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Title	Effect of repeated forearm muscle cooling on the adaptation of skeletal muscle metabolism in humans
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Citation	International journal of biometeorology, 61(7), 1261-1267 https://doi.org/10.1007/s00484-016-1303-z
Issue Date	2017-07
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/70879
Rights	The original publication is available at www.springerlink.com
Туре	article (author version)
File Information	Wakabayashi_manuscript_HUSCAP.pdf



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## 22 Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effect of repeated cooling of forearm muscle on adaptation in skeletal muscle metabolism. It is hypothesized that repeated decreases of muscle temperature would increase the oxygen consumption in hypothermic skeletal muscle.

Sixteen healthy males participated in this study. Their right forearm muscles were locally cooled to 262725°C by cooling pads attached to the skin. This local cooling was repeated eight times on separate 28days for eight participants (experimental group), whereas eight controls received no cold exposure. 29To evaluate adaptation in skeletal muscle metabolism, a local cooling test was conducted before and 30 after the repeated cooling period. Change in oxy-hemoglobin content in the flexor digitorum at rest 31and during a 25-second isometric handgrip (10% maximal voluntary construction) was measured using 32near-infrared spectroscopy at every 2°C reduction in forearm muscle temperature. The arterial blood flow was occluded for 15 seconds by upper-arm cuff inflation at rest and during the isometric handgrip. 33 34The oxygen consumption in the flexor digitorum muscle was evaluated by a slope of the 35oxy-hemoglobin change during the arterial occlusion.

In the experimental group, resting oxygen consumption in skeletal muscle did not show any difference between pre- and post-intervention, whereas muscle oxygen consumption during the isometric handgrip was significantly higher post-intervention than pre-test from thermoneutral baseline to 31°C muscle temperature (P<0.05). This result indicated that repeated local muscle cooling might facilitate oxidative metabolism in the skeletal muscle.

In summary, skeletal muscle metabolism during submaximal isometric handgrip was facilitated after
repeated local muscle cooling.

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Key Words: hypothermic skeletal muscle; tissue oxygenation; non-shivering thermogenesis; local
cold exposure; cold adaptation

### 46 Introduction

47A number of researchers have studied the adaptation of non-shivering thermogenesis (NST) after repeated cold exposures in humans (Vybiral et al. 2000; van Marken Lichtenbelt and Daanen 2003; 4849van Marken Lichtenbelt and Schrauwen 2011; van der Lans et al. 2013; Yoneshiro et al. 2013; Nishimura et al. 2015). Recently, brown adipose tissue (BAT) have been focused on as one of the 50major components of energy expenditure, since cold-induced activity of BAT in adult humans had 51been identified in studies using PET/CT scanning (Saito et al. 2009; van Marken Lichtenbelt et al. 52532009). On the other hand, it is necessary to study the skeletal muscle's contribution to the adaptation 54of cold induced thermogenesis, concerning their large volume and wide distribution to human body.

55A recent study reported increases of human BAT activity and NST after 10 consecutive days of 56mild cold exposure to 15-16°C in air for six hours a day, whereas no significant change was observed in skeletal muscle mitochondrial uncoupling in vitro (van der Lans et al. 2013). However, in the case 5758of acute response to cold, a significant positive relationship has been reported previously between the 59increase of total daily energy expenditure during mild cold exposure (16°C in air for 48 hours) and the increase of mitochondrial uncoupling (state 4 respiration) of isolated human skeletal muscle biopsies 60 61 taken after the cold exposure (Wijers et al. 2008; Wijers et al. 2011). Furthermore, recent studies 62 reported an increase of skeletal muscle oxidative capacity in UCP1 knockout mice or BAT partial 63 ablation mice after repeated cold exposure (Meyer et al. 2010; Mineo et al. 2012), that indicated the 64 contribution of skeletal muscle to the increase of NST after chronic cold exposure. However, as was 65 mentioned above, it was reported that there was no significant change in human skeletal muscle mitochondrial uncoupling after repeated mild cold exposure (van der Lans et al. 2013). Concerning 66 67 these studies, it is suggested that mild cold exposure (defined here as cold stimulus which only 68decreases skin temperature and induces NST) would activate mitochondrial uncoupling in the skeletal 69 muscle, but it is not cold enough to induce a significant increase in UCP activation after repeated

