

# Cerebral oxygenation and cognitive performance under acute normobaric hypoxia

## 01 INTRODUCTION

► **Altitude hypoxia** can degrade executive functions and associated behavioral responses in fighter pilots and so be at the origin of accidents in flight.

► **Working Memory (WM)** is impaired during exposure to hypoxia beyond 3000m (Malle et al., 2013)

► **Cerebral oxygenation responses** are correlated to cognitive performance during hypoxia (Williams et al., 2019)

### Purpose

Identify the effects of acute exposure in normobaric hypoxia on cerebral oxygenation and cognitive performance during a working memory task

## 02 METHODS

Normoxia | Hypoxia  
FiO<sub>2</sub> = 21 % | FiO<sub>2</sub> = 11.3%

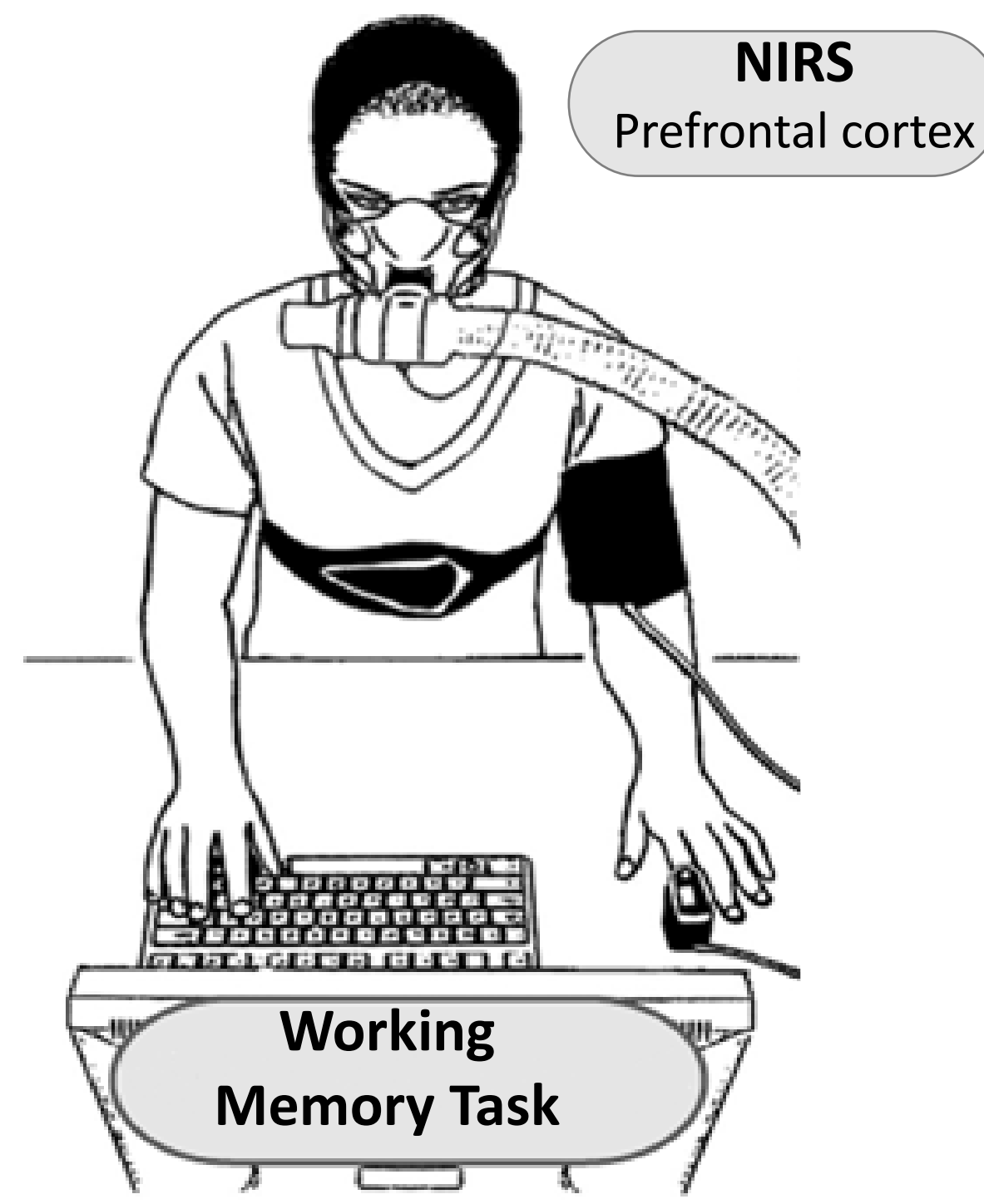


Fig.1: Experimental set-up

### Participants:

- 10 healthy adults attended 2 randomized sessions:
- 1 normoxia (N)
- 1 hypoxia (H)

