

# Changes in corticospinal excitability after whole body exercise

*Romuald LEPERS*

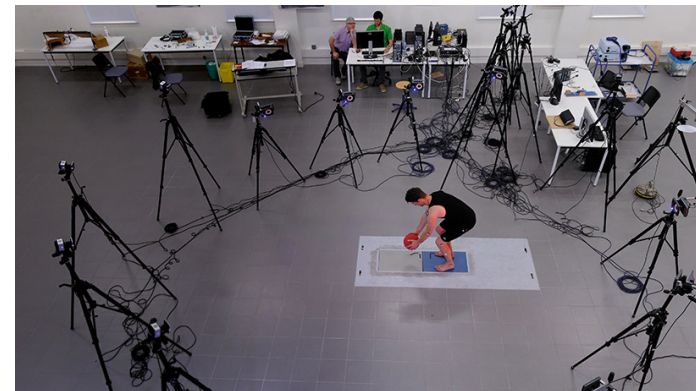
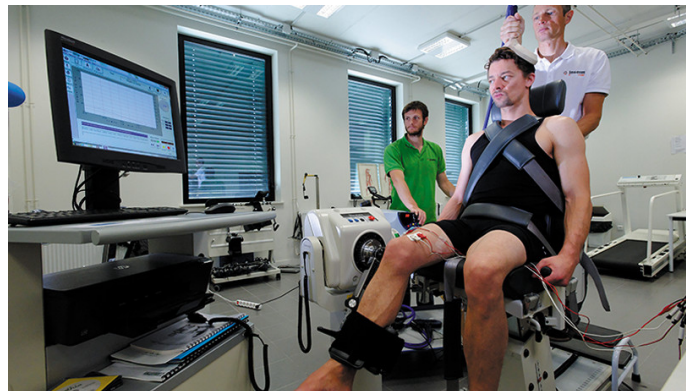
# Presentation



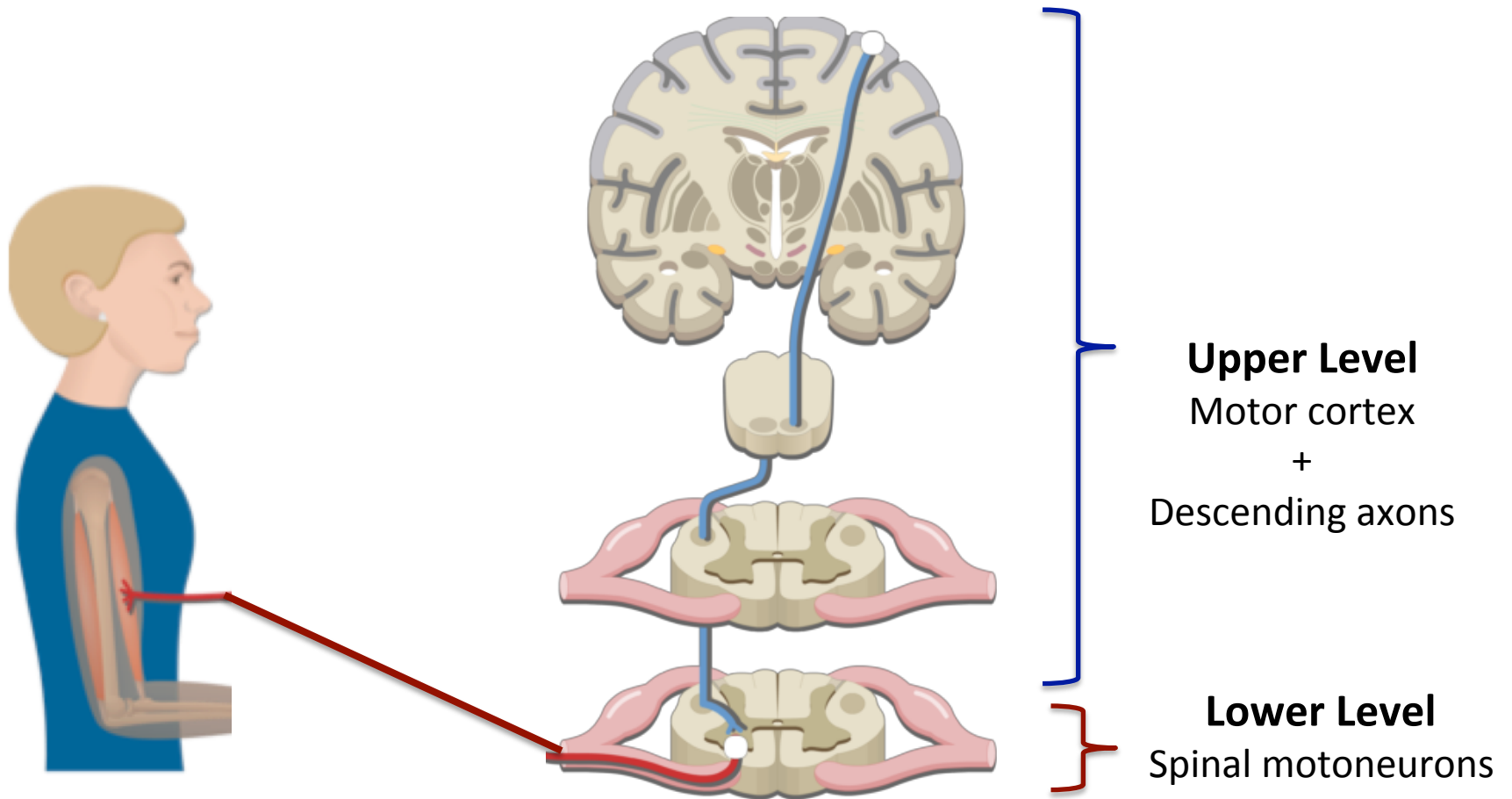
**Dijon-Le Creusot**  
2100 students  
(1500 Licence, L1 : 694)



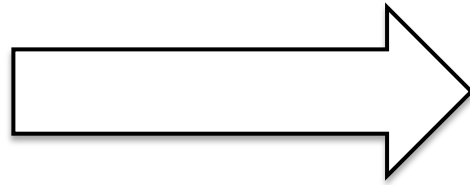
Laboratory : **INSERM U 1093 – CAPS**  
*Cognition Action & Plasticité Sensorimotrice*  
(6 PU, 13 MCU, 8 PU-PH, 4 INSERM/CNRS, 4 IE,  
18 PhD students)



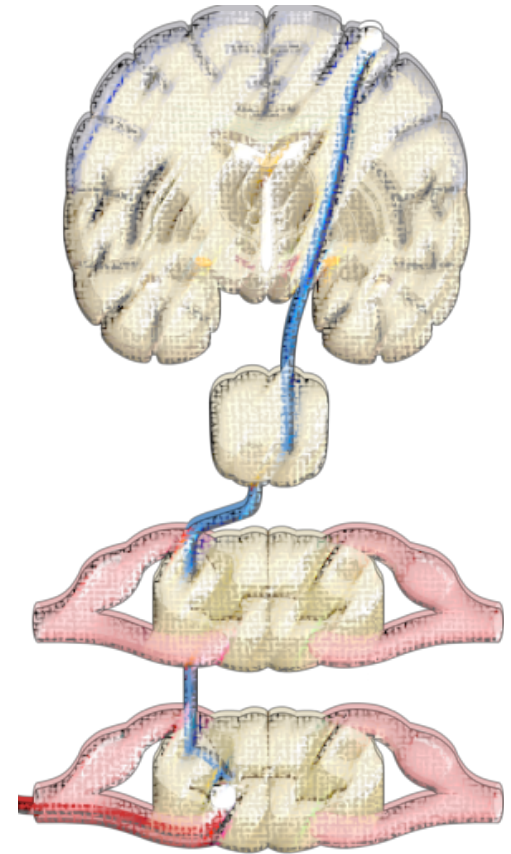
# Corticospinal (CS) motor pathway



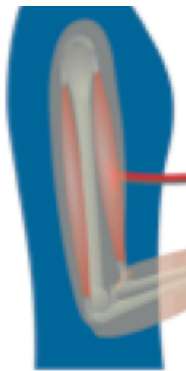
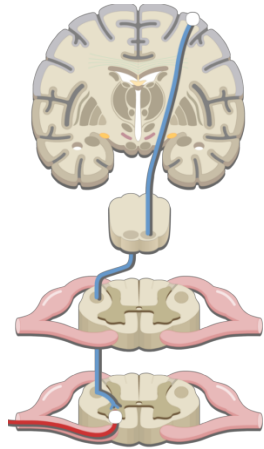
# Exercise



# Alterations of CS efficacy (excitability)



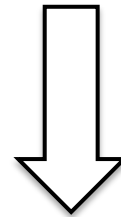
# Alterations of Corticospinal excitability



↓ CS excitability

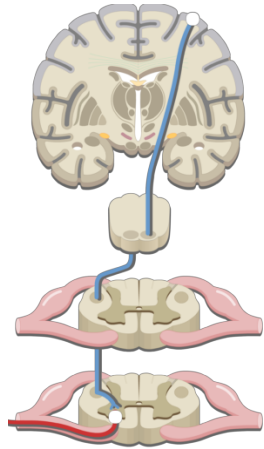
+

↑ Input into the motor cortex and/or spinal motoneuron (greater central motor drive)



Muscle activation = Cste

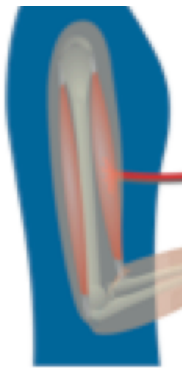
# Alterations of Corticospinal excitability



↓ CS excitability

+

~~↑ Input into the motor cortex and/or spinal motoneuron (greater central motor drive)~~



↓ Muscle activation

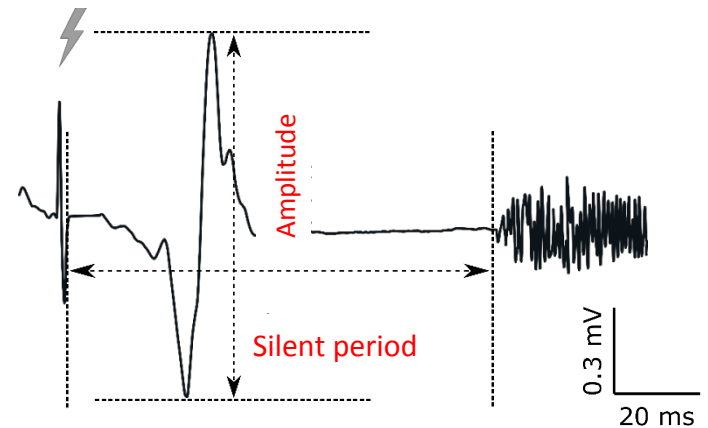
Central Fatigue

# How to evaluate the corticospinal excitability ?

## Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS)



## Motor-evoked potential (MEP)

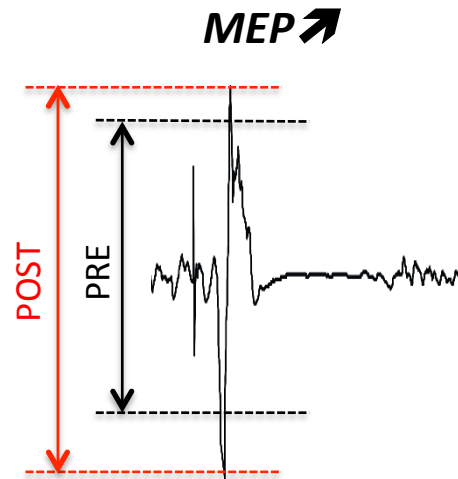
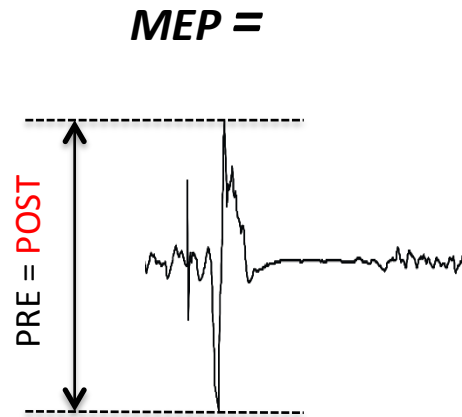



### Assessment - 3 different types of contraction :

- (1) Brief submaximal constant force contractions
- (2) Brief constant EMG contractions
- (3) Brief contractions of a given relative intensity (% MVC)





# Corticospinal excitability changes after prolonged whole body exercise




 Girard et al. (2013)  
(MVC: -11%)

 O'Leary et al. (2016)  
(MVC: -9%)

 Fernandez del Olmo et al. (2013)  
(MVC: -17%)

 Jubeau et al. (2014)  
(MVC: -25%)

 Temesi et al. (2014)  
(MVC: -34%)

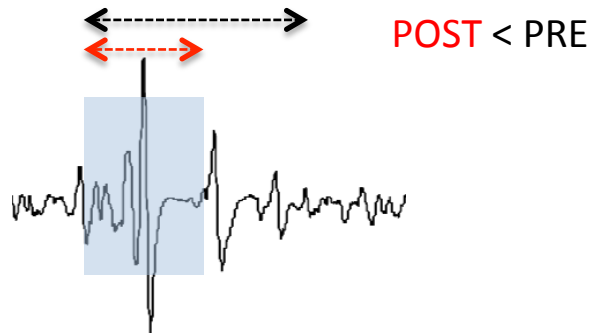
?