70exposure to mild cold. The necessary condition for inducing metabolic adaptation in the skeletal 71muscle might be a repetition of severe enough cold stimulus which would decrease deep body 72temperature and/or initiate shivering. However, Cannon and Nedergaard (2004) insisted that the 73increase of muscle oxidative capacity observed after repeated cold exposure was a by-product of muscle training induced by repeated shivering. Thus, in this study, repeated local severe cold exposure 74was used as a thermal adaptation impulse for potentially inducing metabolic adaptation in the skeletal 7576muscle. This method enables repetition of a strong cold stimulus locally in skeletal muscle without 77shivering. Increased muscle capillary density after repeated cold exposure was reported in rats which 78were exposed to 5°C in air for four weeks (Suzuki et al. 1997) and in human free-divers who routinely 79 have been immersed into cold water for more than 20 years (Bae et al. 2003). This might be one 80 potential mechanism to increase muscle oxidative capacity following repeated cold exposure. It is probably because of a decline of muscle temperature, which reduces enzyme activity as a result of the 81 82 Q10 effect. To compensate for the reduction of the enzyme activity in each muscle fiber, more muscle 83 fibers would be recruited and/or capillary density might be increased to satisfy an energy (oxygen) demand. Thus, reduction of muscle temperature might be an essential qualification to increase 84 85 oxidative capacity after repeated cold exposure.

This study aimed to investigate the effect of a repeated severe local cold exposure (reduction of forearm muscle temperature) on metabolic adaptation of hypothermic skeletal muscle. Because the energy demand of resting muscle seems too small to be affected by the suppression of metabolism due to local cooling, submaximal isometric handgrip exercise conditioning was tested pre- and post-intervention. It is hypothesized that a repeated decrease of local skeletal muscle temperature will increase muscle-based thermogenesis in humans.

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#### 93 Methods

#### 94 **Participants**

Sixteen healthy males participated in this study. They were all right handed and divided into two 95groups (experimental cold adaptation and control group) that had no statistical group difference in the 96 97 following parameters; height, weight, body mass index, right forearm maximal girth, skin fold thickness and handgrip strength during maximal voluntary contraction (MVC). Skinfold thickness was 98 measured at seven sites (forearm, upper arm, subscapular, abdomen, iliac spine, thigh and calf) by one 99 100 experienced examiner using a skinfold caliper (Eivoken-type; Meikosha Co. Ltd., Japan). Physical 101 characteristics measured pre- and post-intervention are shown in Table 1. All experimental protocols in 102this study were designed according to the principle of the Helsinki Declaration and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Kyushu University. All participants were informed of the experimental 103 104 procedures and gave their written informed consent before participation.

105

#### 106 **Procedures**

107The experimental cold adaptation group repeated forearm muscle cooling eight times on separate 108 days in three weeks, while no cold exposure was conducted in the control group. Their right forearm 109 was locally cooled by using cooling pads attached to the skin until their forearm muscle temperature 110 fell to 25°C. Whole surface of the right forearm between the wrist and elbow was wrapped by several 111 water perfusion cooling pads, in which 5°C water was circulated using a thermostatic bath system 112(LTB-400, ASONE, Japan). On average, about 70 minute was required to cool forearm muscle to 25°C. 113The forearm muscle temperature was measured by a deep body temperature monitor (CM-210, 114 TERUMO, Japan) which detects the tissue temperature 5-10 mm below the skin surface using the zero 115heat flow method (Yamakage and Namiki 2003). This monitor measures skin surface temperature 116 beneath a thermal insulating pad containing a heater, which equilibrates the skin temperature with the 117deep tissue temperature when heat flow from the skin is maintained to zero.

