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Original Research

Postexercise Cooling Rates in 2 Cooling Jackets

Carly Brade, BSc (Hons)¹, Brian Dawson, PhD¹, Karen Wallman, PhD¹, and Ted Polglaze, MPE²

¹School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, The University of Western Australia, Crawley, Western Australia

²Western Australian Institute of Sport, Claremont, Western Australia

Abstract

Context: Cooling jackets are a common method for removing stored heat accumulated during exercise. To date, the efficiency and practicality of different types of cooling jackets have received minimal investigation.

Objective: To examine whether a cooling jacket containing a phase-change material (PC17) results in more rapid postexercise cooling than a gel cooling jacket and a no-jacket (control) condition.

Design: Randomized, counterbalanced design with 3 experimental conditions.

Setting: Participants exercised at 75% V'o₂max workload in a hot climate chamber (temperature = 35.0 ± 1.4 °C, relative humidity = 52 ± 4 %) for 30 minutes, followed by postexercise cooling for 30 minutes in cool laboratory conditions (ambient temperature = 24.9 ± 1.8 °C, relative humidity = $39\% \pm 10\%$).

Patients or Other Participants: Twelve physically active men (age = 21.3 ± 1.1 years, height = 182.7 ± 7.1 cm, body mass = 76.2 ± 9.5 kg, sum of 6 skinfolds = 50.5 ± 6.9 mm, body surface area = 1.98 ± 0.14 m², V^o0₂max = 49.0 ± 7.0 mL·kg⁻¹·min⁻¹) participated.

Intervention(s): Three experimental conditions, consisting of a PC17 jacket, a gel jacket, and no jacket.

Main Outcome Measure(s): Core temperature (T_C) , mean skin temperature (T_{Sk}) , and T_C cooling rate (°C/min).

Results: Mean peak T_C postexercise was 38.49 ± 0.42 °C, 38.57 ± 0.41 °C, and 38.55 ± 0.40 °C for the PC17 jacket, gel jacket, and control conditions, respectively.

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No differences were observed in peak T $_{\rm C}$ cooling rates among the PC17 jacket (0.038 ± 0.007°C/min), gel jacket (0.040 ± 0.009°C/min), and control (0.034 ± 0.010°C/min, P > .05) conditions. Between trials, no differences were calculated for mean T $_{\rm Sk}$ cooling.

Conclusions: Similar cooling rates for all 3 conditions indicate that there is no benefit associated with wearing the PC17 or gel jacket.

Keywords: PC17, hyperthermia, core temperature, skin temperature

Karen Wallman, PhD, School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, The University of Western Australia, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, Western Australia 6009, e-mail: kwallman@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

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