Magnitude of neuromuscular fatigue ↔ Corticospinal excitability



# Corticospinal silent period changes after prolonged whole body exercise

CSP ↘

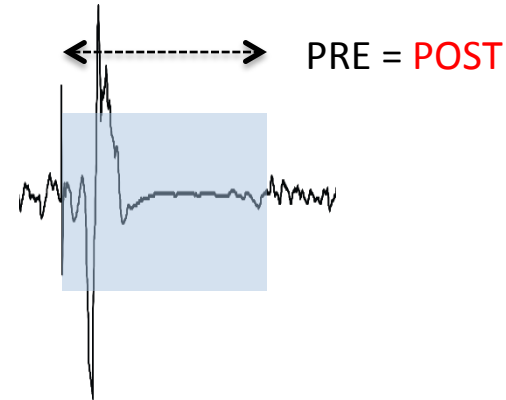


MEP =



*O'Leary et al. (2016)*  
(MVC: -9%)

CSP =



MEP ↗



*Fernandez del Olmo et al. (2013)*  
(MVC: -17%)



*Jubeau et al. (2014)*  
(MVC: -25%)



*Temesi et al. (2014)*  
(MVC: -34%)

**NO CONSENSUS**

# Characteristics of an (whole body) exercise training ?

Duration

Type

Intermittent, Continuous

Intensity

Mode of  
contractions

Isometric, Dynamic  
Concentric /Eccentric

# Characteristics of an (whole body) exercise training ?

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Intermittent, Continuous

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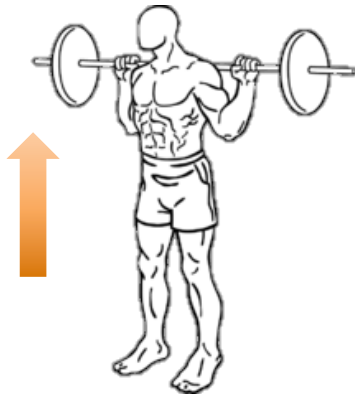
**Mode of  
contractions**

Isometric, Dynamic  
Concentric /Eccentric

Mode of  
contractions

## Concentric versus eccentric

*Knee extensor muscles*



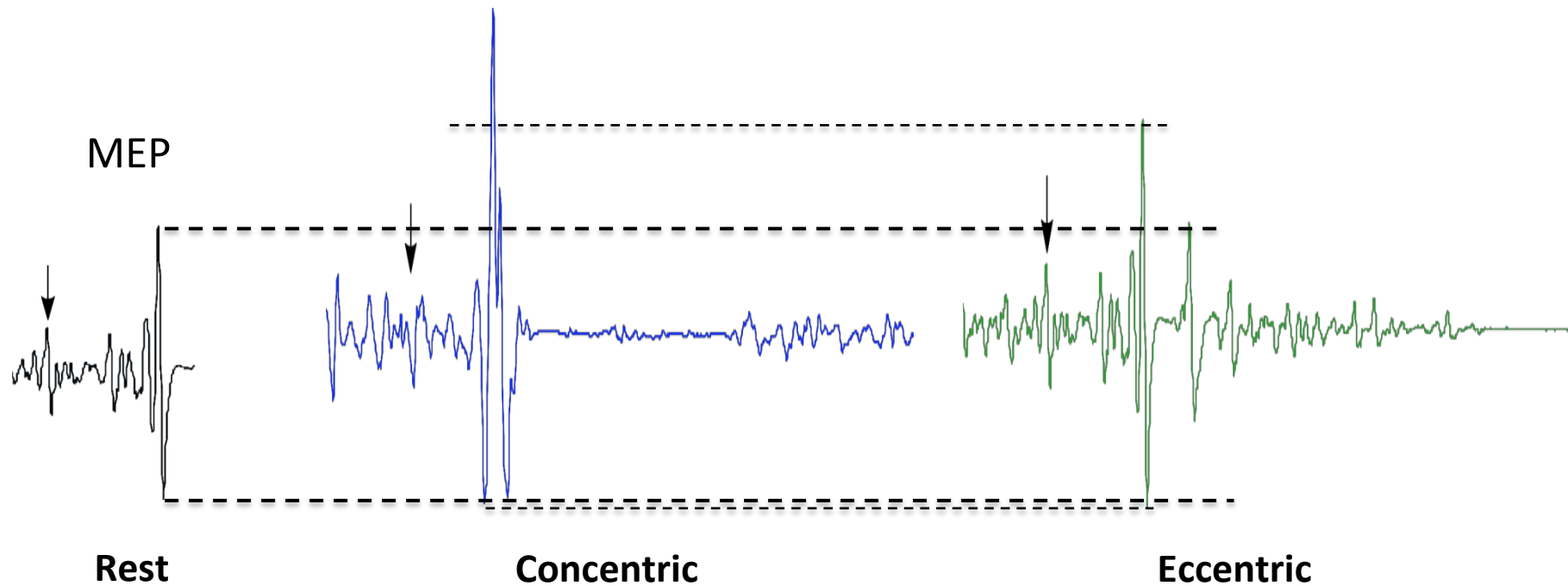
Concentric



Eccentric



# Mode of muscle contraction and corticospinal excitability



↑↑ MEP amplitude

↑+ MEP amplitude

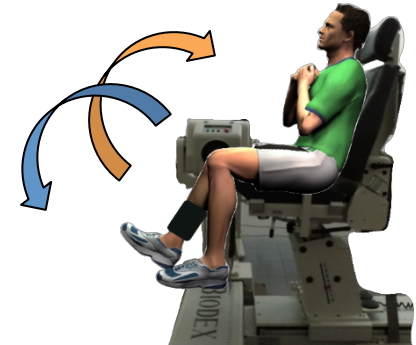
↑↑ Cortical silent period (CSP)

↓ CSP

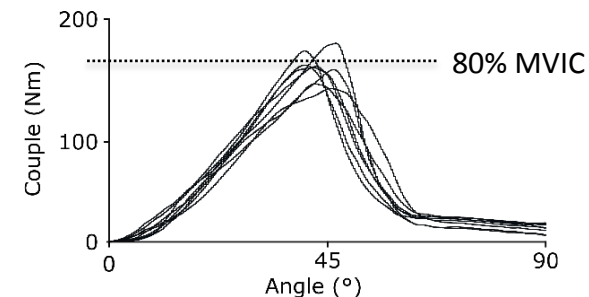
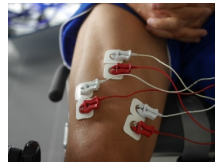
*(Duclay et al. 2014)*

# Mode of muscle contraction and fatigue interactions in corticospinal excitability : Single-joint exercise

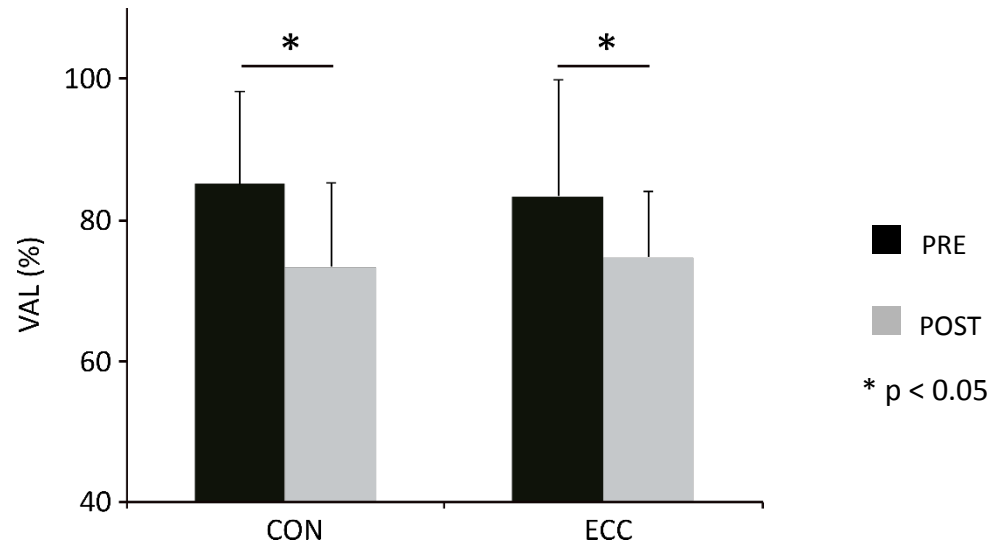
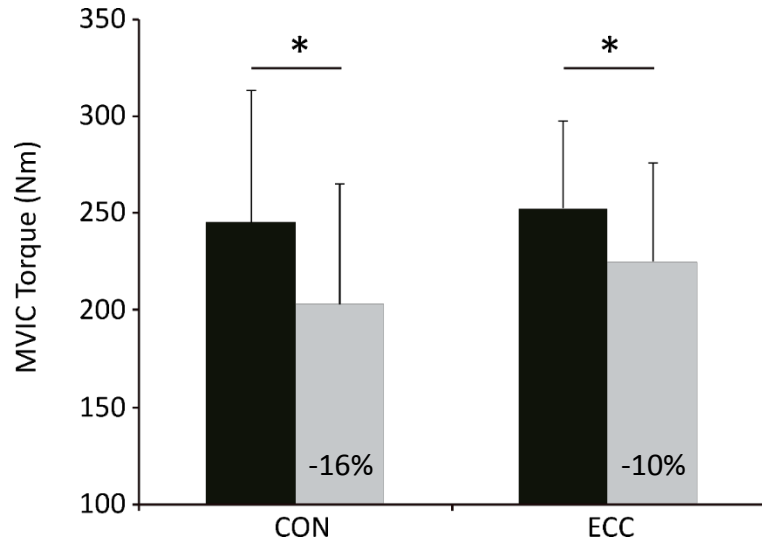
- ✓ 12 subjects (age:  $28 \pm 8$  yrs)
- ✓  $10 \times 10$  contractions
- ✓ 30 s rest between set
- ✓ Velocity :  $+60^\circ \cdot s^{-1}$  (concentric) or  $-60^\circ \cdot s^{-1}$  (eccentric)
- ✓ Intensity : 80% MVIC ; same total work