118 To evaluate adaptation in metabolism in the skeletal muscle, both groups undertook two 119 experimental forearm cooling tests, three weeks apart (Pre and Post), until their right forearm muscle 120temperature fell to 25°C. Before the first local cooling test, all participants practiced the protocol 121including submaximal (10% of predetermined MVC) isometric handgrip exercise using a handgrip 122dynamometer (T.K.K.5710b, Takei Scientific Instruments, Japan). On the day of the forearm cooling 123test, participants came to the laboratory at least one hour prior to starting the protocol. After changing 124into shorts and T-shirts, they rested on a chair in a climate chamber controlled at 24°C and 50% 125relative humidity, and sensors were attached to them. During the forearm cooling test they sat on a 126chair and placed their right arm on a table holding the hand grip dynamometer fixed on the table. At 127the beginning of the test, normothermic baselines of measurement items described below at rest and 128during submaximal isometric contraction (10% MVC) were measured before starting forearm cooling. 129After the measurement of normothermic baseline, their right forearms were locally cooled by the 130 water perfusion cooling pads attached to the skin, as the same manner of the repeated forearm cooling 131described above. During the cooling protocol, participants repeated 25-second isometric handgrip 132(10% MVC) for every 2°C reduction in the forearm muscle temperature (around 35, 33, 31, 29, 27 and 13325°C).

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#### 135 Measurements

136 Changes in muscle hemodynamics (changes in oxy- and deoxy-hemoglobin content) were 137 continuously measured by spatially resolved near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) (NIRO-200, 138 Hamamatsu Photonics, Japan) every 0.5 seconds. The optodes of the NIRS, with a 3 cm distance 139 between an illuminant and a detector, were housed in an optically dense black vinyl holder to ensure 140 the position and were attached on the skin above the flexor digitorum (around 5-10 cm distal from the 141 cubital fossa) using double-sided adhesive tape. A fixed path length (10.6 cm) was used in this study 142as suggested by the manufacturer. The resting oxygen consumption in normothermic forearm muscle 143was evaluated by the slope of the concentration change of oxy-hemoglobin (O<sub>2</sub>Hb) during 15-second 144arterial occlusion using an upper-arm cuff inflated to 220 mmHg with a rapid cuff inflator system (E20 and AG101, Hokanson, USA). The calculation of tissue oxygen consumption (tissueVO<sub>2</sub>) was based 145146on previous studies (van Beekvelt et al. 2001; van Beekvelt et al. 2002). The rate of decrease in concentration of O<sub>2</sub>Hb (-d(O<sub>2</sub>Hb)/dt) was manually detected using a 5-second stable linear slope of 147148  $O_2Hb$  around 5-10 seconds after occlusion. Then, the unit of  $-d(O_2Hb)/dt$  [µmol Hb/L/sec] was 149converted into milliliters O<sub>2</sub> per 100 gram tissue per minute [mLO<sub>2</sub>/100g/min] taking into account that 150each Hb molecule binds four O<sub>2</sub> molecules, the molar gas volume in STPD is 22.4 L and muscle density is 1.04 kg/L, using the following equation: 151

## 152 Tissue $VO_2 = -d(O_2Hb)/dt \cdot 4 \cdot 22.4/1000 / 1.04/10 \cdot 60 [mLO_2/100g/min]$

Tissue  $VO_2$  of the normothermic forearm during isometric handgrip (10% MVC) was also evaluated by a similar technique. Participants were asked to keep constant handgrip strength for 25 seconds with arterial occlusion for the latter 15 seconds. After starting forearm cooling, tissue  $VO_2$  of the right forearm at rest and during isometric handgrip (10% MVC) was evaluated for every 2°C reduction in the forearm muscle temperature using the same technique as for the normothermic baseline.

Skin temperature on the right forearm ( $T_{forearm}$ ) was measured by thermistor sensors and a data logger (LT-8A, Gram Corporation, Japan) every two seconds. Skin blood flow (SkBF) in the forearm skin above the flexor digitorum was measured by laser Doppler flowmetry (FLO-C1, OMEGAWAVE, Japan). The right forearm skin thermistor and a laser Doppler probe were attached on the skin around m distal site from the NIRS probe. The SkBF data were sampled using an A/D converter (Powerlab/16SP, AD Instruments, Australia) and recorded at 0.5 second intervals using a personal computer. Since the laser Doppler flow signal does not provide an absolute measurement of blood flow, the voltage output of the laser Doppler measurement was normalized (%SkBF) relative to maximal levels (100%), which were measured during reactive hyperemia after right arm arterial occlusion, and the minimum value (0%) during the occlusion conducted before starting cooling. To minimize the artifact due to the movement of the laser Doppler probe, participants were asked to keep their right arm as stable as possible on a fixed table. The 15-second averaged %SkBF and skin temperature just before the arterial occlusion for evaluating resting muscle oxygenation for every 2°C reduction in forearm muscle temperature was analyzed later.

