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Repeatability and reproducibility of an onfield device for measuring low- to highfrequency muscle force ratio.

Olivier BERNARD¹, Nathalie ANDRE² and Michel AUDIFFREN²

¹Laboratoire MOVE (UR 20296), Université de Poitiers, Faculté des Sciences du Sport, 8 allée Jean Monnet, 86000 Poitiers ²Equipe CoCliCo, CeRCA (CNRS UMR 7295), Université de Poitiers, MSHS, 5 rue T. Lefebvre, 86000 Poitiers Contact : olivier.bernard@univ-poitiers.fr



CONTEXT: Low-Frequency Fatigue (LFF):

- refers to a long-lasting impairment of muscle contractility, induced by a fatiguing physical task.
- \succ is assessed by the low- to high-frequency force ratio produced by an

electrically stimulated muscle (L/HF ratio).

A recent portable device¹ (MYOCENE, Liège, Belgium) has been developed to measure the quadriceps L/HF ratio (called Powerdex value, expressed in percentage) of sport practitioners, in the field : LF = 20 Hz ; HF = 120 Hz.

OBJECTIVES : To evaluate the repeatability and reproducibility of Powerdex measurements, under field conditions.

METHODS:

16 healthy volunteers. One familiarization session (MYOCENE measures).

Two experimental sessions (over two weeks) :

- 1. Repeatability: test-retest on two consecutive Powerdex measurements (seven minutes apart),
- 2. Reproducibility: repeated Powerdex measurements, influenced by the combined effect of time of day (8:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.) and



Contraction quantifiée

Figure 1: schematic relationship between the evoked

force and the frequency of stimulation: rested vs fatigued

influx/sec

daily activities.

Participants were asked to refrain from any sport activity from the day before.

Conditions : same operator, same device, same electrical stimulation process, _ same position of the skin electrical stimulation electrodes, for all measurements.



Figure 2: Bland-Altman plot for repeatability. Bias = -1.6% ; Limits of agreement : [-4.5 ; 1.4%] (= bias ± 2.97 %) **Figure 3:** Bland-Altman plot for reproducibility (8:00 a.m. vs 5:00 p.m.). Bias = 1.2% ; Limits of agreement : [-7.4 ; 9.3%]

Discussion & Conclusion:

The repeatability of the paired Powerdex measurements suggests that a Powerdex depression of at least 3 % is required to conclude to the onset of Low-Frequency Fatigue. Additional studies are needed to more accurately assess the reproducibility of the device, as daily activities may have interfered with the time of day on muscle contractility, either by inducing a slight potentiation or a slight fatiguing effect.

[1] Ridard J. et al. (2022). On-field low-frequency fatigue measurement after repeated drop jumps. Front Physiol. Nov 9;13:1039616.

