Practical Applications for Muscle Testing with Your Fur Baby

Ideas for Benefitting Your Pet

a special publication from Firebelle Productions

Introduction

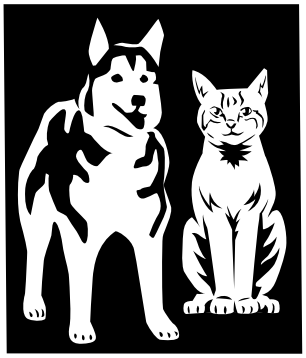
Muscle testing is a form of biofeedback that reflects subtle changes in the body's energy systems. It's a "detector" of sorts—one that costs nothing, is noninvasive, and can give us valuable information to help us and our pets live healthier, happier lives. This newsletter is an introduction to how we can use muscle testing for:

- Evaluating foods for ourselves and our pets
- Evaluating supplements for ourselves and our pets
- Supplementing veterinary care
- Conversing with our pets

Muscle testing is a form of biofeedback that reflects subtle changes in the body's energy systems.

What Is Muscle Testing?

Muscle testing allows us to obtain information from the body or the subconscious mind. It's a binary form of communication in response to a specific question, substance, or situation.



Consider for a moment how you respond to different foods, odors, sounds, or images. Do they strengthen you or weaken you? How about your interactions with other people? Do they energize you or rob you of energy?

Many of these energy shifts are on a macro level, easy for you to perceive. However, energy shifts on a micro level may not even be noticeable without some kind of "detector." Muscle testing is one such "detector," one that works for both humans and animals.

The results of muscle testing are binary: Good/Bad, Yes/No, or True/False. For example:

- If you are evaluating different foods for how they affect your body, your muscle should test strong for foods that are compatible with your system or weak for those that your body deems are bad for you in some way. Often the foods that are bad for us in some way will cause or contribute to aches and pains, fatigue, brain fog, congestion, or other complaints that we may not even recognize as being related to the foods we eat. Muscle testing can help us identify the offending foods. Likewise, muscle testing can help us identify appropriate or inappropriate foods for our pets.

Muscle testing is a "detector" of sorts that works for both humans and animals.

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- If you ask your subconscious mind a question, such as whether you are coming down with a cold, your muscle should test strong for Yes or weak for No.

- If you make a statement, such as "My name is _____," your muscle should test strong for True or weak for False. When you make a false statement, it causes a detectable shift in the body's energy systems. In that regard, it's not unlike a polygraph test (commonly referred to as a lie detector) that senses changes in a person's breath rate, pulse, blood pressure, and respiration. Of course, we wouldn't use muscle testing to convict someone of a crime or to prove a case in court. However, it's a valuable tool for biofeedback.

When we do muscle testing, we are not testing the muscle itself. Nor are we testing muscle strength. Rather, we are viewing the muscle response as an indication of energy flow or balance in the body. We are looking only at whether the muscle remains strong or weakens.

Who Uses Muscle Testing?

Muscle testing is used by a variety of healthcare professionals, including but not limited to the following:

- Chiropractors
- Physical therapists
- Naturopathic physicians
- Alternative and holistic practitioners
- Functional medicine practitioners
- Nutritionists and dietitians

These healthcare professionals use muscle testing to identify or evaluate such things as:

- Imbalances
- Misalignments
- Muscle function
- Energy blockages
- Nutritional needs
- Emotional stressors
- Allergies, sensitivities, or intolerances
- Treatment options and recommendations

Some veterinarians, particularly those who practice holistic care or alternative medicine, also use muscle testing.

Muscle Testing for the Layperson or Pet Parent

Muscle testing isn't only for trained healthcare professionals. Muscle testing is elegant in its simplicity, which is why there's a lot that we can do at the layperson level.

Additionally, the underlying principles are universal, regardless of species, making it possible to use muscle testing for our pets too. We just need to modify our approach, for example, by using a surrogate.

Muscle testing is used by a variety of healthcare professionals, including some veterinarians who practice holistic care or alternative medicine.

Muscle testing isn't only for trained healthcare professionals. There's a lot that can be done at the layperson level.