173

#### 174 Statistics

175Data representative for baseline prior to cooling and each 2°C reduction in the forearm muscle 176 temperature (tissueVO<sub>2</sub>,  $T_{\text{forearm}}$  and %SkBF) were analyzed by a repeated measures two-way (muscle temperature × pre-post intervention) analysis of variance (ANOVA). This analysis was conducted 177178separately for each control and experimental cold adaptation group. After determining the main effects, 179pair-wise post-hoc tests were conducted between pre- and post-intervention tests at indicated muscle 180 temperatures, and among muscle temperatures within pre- and post-test groups. Additionally, 181 pre-intervention group differences were tested by two-way (muscle temperature  $\times$  group) ANOVA 182followed by Student's *t*-tests between groups at each muscle temperature, using the measured pre-test data. Significant differences were established at P<0.05. All data are presented as mean values and 183 184 standard error (SE).

185

186 **Results** 

## 187 Physical characteristics

188 No difference was observed in any physical characteristics between groups or in pre- and 189 post-intervention forearm cooling within a group (Table 1).

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## 191 Control group

Based on the data measured in the pre-intervention forearm cooling test, there was no statistical difference between the control and experimental groups in any variables (tissue  $VO_2$ ,  $T_{\text{forearm}}$ and %SkBF) at each muscle temperature. The control group did not show significant differences in any variables at each muscle temperature between pre and post forearm cooling tests (Fig. 1a-4a).

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## 197 Tissue oxygen consumption in the experimental group

The resting forearm tissue $VO_2$  of the experimental group at each 2°C muscle temperature reduction pre- and post-cooling is shown in Figure 1b. There is a significant main effect of muscle temperature (P=0.014) in the two-way ANOVA (Fig 1b). However, post-hoc analysis indicated no statistical difference among tissue $VO_2$  at any muscle temperatures between pre- and post-intervention tests.

Forearm tissueVO<sub>2</sub> during submaximal isometric handgrip in the experimental group showed a 202203significant main effect of muscle temperature (P<0.001), pre- and post-cooling (P=0.001), and a significant interaction between those factors (P=0.022) in the two-way ANOVA (Fig 2b). TissueVO<sub>2</sub> 204during submaximal handgrip was significantly higher after local cooling than pre-test for baseline, 35, 20533 and 31°C muscle temperature (P<0.05). In the pre-test, tissueVO<sub>2</sub> during submaximal handgrip at 206 20727 and 25°C muscle temperature was significantly lower than that at baseline (P<0.05). In the post-test, tissueVO<sub>2</sub> during handgrip at 31 to 25°C muscle temperature was significantly lower than that at 208209 baseline (P<0.05).

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## 211 **Forearm skin blood flow and skin temperature**

The resting %SkBF in the right forearm just before occlusion at each 2°C muscle temperature reduction pre- and post-cooling is shown in Figure 3. In the experimental group, a significant main effect of muscle temperature (P<0.001) was observed in the %SkBF in the two-way ANOVA (Fig 3b). %SkBF at 35°C (when cooling just was started) to 25°C muscle temperature was significantly lower than at baseline both pre- and post-intervention (P<0.05, Fig 3b). No statistical difference was observed between pre- and post-intervention at each muscle temperature level.

Right forearm skin temperature was gradually decreased with the reduction of muscle temperature; a significant main effect of muscle temperature (P<0.001), pre- and post-intervention (P=0.039), and a significant interaction between those factors (P=0.008), was shown in the two-way ANOVA in the experimental group (Fig 4b). Forearm skin temperature tended to be higher post-test at each muscle temperature level and a significant difference was observed at 33°C (P<0.05, Fig 4b).

