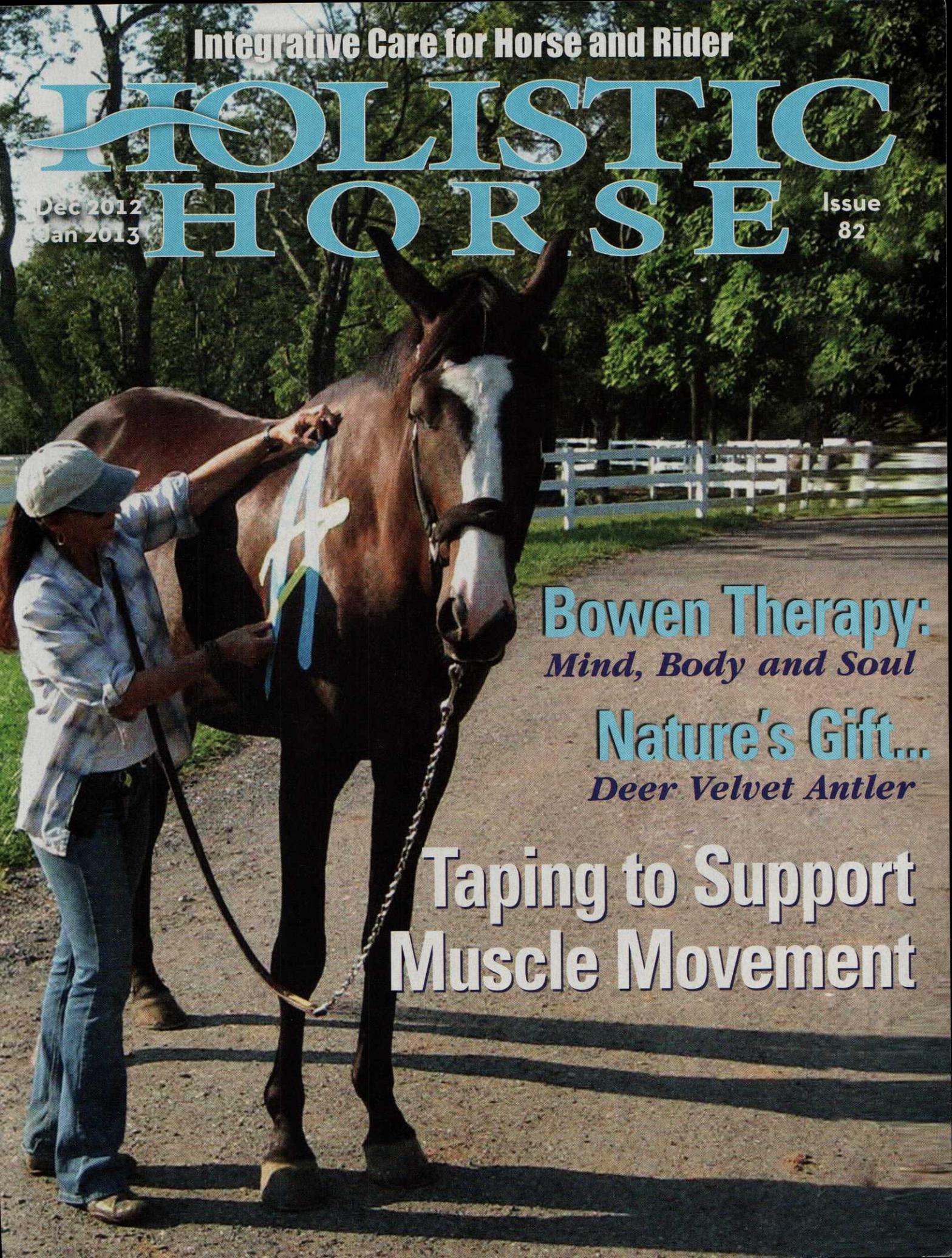


Integrative Care for Horse and Rider

# HOLISTIC HORSE

Dec 2012  
Jan 2013

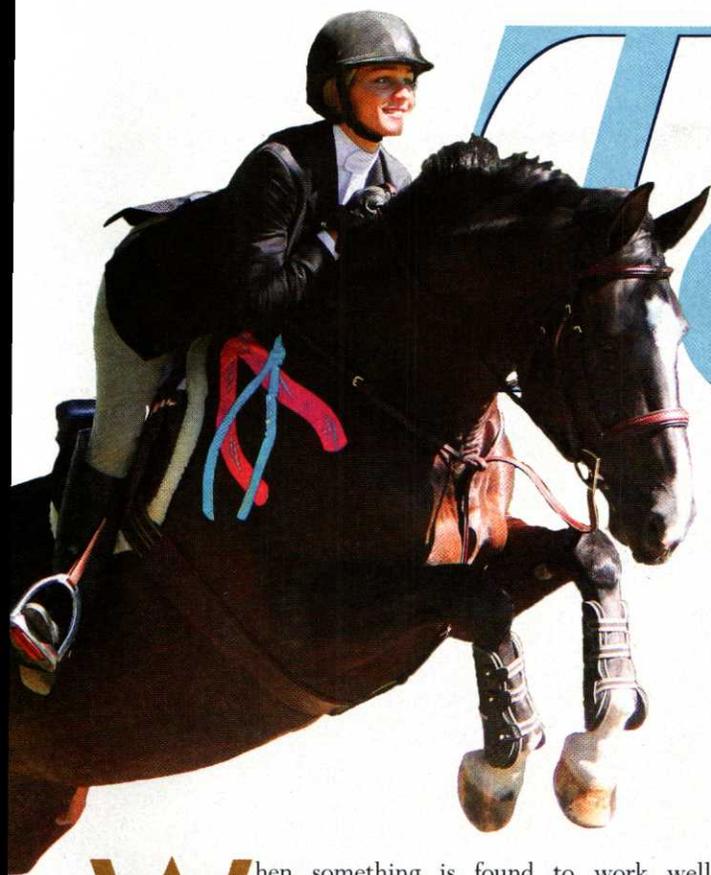
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82