Measurements PRE/POST : MVC, VAL, Dt, MEP, CSP



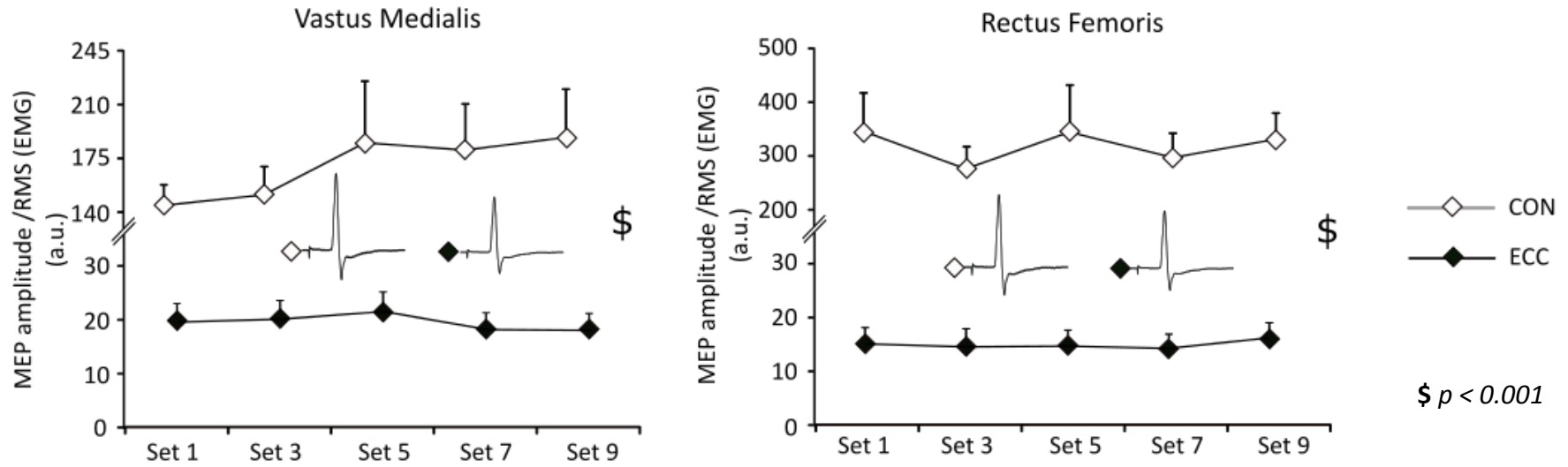
# Level of neuromuscular fatigue



• Similar peripheral fatigue after both exercises

Matched total muscular work → Similar level of muscle fatigue

# Corticospinal excitability during the fatiguing exercise

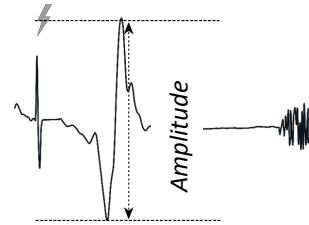
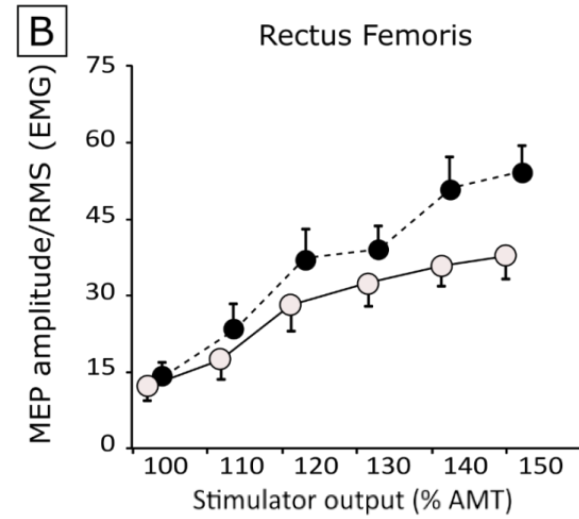
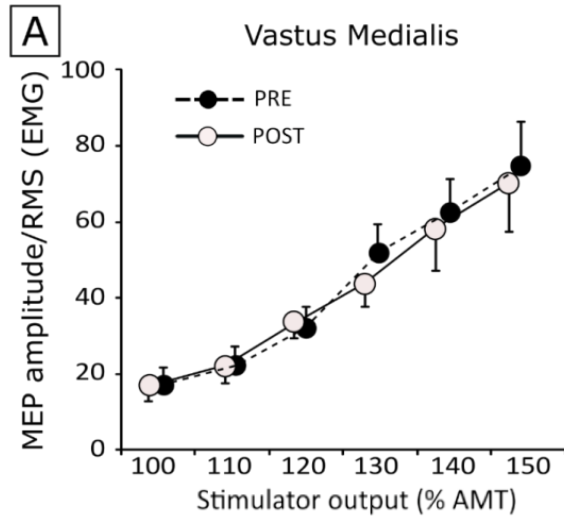


No change of CS excitability during exercise



# Corticospinal excitability after exercise

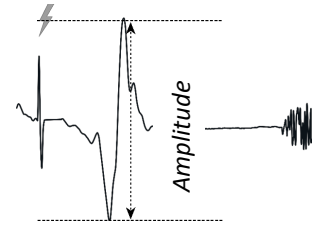
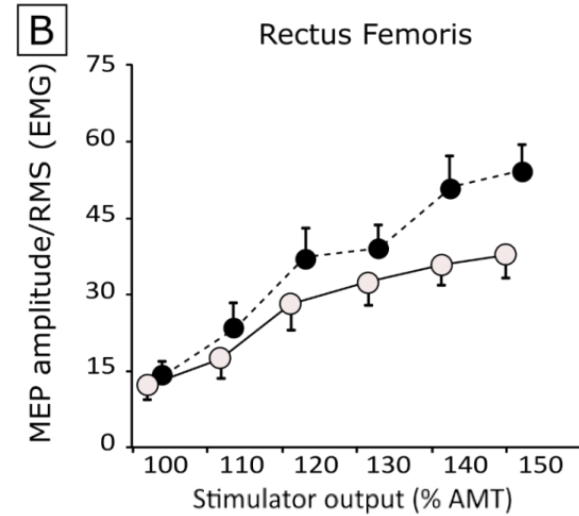
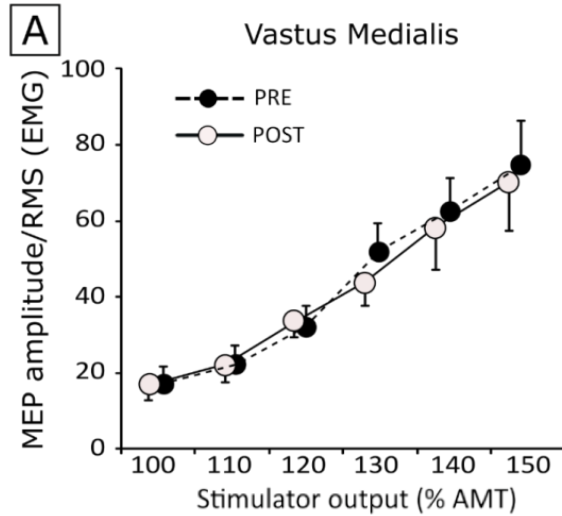
CONCENTRIC



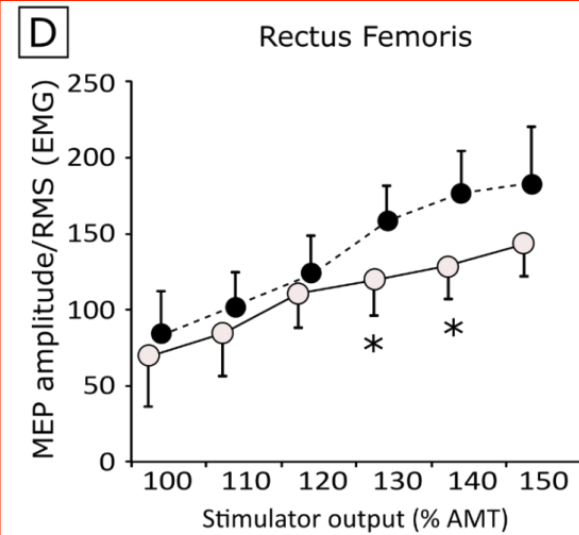
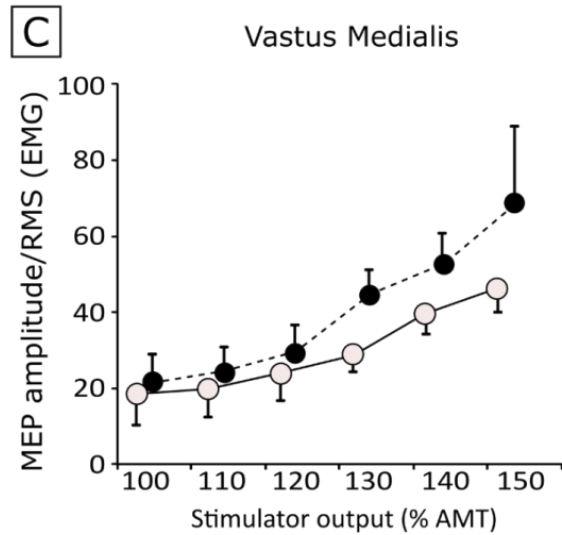
No significant changes

# Corticospinal excitability after exercise

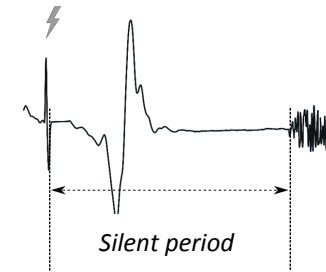
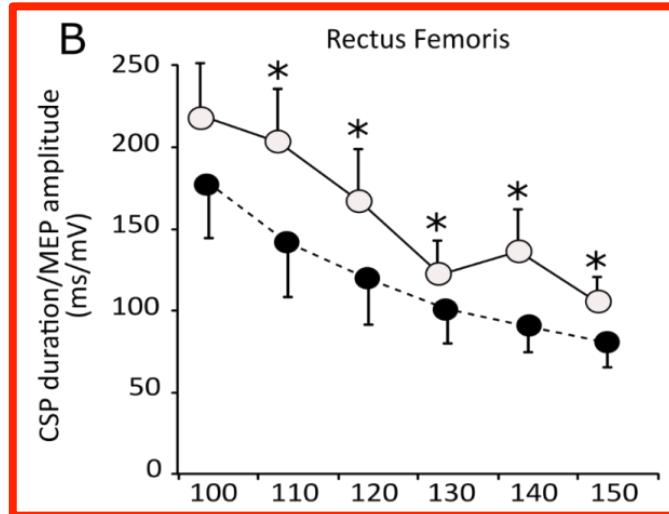
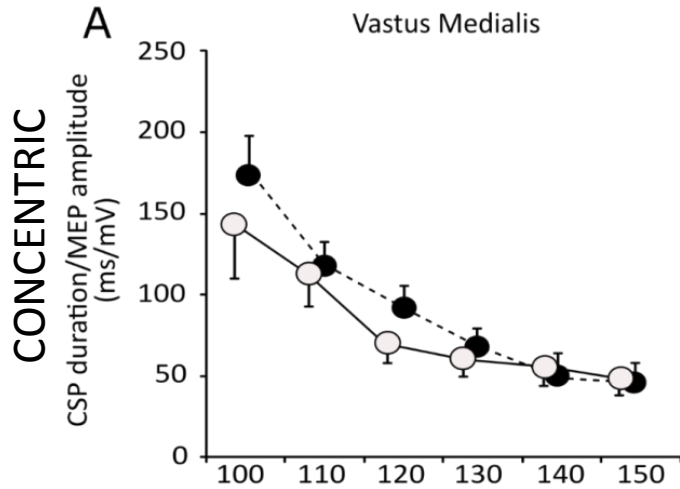
CONCENTRIC