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Surrogate Testing for Pets

When we muscle test for pets, we do so using a human surrogate. One person can act as both the tester and the surrogate, as I did when testing my dog Laddie in the left-hand photo below. Or the process can be done with two people, such as when my friend Marina used me as a surrogate to test Laddie in the right-hand photo below.

In the photos above, both Marina and I are using a straight-arm technique. However, we could have used any technique, because we're not testing specific muscles. Rather, we're using muscle testing to tap into the body's energy system.

Specific instructions for muscle testing are beyond the scope of this newsletter, since we're focused on the practical applications for testing your fur baby. (Detailed instructions are contained in my book *Muscle Testing for You, Your Family, and Your Pet* available at www.firebelleproductions.com.) But in general, we're looking to see whether the indicator muscle remains strong or weakens. In the straight-arm test, the arm should remain strong for Yes and drop slightly for No. (Two inches of movement should be enough to signal a No response.)

When we're doing surrogate testing, we form an energetic link between ourselves and the other party (human or animal). That energetic link enables us to access information or responses from the other party's subconscious mind.

Intent is the key to creating the energetic link. If I'm going to test someone else via surrogate testing, I must first inform my subconscious mind of my intent. And I must also obtain permission from that other person. The same is true if I'm going to test an animal.

I like to think of it as flipping a toggle switch. When the toggle switch is facing me, I'm testing myself. When the toggle switch is facing away from me, I'm testing someone else. So when I begin a session for someone else, I toggle my brain—form the intent—to test that other individual (human or animal). When I end the session, I toggle back to break the connection.

When we muscle test for pets, we do so using a human surrogate. One person can act as both the tester and the surrogate using self-testing methods.

When we're doing surrogate testing, we form an energetic link between ourselves and the other party (human or animal).

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Surrogate testing works for animals in much the same way as it does for humans. Animals don't always understand our spoken words to the same extent that humans do. However, when we connect with their subconscious minds on an energetic level, they are able to understand the intent behind our words such that we can obtain information from them in the same way that we do from other humans.

Evaluating Food for Ourselves and Our Pets

Everything is made of energy, including us and our pets. We each have unique energetic vibrations. Food also has specific vibrational frequencies. Muscle testing gives us a way to evaluate how well different foods resonate with our unique energetic vibrations.

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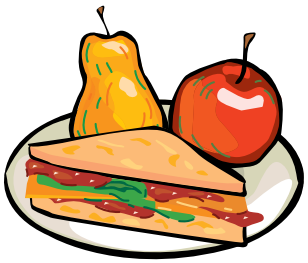
My first exposure to muscle testing was in the context of distinguishing foods that were either good for the body or bad for the body. It was a simple demonstration in which the volunteers being tested were asked to hold different substances in one hand while the presenter muscle tested using the other arm. When the volunteers were holding something healthy, like an apple, their muscles remained strong. When the volunteers were holding something unhealthy, such as a candy bar, their muscles became weak.



The pure simplicity of this test means that any layperson can easily get feedback from the body regarding foods that are compatible or incompatible. Anything that we can do for ourselves, we can also do for our pets, the difference being that we need to do it via surrogate testing.

Muscle testing can be an effective tool for evaluating foods for our pets, particularly those who are picky eaters. My Laddie is a picky eater. He might eagerly accept a free sample of something at the pet store, then not touch the same food or treat at home once I'd spent money on it. Or he might suddenly stop eating something he's been eating for weeks. So I was wasting a lot of money on food or treats that had to be thrown out, returned, or donated to an animal shelter. I couldn't even rely on suggestions from Laddie's vet or from pet store employees, because Laddie can be so picky. Fortunately, however, muscle testing has made it easier to find foods that Laddie will actually eat.

We can evaluate foods for our pets in much the same way that we can do it for ourselves, except that we need to do it via surrogate testing.

What Do We Ask?

In my apple-versus-candy-bar story above, it was unnecessary to ask anything. The volunteers simply tested strong or weak in response to whatever they were holding. However, we can often get more meaningful feedback by asking specific questions.

It's acceptable to ask, "Is this food good for me?" However, our needs change throughout the day and in response to other variables, such as weather conditions, activity level, and stress. So adding "at this time" can provide more accurate feedback.

