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A NEW PORTABLE DEVICE TO MEASURE SWEAT RATE IN HYPERTHERMIA FOR FIELD STUDIES

Yu Ogawa¹, Yufuko Kataoka Y¹, Kazumasa Manabe¹, Takamichi Aida¹, Koji Uchida¹, Yoshi-ichiro Kamijo^{1,2} and Hiroshi Nose^{1,2}

¹Dept. of Sports Med. Sci, Shinshu Univ. Grad. Sch. of Med. and ²Inst. for Biomedical Sci., Shinshu Univ., 390-8621, Japan.

Sweat rate (SR) in hyperthermia has been measured by a ventilated capsule method. However, this technique is only limited to an experimental chamber.

Here, we have developed a portable capsule to measure SR for the field test. 4 males and 5 females (28-78yrs) performed cycling exercise for 20-30 min at ~65 % peak oxygen consumption rate [30 °C T_a ; 50 % RH]. SR was measured with a ventilated capsule traditionally used on the left chest which was perfused with dry air at 1.5 l/min (SR_{vent}; 12.6 cm² area) and a portable capsule on the right chest in which 4.8 g of silica gel was contained to absorb water vapor from sweat and two small fans were installed to mix the air in the capsule (SR_{pd}; 8.4 cm³ volume), while monitoring esophageal temperature (T_{es}).

 T_{es} at rest was ~36.6 °C and increased by 1.1 °C by the end of exercise when SR_{vent} and SR_{pd} increased to ~0.8 mg/min/cm² and ~1.7 mmHg, respectively. The profile of SR_{pd} (*x*) every 5 sec during exercise was almost identical to that in SR_{vent} (*y*) in each subject (all, r> 0.99, P<0.0001) with the slope and the intercept of the regression equations were 0.49 ± 0.05 mg/min/cm²/mmHg and 0.01 ± 0.00 mg/min/cm², respectively. In addition, when we determined the T_{es} threshold for increasing SR_{pd} (TH_{pd}) and the sensitivity of SR_{pd} in response to increased T_{es} (Δ SR_{pd}/ Δ T_{es}) and those for SR_{vent} (TH_{vent} and Δ SR_{vent}/ Δ T_{es}) in individual subjects, they were highly correlated (*y*=1.11*x* – 3.99, *r*=0.98, *P*<0.0001). Similarly, the slopes of Δ SR_{pd}/ Δ T_{es} (*x*) and Δ SR_{vent}/ Δ T_{es} (*y*) were 1.7 ± 0.3 mmHg/°C and 0.9 ± 0.2 mg/min/cm²/°C, respectively, and they were highly correlated (*y*=0.82*x* – 0.47, *r*=0.90, *P*=0.0008).

Thus, the portable device can be used to measure SR in hyperthermia, suitable for the field test.

Key words: sweat rate, continuous measurement, portable device, field.