ECCENTRIC

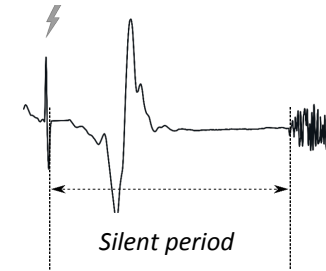
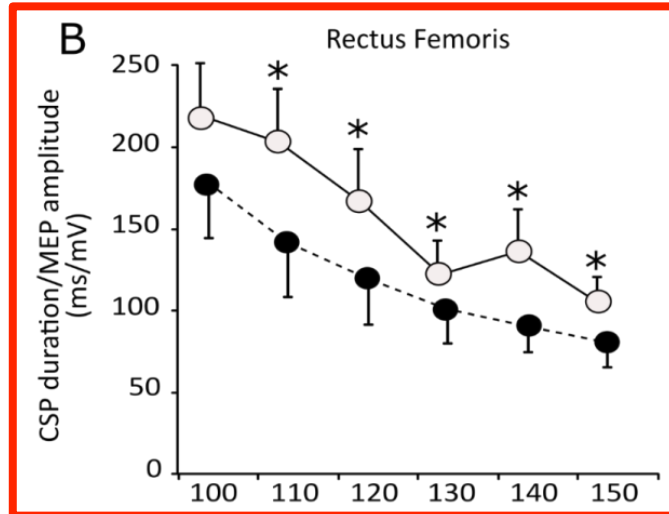
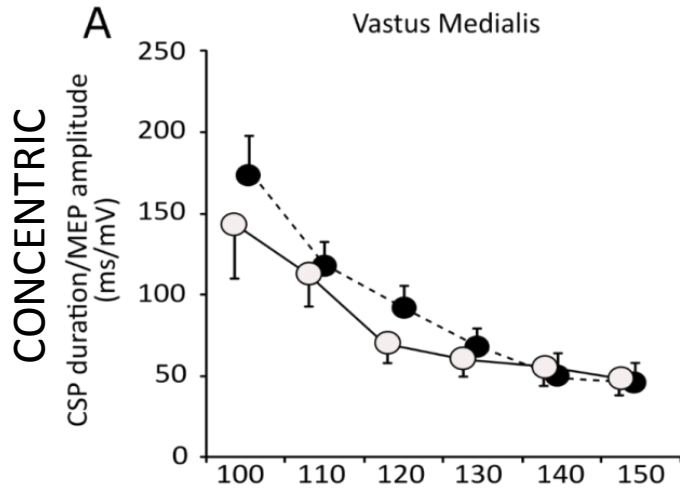


# Cortical Silent Period after exercise

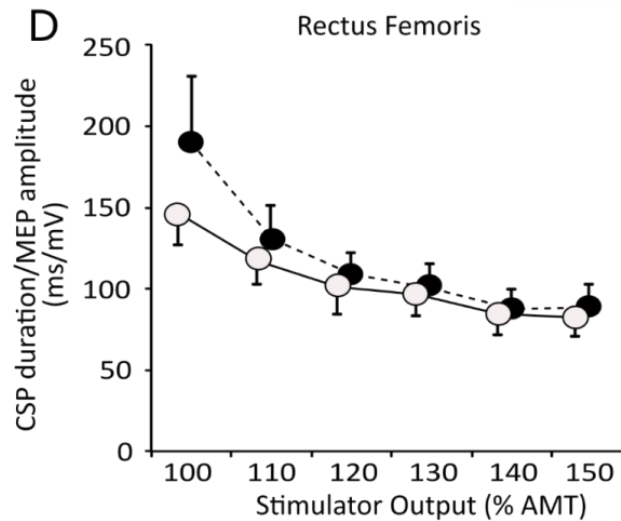
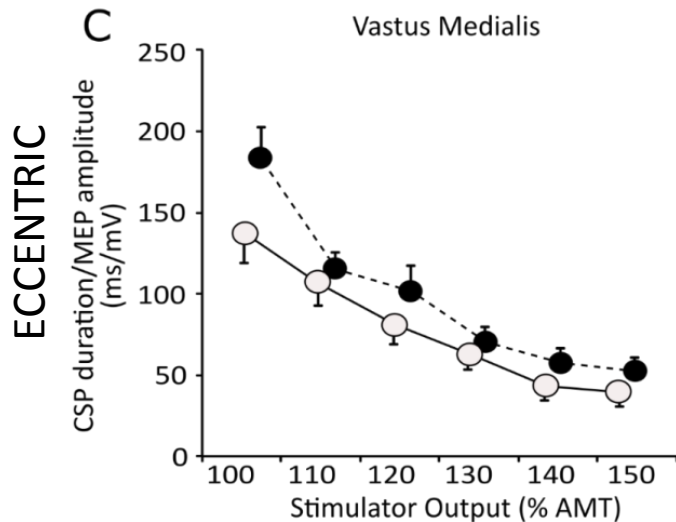


● PRE  
○ POST  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$

# Cortical Silent Period after exercise



● PRE  
○ POST  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$



# Mode of muscle contraction and fatigue interactions in corticospinal excitability : Single-joint exercise

## *Summary*

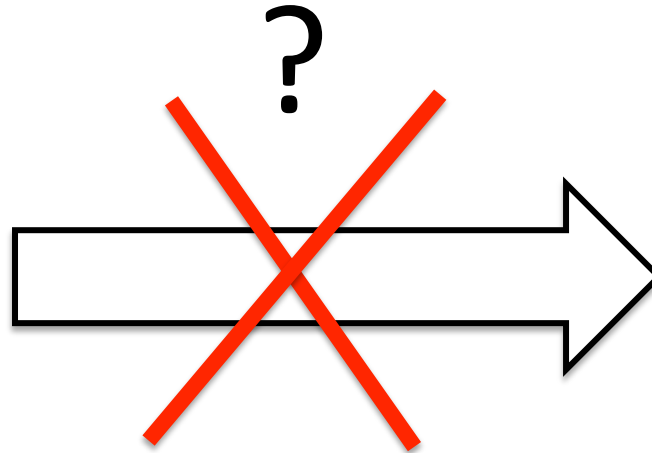
- ☑ No difference in the amount and etiology of fatigue induced for a similar workload
- ☑ Lower CS excitability during eccentric exercise
- ☑ Specific modulations for RF muscle after exercise (MEP amplitude and CSP)
  - ➔ RF bi-articular muscle → Control of joint torque ?

# From single-joint exercise to whole body exercise

Single-joint exercise



Isometric & dynamic



Whole body exercise

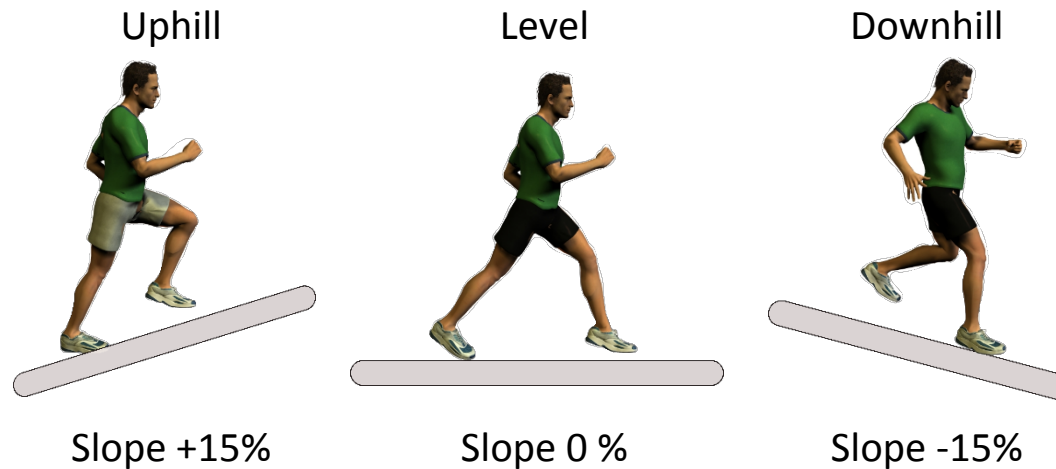


≠

muscle mass, muscular work,  
arterial pressure, heart rate,  
hydratatus status, ...

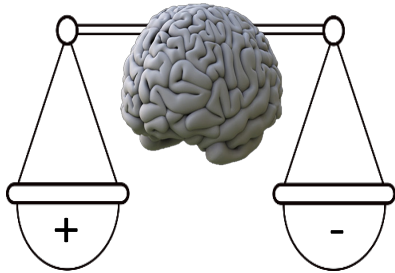
# Mode of muscle contraction and fatigue interactions in corticospinal excitability : Running exercise

- 11 healthy volunteers (age =  $26 \pm 7$  years;  $VO_{2max} = 58 \pm 6$  ml.min<sup>-1</sup>.kg<sup>-1</sup>)
- 3 conditions : 45-min treadmill exercise / 75% HRr

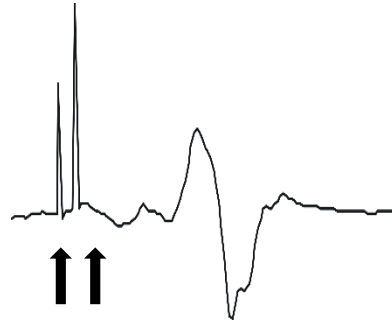


Measurements PRE/POST : MVC, VAL, Dt, MEP, CSP, SICI

# Short-Interval Cortical Inhibition (SICI)



*Ridding et al. (1999)*



↑↑  
TMS

*(Kujirai et al. 1993)*

$$\text{SICI} = \frac{\text{Conditioned MEP Size}}{\text{Unconditioned MEP Size}}$$

Ratio ↓ = Inhibition ↑

Ratio ↑ = Inhibition ↓

## Examples :

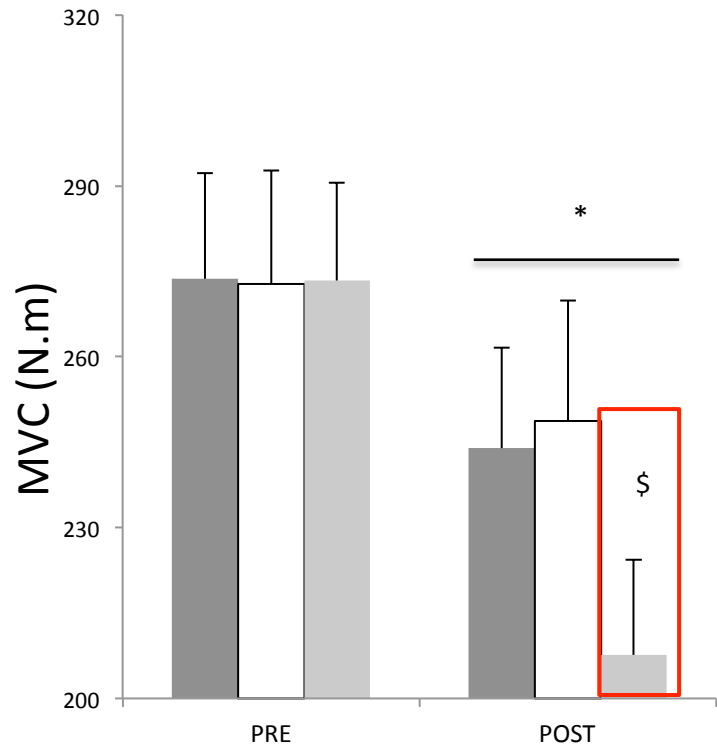
↘ SICI with muscle damages (*Pitman et al., 2012*)