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When we muscle test for ourselves, we ask in first person (me). When we muscle test for our pets, we can ask the questions in either second person (you) or third person (Laddie) as long as we first establish a connection with the pet and are clear that we are asking for the pet's response, not the surrogate's response. (We are merely using the surrogate as a sort of translator.)

For Myself: Is this food good for me at this time? *(first person)*
For My Dog: Is this food good for you at this time? *(second person)*
Or ... Is this food good for Laddie at this time? *(third person)*

Sometimes it's more valuable to identify the best option among multiple choices. Remember, however, that muscle testing is binary. It can only tell us Yes or No, Good or Bad. So we can't ask our subconscious minds to "pick one" from everything in the refrigerator or on a shelf in the grocery store. We need to go item by item and ask if each is the best option. The same is true when seeking the best option for our pets.

When we have a specific purpose in mind, such as losing weight, stabilizing blood sugar levels, or sustaining us through a day of high activity, we can ask if particular foods are a good choice or the best choice for that purpose. The same is true if we have a specific purpose in mind for our pets, such as to help them recover from an injury or illness.

We can also rate foods on a scale of 0 to 10 to determine the best choice(s). However, because muscle testing is binary, we need to ask one number at a time to arrive at the rating.

- On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being best for me and 0 being worst, is this a 10? Is this a 9? And so forth.

We can shortcut this a little by dividing the range in half.

- On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being best for me and 0 being worst, is this food a 6 or above?

If the answer is Yes, we can then ask about the numbers 6 through 10. If the answer is No, we can work our way down from 5. We can rate foods for our pets the same way.

Fortunately, we can test foods through containers and packaging. It is believed that our bodies (and our pets' bodies) can detect a food's unique energetic vibrational frequency even through a closed or sealed container. The interaction between that vibrational frequency and our own (or our pets') energetic fields provides a strong or weak response during muscle testing.

Evaluating Supplements for Ourselves and Our Pets

Many healthcare practitioners and veterinarians who use muscle testing do so as part of their overall process of determining nutritional deficiencies and recommending supplements.

We can ask if foods are good for us or our pets "at this time" or for a specific purpose. We can also rate foods on a scale of 0 to 10.

Questions asked of pets can be phrased in second person (you) or third person (Laddie) as long as you are clear that you are talking to the pet.

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In general, evaluating the body's need for supplements is best done by or in consultation with trained healthcare professionals or veterinarians who have studied nutrition. Realistically, however, many of us will purchase over-the-counter supplements for ourselves or our pets, particularly if our healthcare professionals or veterinarians don't have expertise in this area. So it's important that we use common sense. We don't want to create health problems by throwing the body out of balance through an indiscriminate use of supplements.

When we test for supplements, we apply the same principles that we use when testing for foods. We can ask if particular supplements are good for us (or our pets), good for us (or our pets) at this time, or good for a particular purpose. We can also rate the supplements on a scale of 0 to 10.

Once again, the body's needs change throughout the day and in response to other variables So it is worthwhile to reevaluate supplements periodically.

Muscle testing can be used to supplement care or advice from a veterinarian.

Supplementing Veterinary Care

Muscle testing is not a substitute for proper advice from a veterinarian. Nor is it a substitute for proper diagnostic efforts. However, it is a tool that veterinarians may use as part of the diagnostic process.

As laypersons, we may be able to use muscle testing to supplement care or advice from a veterinarian:

It can be used as a "gut check," as "first aid," or as additional feedback for veterinarians.

- As a "gut check." Often we already know things in our guts, but don't yet have confirmation. Muscle testing may give us that confirmation—or alert us when the gut is wrong.

- As "first aid." Muscle testing may be used to help guide us when caring for pets with minor injuries that don't require professional veterinary care or when caring for pets as an interim measure until more advanced care is available.

- As additional feedback for veterinarians. Muscle testing may help us provide feedback that veterinarians need to effectively diagnose and treat our pets.

The following are examples of how I've used muscle testing to supplement Laddie's medical care.

Is Laddie Injured?

