

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 much and how often you should take each herb. 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.

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)