↗ SICI after severe intensity exercise (92%  $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ ) (*O'Leary et al., 2015*)

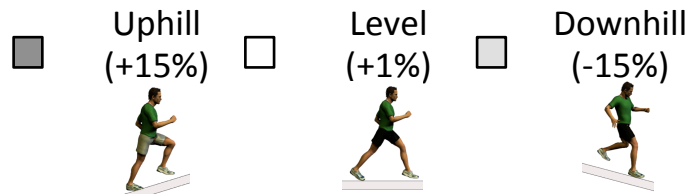
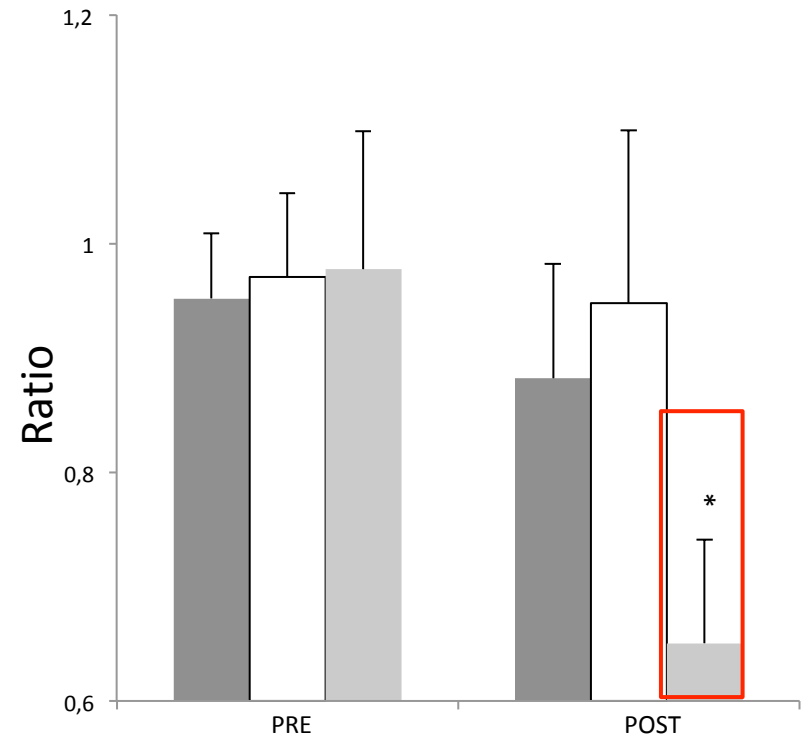
= SICI after moderate intensity exercise (52%  $\text{VO}_{2\text{max}}$ ) (*O'Leary et al., 2015*)



# Maximal Voluntary Isometric Contraction



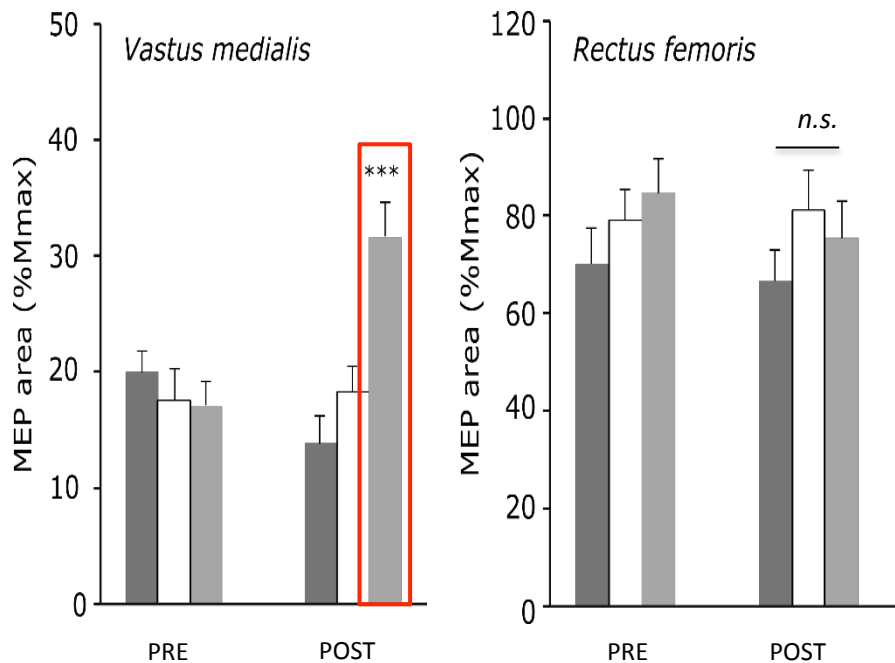
# Dt10 Hz / Dt100 Hz torque



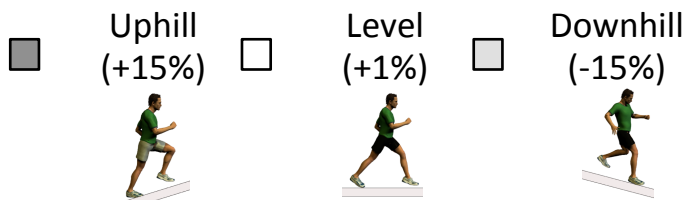
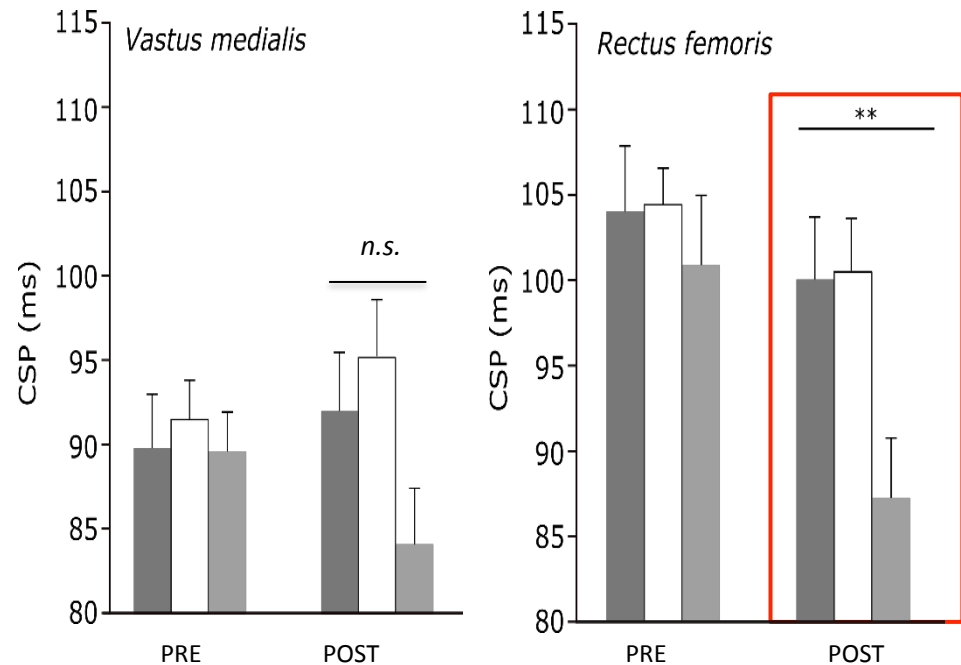
**Downhill → Greater muscle fatigue (peripheral)**

\* Significantly different from PRE , <sup>§</sup> significantly different from all other conditions ( $p < 0.001$ )

## MEP Area



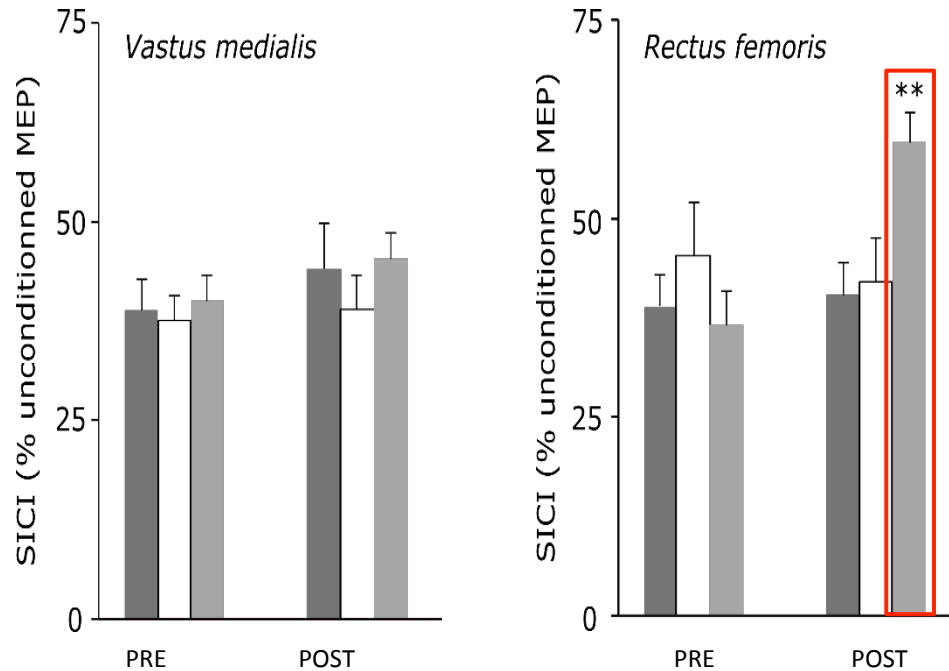
## Cortical Silent Period



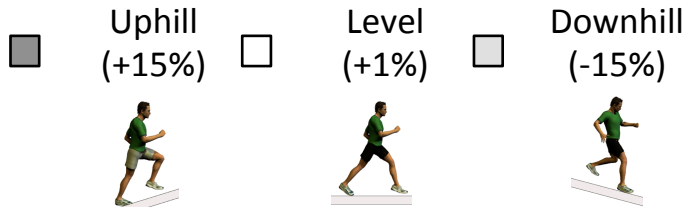
### Downhill exercise :

VM muscle : MEP  $\nearrow$  and CSP = Cste  
 RF muscle : MEP = Cste and CSP  $\searrow$

# Short-Interval Cortical Inhibition

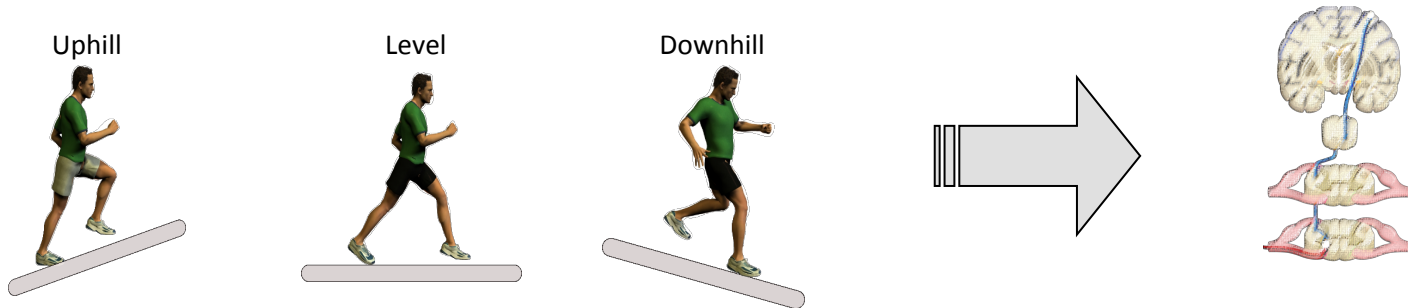


Ratio ↑ = Inhibition ↓



VM muscle : Inhibition does not change  
RF muscle : Inhibition ↘

# Mode of muscle contraction and fatigue interactions in corticospinal excitability : Running exercise



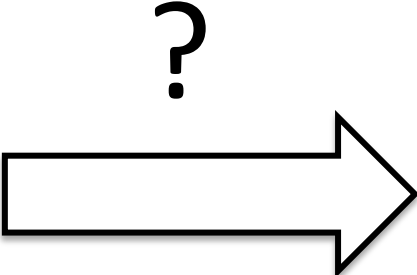
## *Summary*

- ✓ Greater peripheral alterations after downhill treadmill exercise
- ✓ Corticospinal excitability and inhibition changes after downhill
- ✓ Cortical inhibition changes after downhill (RF muscle)