One night while driving a friend home from a meeting, I had to brake suddenly. Laddie, who normally sits up front with me, was in the back seat of my truck. He flew forward, landing between the bench seat and the front passenger seat, unable to extricate himself. As soon as I could park safely, I helped Laddie out of his predicament and used surrogate testing to assess him:

- Are you hurt? *No.*
- Were you just scared? *Yes.*

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Ordinarily, I would simply watch Laddie for signs of injury and take him to his vet or chiropractor if I suspected that he had been hurt. Muscle testing confirmed what I believed based on observation.

Why Is Laddie Limping?

I've taken Laddie several times to the Wild Blue Dogs Camp (WildBlueDogs.org) in South Lake Tahoe. Camp is held at the 4H campgrounds adjacent to the lake, where Laddie loves playing at the beach.

One day after romping in the sand, Laddie curled up on a blanket and wouldn't get up. I stood him up three times, only to have him plop back down. Nor would he follow me when I pretended to leave him behind. When I finally got him up, he began limping. So one of the lifeguards carried him back to the main building for me, where I used surrogate testing to determine why he was limping:

- Did you hurt one of your legs? *No.*
- Did you hurt one of your paws? *Yes.*
- Is it one of your front paws? *No.*
- Is it one of your back paws? *Yes*
- Is it the right one? *No.*
- Is it the left one? *Yes.*

Once I'd narrowed it down, I discovered that Laddie had stepped in some pitch—a tar-like substance somewhere in the sand. It took two of us to clean the pitch out of Laddie's left rear paw, because Laddie squirmed so much. But I was happy to have found the cause of his distress through muscle testing.

How Would Laddie Rate His Pain? or His Nausea?

Animals can be relatively stoic, making it difficult for us to know when they are in pain or how much pain they are in. Laddie seems to be more stoic than the average dog, challenging even his veterinarians and chiropractor at times.

So now when Laddie's behavior is off or when he seems to be favoring a leg or paw, I'll use surrogate testing to ask if he is in pain. If the answer is Yes, I'll ask him to rate the severity on a scale of 0 to 10.

Keep in mind that the body's response to muscle testing is binary—strong or weak, Yes or No. So we need to phrase our questions (or statements) accordingly. Often I will streamline the process by first finding a range. For example:

- Would you rate the severity of your pain at a 5 or below?
- Would you rate the severity of your pain at a 6 or above?

Once I've identified the range, I'll narrow it down further.

- How would you rate the severity of your pain at this time? Is it a 6? A 7? An 8? And so forth.

Saldy, Laddie has kidney disease, which often causes nausea. So I frequently use muscle testing to see if Laddie is nauseous, how bad the nausea is, and which remedy will best ease his nausea.

Muscle testing can be used to help assess whether a pet has been injured, the location of an injury, and the severity of the pain.

Muscle testing is not a substitute for proper veterinary care or proper diagnostic efforts. But it is a helpful resource for pet parents.

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If Laddie is in pain, I can also use muscle testing to obtain a description of the pain.

- How would you describe the pain? Is it …
  - A burning pain?
  - A dull ache?
  - A tightness?
  - And so forth.

Should I Consent to This Treatment for Laddie?

Shortly after his seventh birthday, I took Laddie to have his teeth cleaned. However, the vet couldn't proceed, because a preoperative blood test revealed that Laddie had Stage 3 kidney disease. He also had high blood pressure.

I was blindsided and devastated. How could I not know that my baby had a serious medical condition? And of course, I felt guilty for not knowing sooner, even though there was no logical way I could have known.

The vet tech reviewed with me the vet's recommendations and asked me what I wanted to do. Did I want her to administer subcutaneous fluids to help flush Laddie's kidneys? Did I want to put Laddie on a blood pressure medication?

At first, I didn't know what to do. What was right for Laddie? How much would this help? My limited medical background did not prepare me for these choices.

And then I remembered that I had a helpful tool to guide me—muscle testing. I used surrogate testing to ask Laddie if the subcutaneous fluids and blood pressure medication would help him. After getting a Yes with each question, I used surrogate testing to rate each one. Both treatments rated a 9. With that feedback, consent was an easy decision. (It also eased the financial sting, because I knew that whatever it cost, it was the right decision.)