223

## 224 **Discussion**

225This study investigated the effect of repeated local forearm muscle cooling on the adaptation in the 226 skeletal muscle metabolism. The major finding is that the forearm tissue oxygen consumption during 227 submaximal isometric handgrip was significantly greater post-intervention local cooling test than 228pre-test in the range of thermoneutral baseline to 31°C muscle temperature level (P<0.05). This result 229indicated that repeated forearm muscle cooling may facilitate metabolism in skeletal muscle. On the 230other hand, resting oxygen consumption during forearm muscle cooling was relatively constant among 231muscle temperature levels and no change was found between pre and post intervention. This might be 232because the energy demand of resting muscle was too small to be affected by the suppression of 233metabolism in hypothermic muscle.

In this study, the change in skeletal muscle metabolism was examined after repeated local severe cold exposure which did not induce shivering. Thus, the present results were not affected by the muscle training effect due to repeated shivering during the adaptation process, as suggested by Cannon and Nedergaard (2004). Additionally, as there were no morphological change in the girth and skinfold thickness on the forearm between pre- and post-intervention (Table 1), there would be no muscular hypertrophy. Thus, the increased tissue $VO_2$  after the repeated forearm cooling intervention would mainly be due to some qualitative changes in the skeletal muscle tissue.

241It is well known that a decline of muscle temperature slows enzymatic processes as a result of the Q10 effect (Barany 1967; Bennett 1985). Additionally, suppression of O<sub>2</sub>-uploading from hemoglobin 242in lower temperature tissue (the Bohr Effect) would restrict the supply of O<sub>2</sub> to the muscle fibers. 243Moreover,  $O_2$  supply to the muscle tissue is restricted by the lower muscle blood flow in the 244245hypothermic muscle (Abramson et al. 1958; Thorsson et al. 1985). The suppressed muscle metabolism 246would be a factor in the impairment of physical performance in the cold (Bennett 1985; Wakabayashi et al. 2015). In this study, a significantly greater tissue $VO_2$  during submaximal isometric handgrip was 247248observed after the repeated forearm muscle cooling in the experimental group, who repeatedly 249experienced these metabolic suppressions in their skeletal muscle.

250We propose a potential mechanism for this adaptation. Distribution of muscle fiber type was 251assessed in Korean diving women who routinely exposed their body to cold water (Bae et al. 2003). Divers had a greater percentage of type IIx and a lower proportion of type IIa fibers in the vastus 252lateralis than control active women, whereas no group difference was observed in the percentage of 253254type I fibers. This suggested that repeated cold water immersion might induce the shift of type II 255muscle fibers to the faster subgroup. In an animal study, a similar shift in fiber type from type I to type 256IIa fibers was observed in rat soleus muscle (predominantly Type I) after intermittent cold exposure 257(Walters and Constable 1993). Although, there is a discrepancy between the previous and the present studies in the adaptation process with or without exercise, it is speculated that a greater number of 258fast-twitch fibers might be recruited for the handgrip exercise following the intervention. This might 259cause the increase of tissue  $VO_2$  after the cold acclimation period, as fast-twitch fibers are less 260261economical than slow-twitch fibers (Crow and Kushmerick 1982; Krustrup et al. 2008).

Another potential mechanism for the greater tissue $VO_2$  after cold adaptation is an increment of  $O_2$ 262delivery caused by the growth of capillary density. Bae et al. (2003) reported that Korean diving 263264women had a significantly greater capillary number per muscle fiber of the vastus lateralis compared 265to that in the active control group. In animal studies, chronic cold exposure induced an increase in capillary density and/or the capillary to fiber ratio in rats (Suzuki et al. 1997; Deveci and Egginton 2662002) and in guinea pigs (Sillau et al. 1980). The greater tissue  $VO_2$  after cold adaptation could be 267explained by the improvement of the oxygen supply to the muscle tissues by microvascular 268remodeling (angiogenesis). In this study, since the tissue  $VO_2$  was evaluated by a slope of the 269270oxy-hemoglobin change during arterial occlusion, the blood circulation was limited in the local body 271part. However, better blood perfusion before occlusion might enable greater oxygen uptake in the 272occluded muscle tissue.