# Changes in corticospinal excitability after whole body exercise

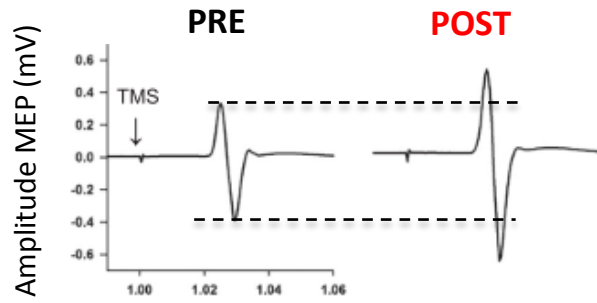


Exercised muscle  
(leg)

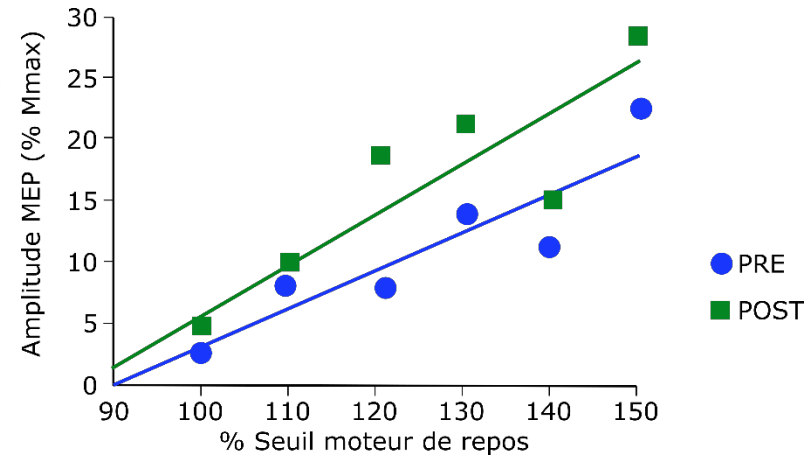


Non-exercised muscle  
(hand)

# Changes in corticospinal excitability after whole body exercise (non-exercised muscle)



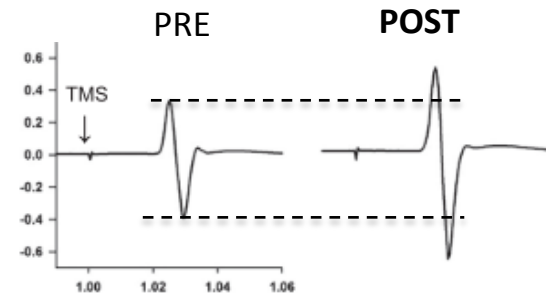
Paired associative stimulation (PAS)



(McDonnell et al., 2013, Singh et al., 2014)

# Paired associative stimulation (PAS)

**PAS : Increases CS excitability**



Example **PAS 25**

200 paired stimuli (0.25 Hz, 15 min) of **median nerve electrical stimulation** followed by **transcranial magnetic stimulation** of the hand M1 area (ISI 25 ms)

*(Stefan et al., 2000)*

# Changes in cortico-spinal excitability following uphill versus downhill treadmill exercise (**non-exercised muscle**)

N = 12 (24 ± 4 yrs)

4 sessions



slope : +10%



slope : -10%



Exercise alone



Exercise  
+  
PAS



30 min



60% H

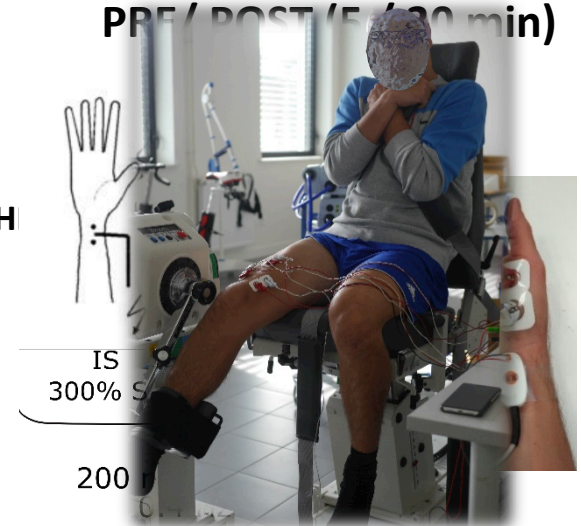


Exercise alone



Exercise  
+  
PAS

Corticospinal excitability  
abductor pollicis brevis  
PPF / POST (5 / 30 min)



IS  
300% S

200



# Changes in cortico-spinal excitability following uphill versus downhill treadmill exercise (non-exercised muscle)



Slope : +10%



Slope : -10%

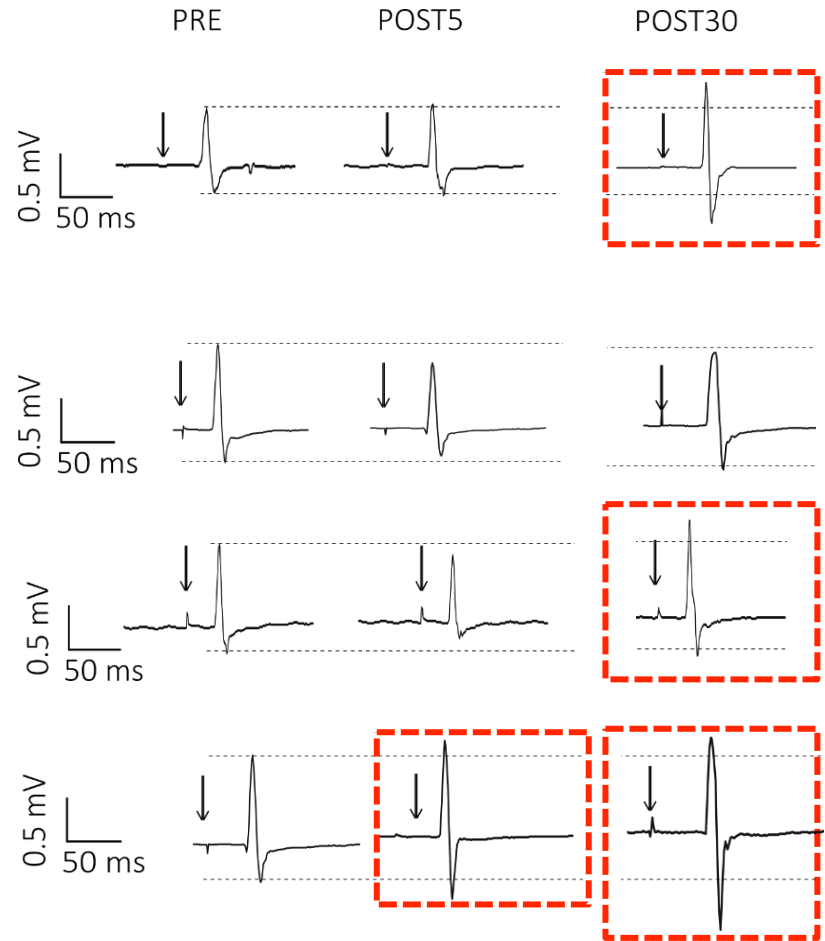


Exercise alone

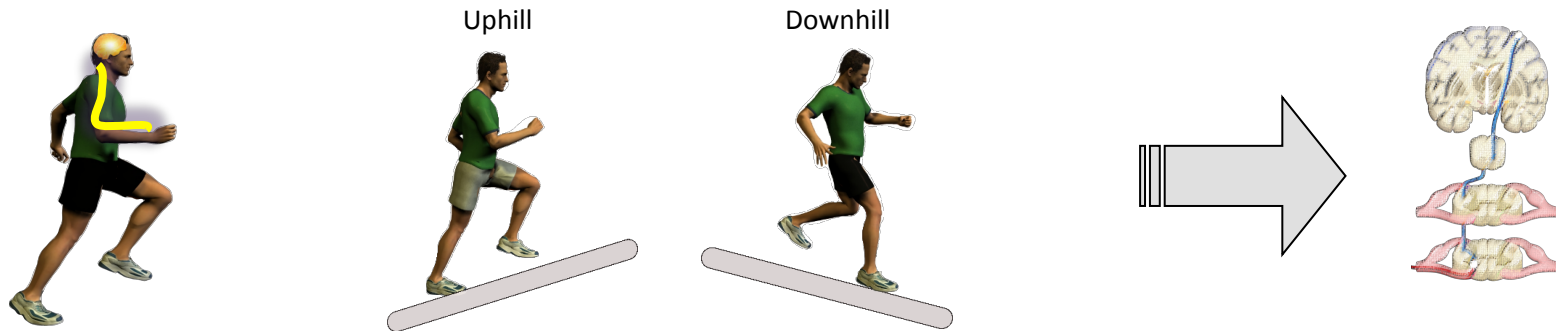
Exercise +  
PAS

Exercise alone

Exercise + PAS



# Changes in cortico-spinal excitability following uphill versus downhill treadmill exercise (**non-exercised muscle**)



## *Summary*

- ✓ Sub-maximal non-fatiguing locomotor exercise on a treadmill affects CS excitability within a delayed period of 30-min
- ✓ The predominant mode of muscle contraction does not influence the CS excitability changes
- ✓ Specific neural changes exist in uphill compared to downhill exercises as highlighted by different responses when exercises were followed by a facilitating PAS25 protocol

# Main limit of these works

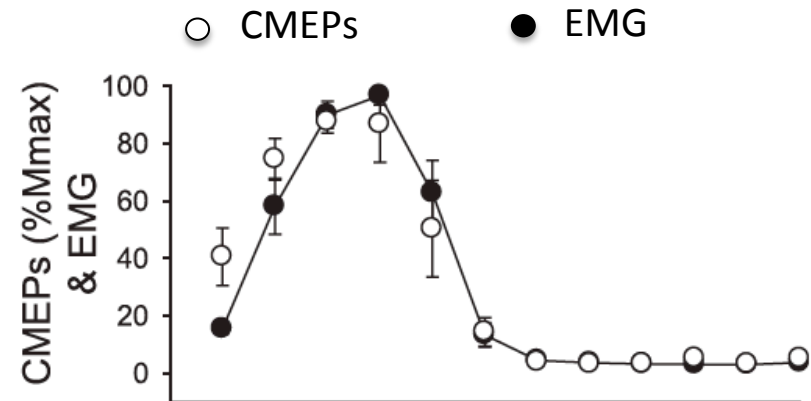
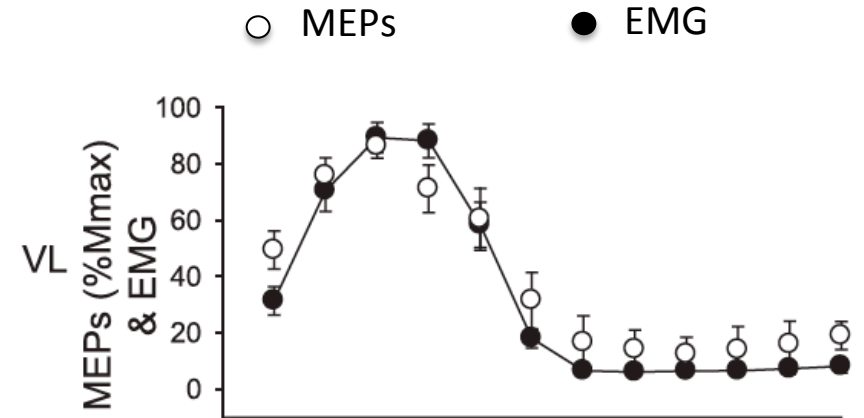
Changes in corticospinal excitability are examined **after** exercise and for **different** movements (i.e. isometric contraction)

→ Corticospinal changes **during** the whole body exercise ?

# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during exercise



Non-fatiguing exercise

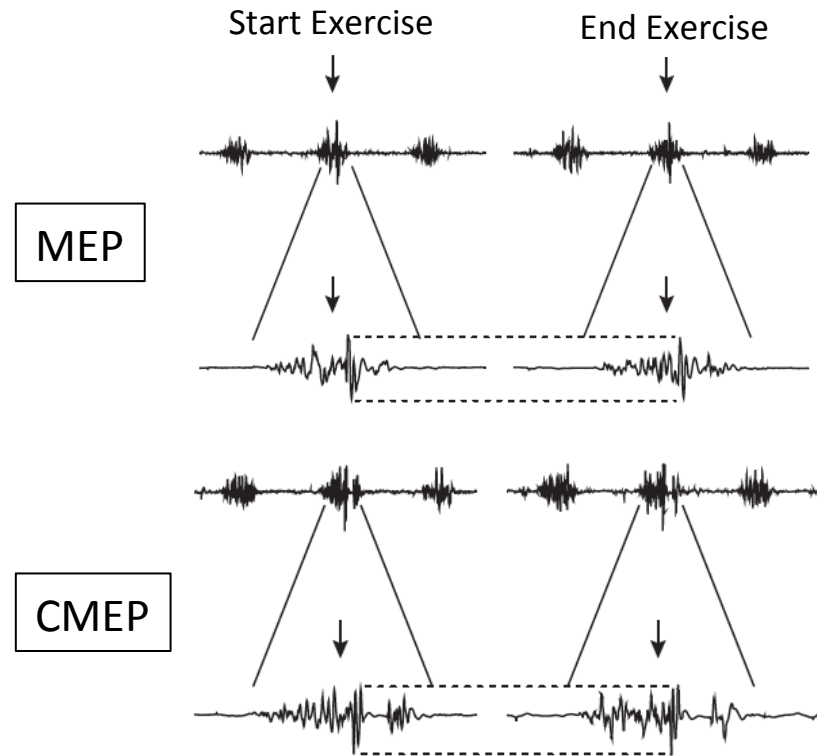


*Sidhu et al. (2011)*

# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during fatiguing exercise

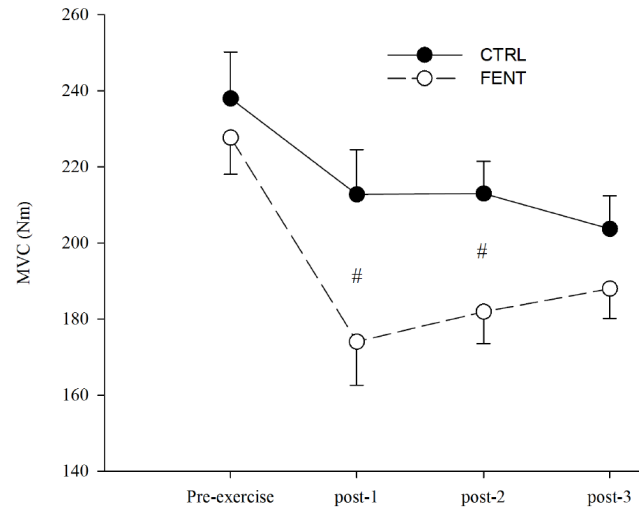


**Fatiguing exercise**  
80%  $W_{peak}$  to exhaustion

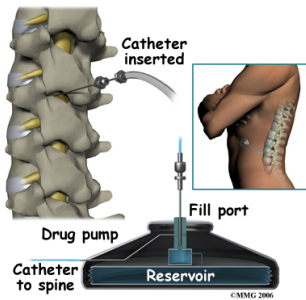


MEPs and CMEPs remained unchanged  
during the fatiguing trial

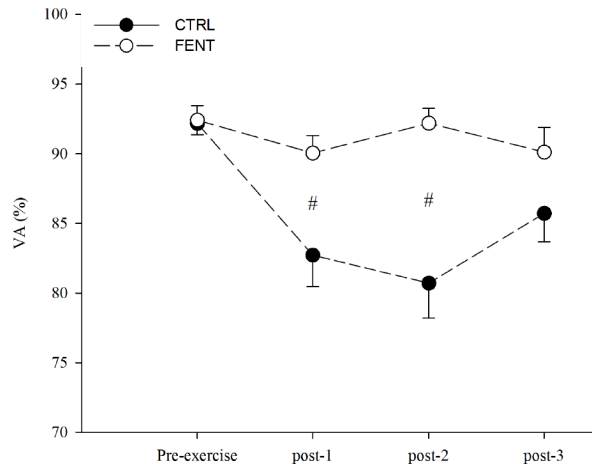
# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during fatiguing exercise



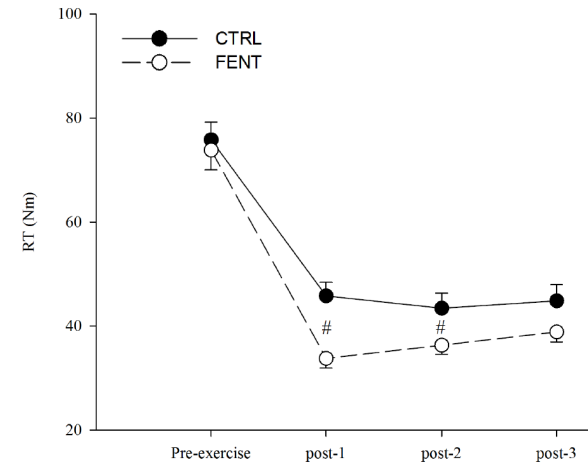
**Fatiguing exercise**  
with lumbar intrathecal fentanyl  
(FENT) impairing feedback from leg  
muscle afferents



## Central fatigue



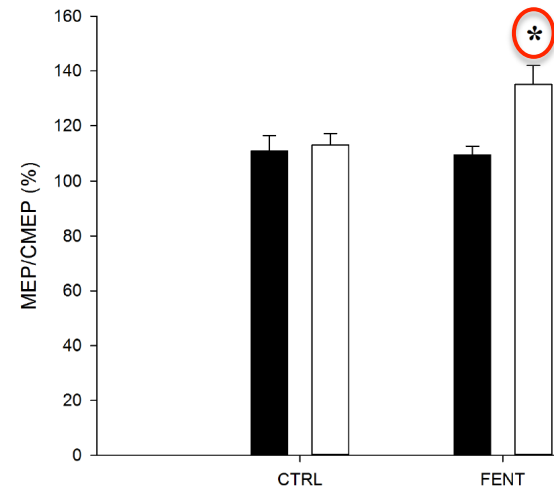
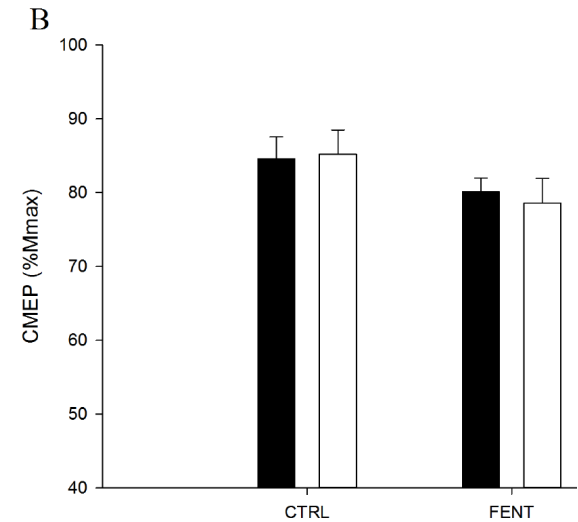
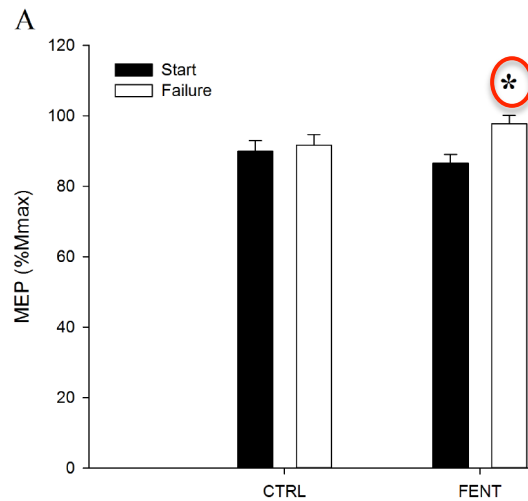
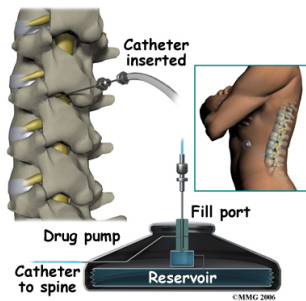
## Peripheral fatigue



# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during fatiguing exercise

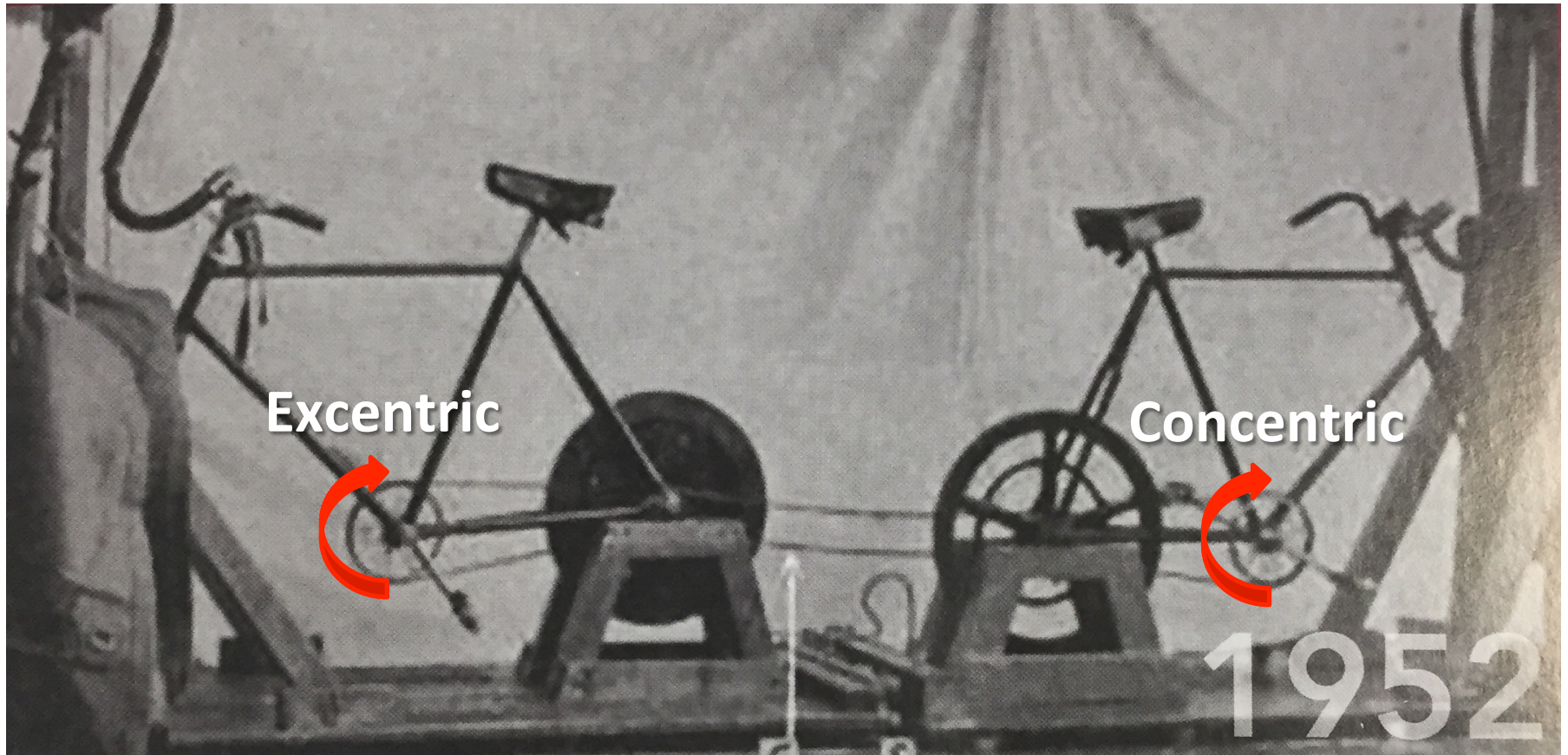


**Fatiguing exercise**  
with (FENT) /without (CTRL)



Group III/IV muscle afferents disfacilitate/inhibit the motor cortex and promote central fatigue