Muscle testing can be used for a "second opinion" when conferring with vets.

Muscle testing can help us make difficult decisions about recommended veterinary care.

Conversing with Our Pets

Although muscle testing is primarily a tool to be used for health and wellness purposes, I have also found it to be a useful tool for communicating with Laddie.

Disclaimer

Muscle testing when used for this purpose can be easily influenced by our own desires. So I try to remain neutral and keep my desires in check. I try to be open to answers that aren't the ones I want to hear.

I also look to Laddie's behavior for clues. If his behavior conflicts with the information I get through muscle testing, I trust his behavior as being more accurate.

Sometimes I can confirm the information that I get through muscle testing by asking questions of Laddie's breeder, vets, or chiropractor. But not everything lends itself to that.

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Ultimately, I approach this with the caveat, "To the extent that I can rely on the information obtained through muscle testing …" This way, I can make choices to benefit Laddie while remaining open to other information that might be more accurate.

Is Laddie Looking Forward to Camp?

I've taken Laddie several times to the Wild Blue Dogs Camp in South Lake Tahoe. The camp helps raise money for canine cancer research and treatment.

As we approached the third year of camp, I asked Laddie if he was looking forward to going and if he was looking forward to each of the activities.

- Are you looking forward to going to doggy camp? *Yes.*
- Are you looking forward to playing with other doggies? *Yes.*
- Are you looking forward to playing at the beach? *Yes.*
- Are you looking forward to lure coursing? *Yes.*
- Are you looking forward to hiking? *No.*

Laddie answered Yes to everything except hiking. I thought perhaps it was because his paws were irritated, but that was not the case. When I probed the different possibilities, I discovered that he found hiking too tiring.

Not wanting to miss out on hiking, I took Laddie on one hike that I expected would be relatively easy. However, Laddie lagged behind everyone else and brought up the rear the entire time. Hiking itself was not the problem, since Laddie has enjoyed other hikes. But hiking up hills at that altitude was not fun. The answers—all the answers—that I got through muscle testing were accurate.

Why Is Laddie Reluctant to Go Swimming?

The Wild Blue Dogs Camp is held at the 33-acre 4H camp facility on the edge of Lake Tahoe. It includes a private beach and dock, where dogs can swim in the lake, play on the beach, and go kayaking or paddle boarding with their humans.

Laddie enjoyed playing on the beach. But even when his friends went swimming, he wouldn't go more than a few inches into the water. I didn't know why Laddie didn't want to try swimming. Muscle testing provided the answer.

- Are you reluctant to go swimming because you don't know how to swim? *No.*
- Are you reluctant to go swimming because you're afraid of the water? *No.*
- Are you reluctant to go swimming because you don't like getting your body wet? *Yes.*
- Is it too much like getting a bath? *Yes.*

Does Laddie Like Going to Fires?

In early 2021, Laddie completed therapy dog certification through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs (therapydogs.com). We do most of our work with the fire service, because I had been a volunteer firefighter for 28 years with the Santa Clara County Fire Department. I am also a member of a group called Fire Associates of Santa Clara Valley.

Although muscle testing is primarily a tool to be used for health and wellness purposes, it can also be a useful tool for communicating with our pets.

Because muscle testing when used for this purpose can be easily influenced by our own desires, we must be mindful to remain neutral.

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Fire Associates of Santa Clara Valley is a volunteer group that provides canteen and rehab support during major emergency incidents, fire department drills, and special events. Fire Associates was founded in 1969 to serve the fire agencies of Santa Clara County in California.

I hadn't been very active with Fire Associates since getting Laddie, partly because I felt bad about leaving him home alone more than necessary. However, once the folks from Fire Associates were introduced to Laddie, they eagerly welcomed him as the group's first therapy dog.

Before being diagnosed with kidney disease, Laddie enjoyed going to fires and providing a little canine therapy for the hardworking firefighters, police officers, and paramedics. While it was evident from the way he interacted with emergency personnel, I did use muscle testing to confirm it.

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More detailed instructions and other testing methods are provided in the book *Muscle Testing for You, Your Family, and Your Pet.*

The book is available through Firebelle Productions and Amazon.com.

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