**Bowen Therapy:**  
*Mind, Body and Soul*

**Nature's Gift...**  
*Deer Velvet Antler*

**Taping to Support  
Muscle Movement**



# Taping Ho

**W**hen something is found to work well on humans, it is only a matter of time before its use crosses over to the equestrian community. Chiropractic, acupuncture, physical therapies, and holistic medicine are just a few examples from a long list of health care modalities to cross over. Now, we can add Elastic Kinesiology taping to that list as well.

As a certified human taping practitioner, I have seen the wonderful effects elastic kinesiology tape can have when used on human athletes. Since my professional interest focuses on improving equine movement and training, it was natural for me to consider using kinesiology tape to benefit equine athletes as well. I began researching and developing the use of elastic therapy tape on horses, and it was exciting to experience the same great results that I had experienced when using tape on humans.

While it was apparent at the 2012 Summer Olympics that many of the athletes chose to wear elastic kinesiology tape during competition, widespread use of this elastic therapy tape is still relatively new to the US, and even newer to the equestrian world. Because of its recognized success in human training and health care programs, equine professionals are expressing a growing interest in taping horses. I am amazed at the abundance of inquiries I receive, worldwide, from both professional and non-professional equestrians wanting to know more about this practice.

## HOW THE TAPE WORKS

The mechanism by which elastic kinesiology tape affects the body is completely different than that of other athletic tape.

by Dr. Beverly Gordon

Unlike a brace or support, elastic kinesiology tape neither compresses tissue nor limits range of motion. In fact, the tape decompresses the tissue, and lifts the skin so as to allow increased blood and lymph circulation which assists in the body's natural ability to heal. This decompression of the tissue also decreases pressure on the pain receptors which helps to relieve pain.

The effect of therapeutic elastic kinesiology tape is based on its ability to interact with the skin and associated neuro- and mechano-sensory receptors. When applied properly, the tape allows full range of motion during activity, thereby allowing it to be used during training, which can be advantageous in rehab programs. Training through full range of motion decreases the likelihood of adhesions forming (adhesions often result from tissue and joint immobility).

Elastic kinesiology tape has no medication on it, is safe to use, and while it can have significant effects, its application is minimally invasive.

## TREAT, HEAL AND ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

Taping can be used in conjunction with other modalities and treatments, such as chiropractic, acupuncture, and shock wave therapy. Using tape during exercise enhances its effect, so it can be used while training, warming-up before performances, and in rehab exercise programs. It can be used with a wide variety of issues, including:

# 8 Athletic taping crosses over to horse world

# Horses

- ◆ Pain and swelling from muscle overuse or weakness (sore back, trigger points, muscle tension)
- ◆ Lymphatic and circulatory issues (swollen joints and tissue, lymphangitis) and trauma (bruising),
- ◆ Support and stability to the horse's joints (suspensory/tendon injuries), and ankle, knee or hock pain.
- ◆ Spinal issues (kissing spine, neck stiffness, sacro-iliac issues)
- ◆ Improve training potential for successful athletic performance by helping to keep horses sounder
- ◆ Preventively for horses prone to particular injuries and weaknesses

*The benefits, effects and theory of equine elastic kinesiology tape have been derived from the great success taping has experienced in the human athletic community.*

## TYPES OF APPLICATIONS

Elastic kinesiology tape can have different effects depending upon how it is applied. For any intended effect, the tape can be applied in different directions, different tensions, with different shaped strips, and with different pressure. Because the tape increases circulation, bringing more oxygen to the working muscle, it ultimately strengthens muscles by allowing them to work harder and become stronger with less fatigue. This consequently reduces the chances of sprains or strains.

Taping may look easy, but determining the proper application can be complicated. It is advisable to consult a knowledgeable trained taping practitioner. Non-health care professionals, such as owners and trainers, can easily learn to apply tape when the proper application is demonstrated to them. Equine massage therapists, equine chiropractors, veterinarians, and other equine health care professionals are finding great success taping their horses and giving their clients take-home instructions for using tape. Trainers can apply the tape to their horses before strenuous training sessions, before trailering, or anytime they feel they need extra support for a chronic joint, tendon or muscle injury.

## ONE FINAL NOTE

While the science behind the application of tape is similar for both equine and human athletes, different taping techniques for specific equine issues and conditions exist. For taping to be of practical use in the equestrian community, there needs to be some unity in taping. Research on taping applications for horses must continue so that we can learn greater ways to help our horses.

The worldwide use of elastic kinesiology therapy tape by human athletes has demonstrated its success, and it continues to become increasingly popular. Now we have another useful, non-invasive therapy to offer our equine athletes!

*Dr. Beverly Gordon is President of The Horse In Motion, Inc. Find more information, articles, pictures and updates at [www.TheHorseInMotion.com](http://www.TheHorseInMotion.com) and [www.Equi-Tape.com](http://www.Equi-Tape.com)*