273Additionally, a significant positive relationship between the increase of total daily energy 274expenditure during mild cold exposure and the increase of mitochondrial uncoupling of isolated 275human skeletal muscle biopsies taken after the cold exposure has been reported (Wijers et al. 2008; 276Wijers et al. 2011). On the other hand, no significant change in human skeletal muscle mitochondrial 277uncoupling was observed after repeated mild cold exposure (van der Lans et al. 2013). The timing of 278the muscle biopsy, when the sample was taken with (Wijers et al. 2008) or without (van der Lans et al. 2792013) mild cold exposure, could influence the result of muscle respiration. The increased muscle 280metabolism observed in the present study might be due to enhanced muscle oxidative capacity via 281mitochondrial uncoupling and/or a greater number of mitochondria (Bruton et al. 2010). In this study, 282skin temperature of the cooled forearm tended to be higher after intervention, whereas there was no 283change in the skin blood flow. Thus, the higher skin temperature would be due to a greater 284thermogenesis in the subcutaneous skeletal muscle tissue, rather than to skin vasodilation.

285

In conclusion, after repeated local forearm muscle cooling, the forearm muscle oxygen

- 286 consumption during a submaximal isometric handgrip was facilitated at muscle temperatures higher
- 287 than 31°C.

## 289 Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank all those who participated in this study. We would also like to express our gratitude to Mr Mutsuhiro Fijiwara for his technical support. This study was supported by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (No. 09J03584, No. 26291099) from the Japan Society for the

- 293 Promotion of Science, and the DESCENTE and ISHIMOTO Memorial Foundation for the Promotion
- 294 of Sports Science. There is no conflict of interest in relation to this work.

		Experimental group		Control group	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Age	yrs	21.9 (0.4)	-	22.1 (1.1)	-
Height	cm	171.3 (2.6)	171.3 (2.6)	168.5 (1.2)	168.5 (1.2)
Body weight	kg	59.8 (2.4)	60.2 (2.4)	55.3 (1.3)	55.4 (1.3)
Body mass index	kg·m <sup>-2</sup>	20.4 (0.5)	20.5 (0.5)	19.5 (0.4)	19.5 (0.5)
Mean skin fold thickness	mm	7.6 (0.8)	7.4 (0.8)	6.6 (1.0)	6.5 (1.0)
Forearm maximal girth	cm	24.3 (0.4)	24.3 (0.3)	24.0 (0.4)	24.1 (0.3)
Forearm skin fold thickness	mm	3.0 (0.2)	3.2 (0.3)	3.3 (0.2)	3.1 (0.2)
Handgrip MVC	kg	47.4 (2.5)	-	45.1 (3.3)	-

295 **Table 1** Physical characteristic of the experimental and control groups pre- and post-intervention

296

Values are means (standard error). Mean skin fold thickness was calculated from the measured values at seven sites (forearm, upper arm, subscapular, abdomen, iliac spine, thigh and calf). Maximal voluntary contraction (MVC) during isometric handgrip was measured. No statistical difference was observed in any physical characteristics between groups or between pre- and post-intervention.

301	Figure captions	

**Fig. 1** Resting forearm tissue oxygen consumption at each  $2^{\circ}$ C muscle temperature reduction pre- and post-intervention. Values are mean  $\pm$  SE of each control (a) and experimental group (b).

304

Fig. 2 Forearm tissue oxygen consumption during isometric handgrip at each 2°C muscle temperature
reduction pre- and post-intervention. Values are mean ± SE of each control (a) and experimental group
(b). \*Significant difference between pre- and post-intervention tests.

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**Fig. 3** Normalized skin blood flow in the forearm just before occlusion at each 2°C muscle temperature reduction pre- and post-intervention. Values are mean  $\pm$  SE of each control (a) and experimental group (b). The skin blood flow data are normalized relative to peak value.

312

Fig. 4 Forearm skin temperature just before occlusion at each 2°C muscle temperature reduction preand post-intervention. Values are mean ± SE of each control (a) and experimental group (b).
\*Significant difference between pre- and post-intervention tests.

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4