled compression
- All products offer stability and range of motion control

## Value

By using the PowerFlex Taping System, you can decrease the number of products you carry. When applying PowerFlex as a base, you do not need adhesive spray, pre-wrap, or heel & lace pads. With PowerFlex and one of Andover's synthetic adhesive tapes, you can have both performance and value.

## Support

Andover by Milliken representatives cover the entire country, please contact us for an in-service!

\* Purcell SB, Schuckman BE, Docherty CL, Schrader J, Poppy W. Differences in ankle range of motion before and after exercise in 2 tape conditions. *Am J Sports Med.* 2009;37(2):383-389.  
\*\*Data on file.