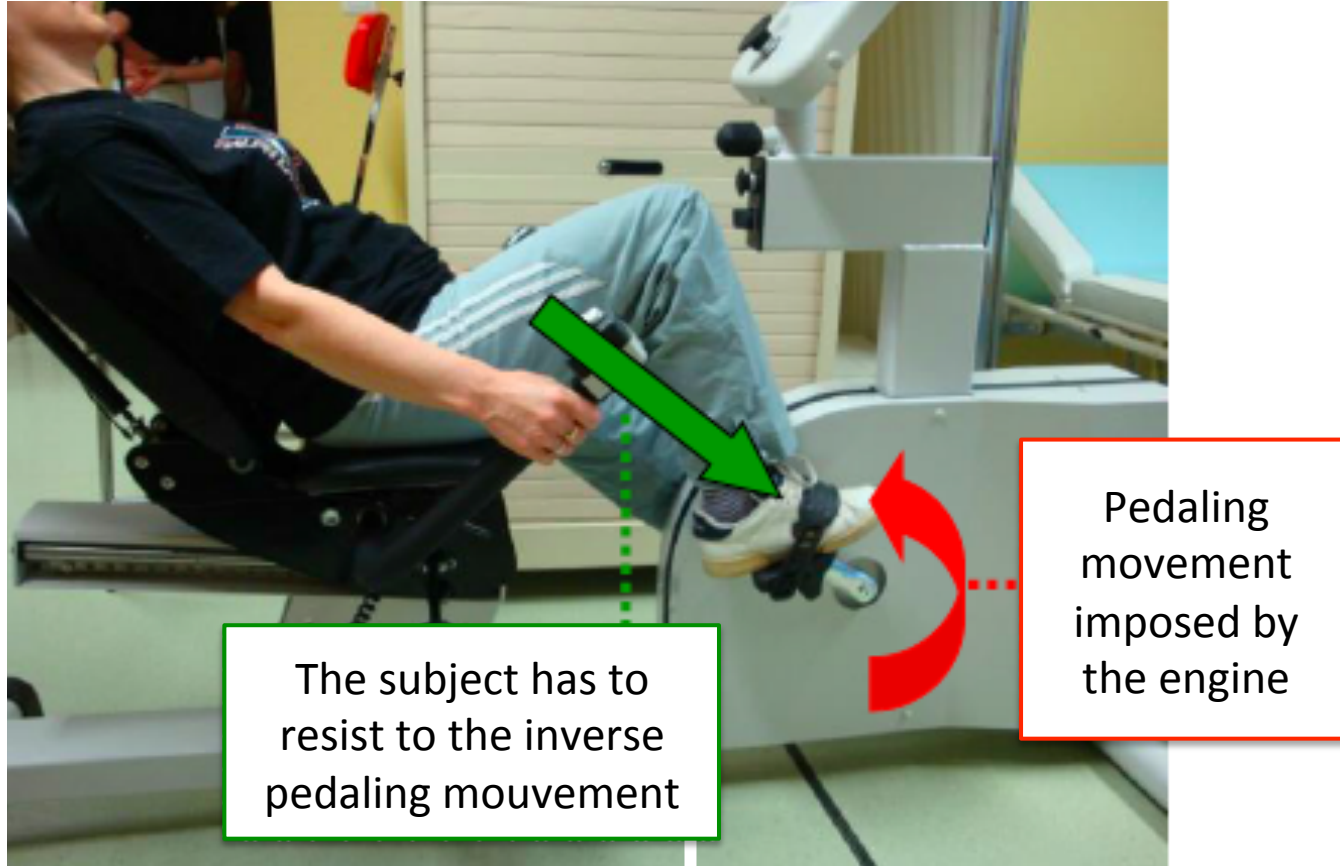
# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during eccentric vs concentric cycling exercise



*Abbott (1952)*

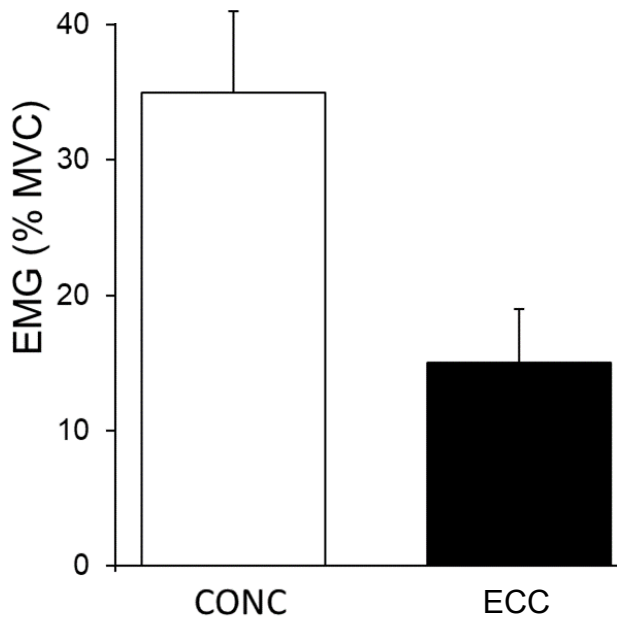


# Evaluation of corticospinal excitability during eccentric vs concentric cycling exercise

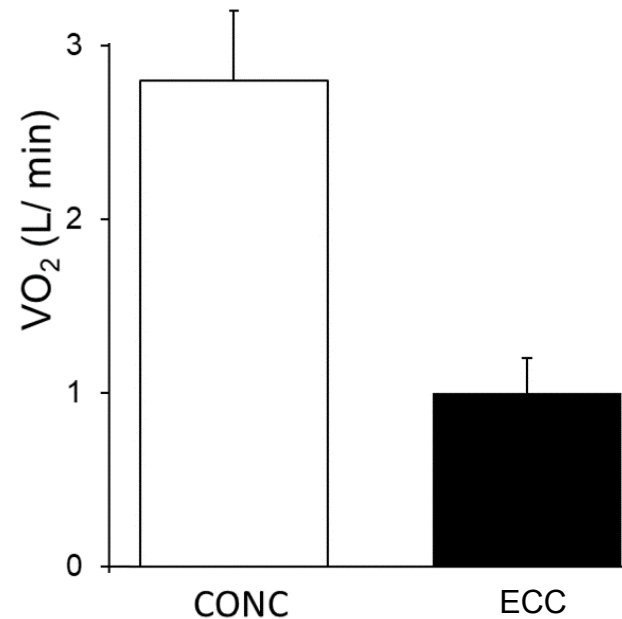


# Physiological characteristics of eccentric pedaling

## Muscle activation

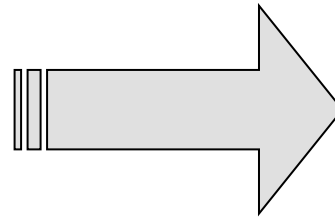


## Cardiorespiratory response

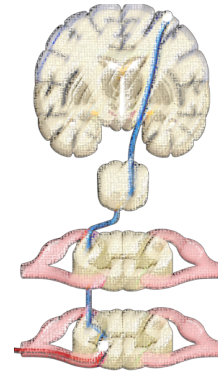


For the same level of torque

# Changes in corticospinal excitability **after and during** eccentric vs concentric cycling exercise



?

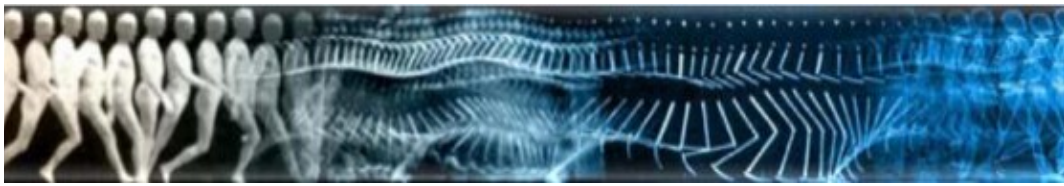


PhD thesis of Pierre Clos (in progress)

# Changes in CS excitability after whole body exercise

## Take home message

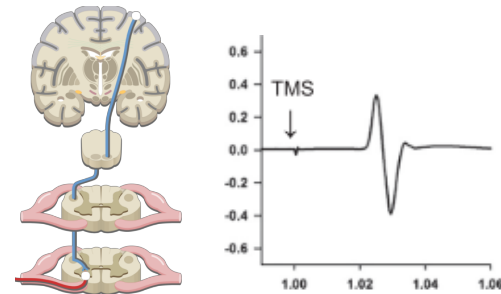
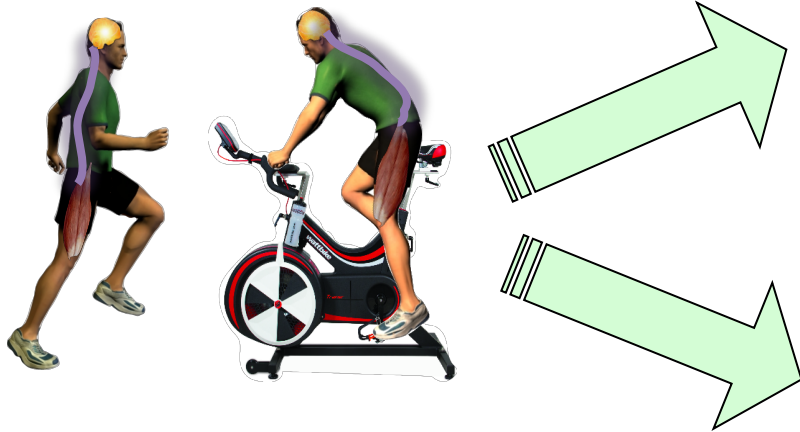
- ☑ Fatiguing whole body exercise is characterized by changing processes simultaneously facilitating and inhibiting the CS pathway.
- ☑ Unchanged net CS excitability  $\neq$  Absence of change  
Counterbalance of excitatory and inhibitory processes  
(e.g. ↓Motor cortical excitability and ↑central motor drive)
- ☑ Locomotor exercise enhance CS excitability in a non-exercised muscle.
- ☑ The mode of muscle contraction influences the CS excitability changes.



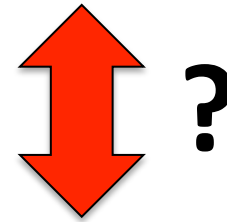
***THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR ATTENTION***

*Romuald LEPERS*

# Remaining question



Corticospinal excitability



Cognitive functions

## Others hypothesis :

- Hemodynamic  
(e.g. cerebral blood flow)
- Hormones