### Design (Fig.1):

- 9 blocks of 49 stimuli of a WM task (2-back)
- N session: 9 blocks under N
- H session: 2 blocks N (T1) → 3 blocks up to H (T2) → 4 blocks H (T3)

### Variables:

- Cerebral oxygenation (PortaLite, Artinis; 10Hz): oxygenated (O<sub>2</sub>Hb) and desoxygenated (HHb) blood
- Working memory performance and reaction time (RT)
- Nasa-TLX (subjective questionnaire)

## RESULTS 03

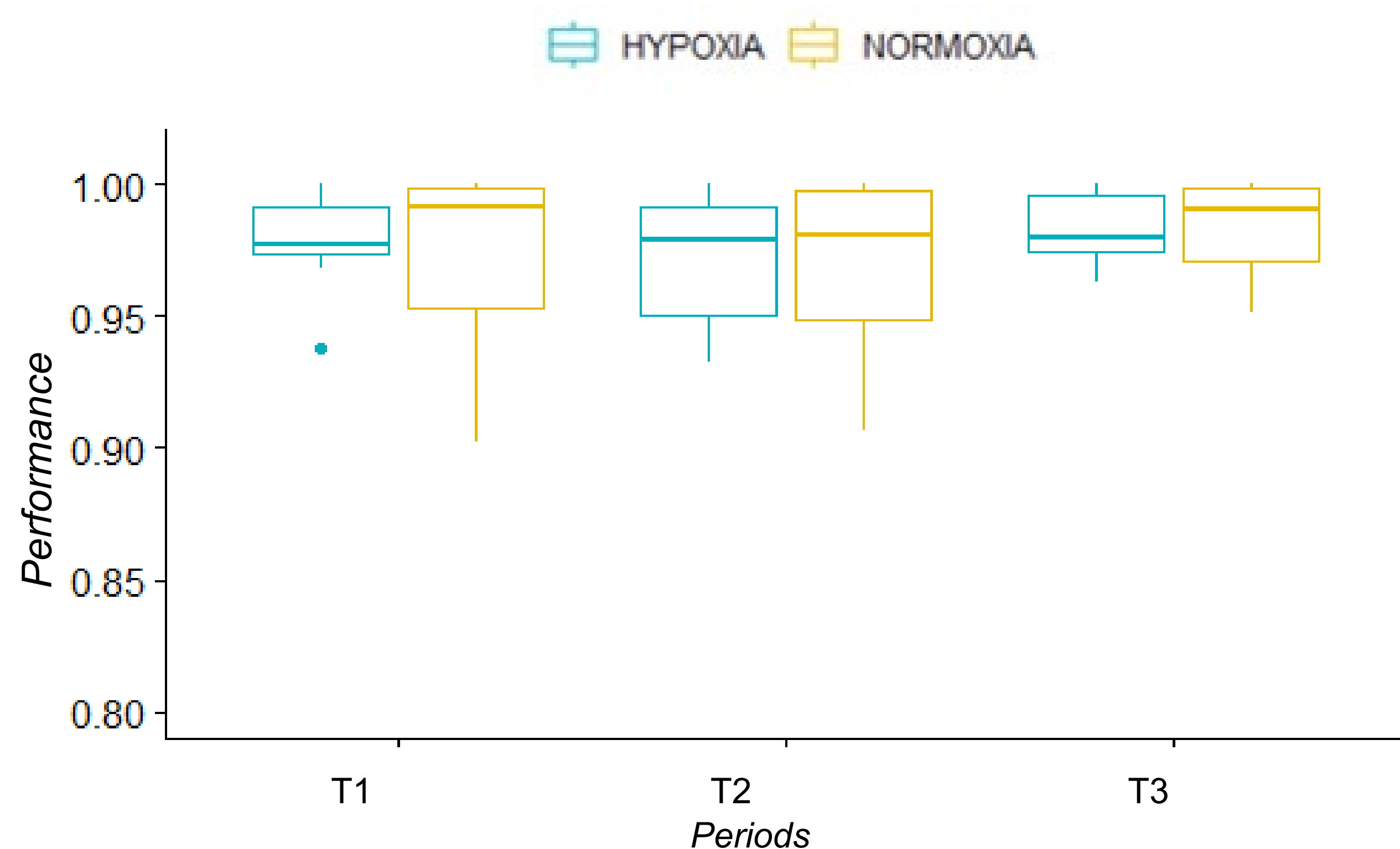


Fig.2: Performance of Working Memory task depending on condition (H vs N) and time periods

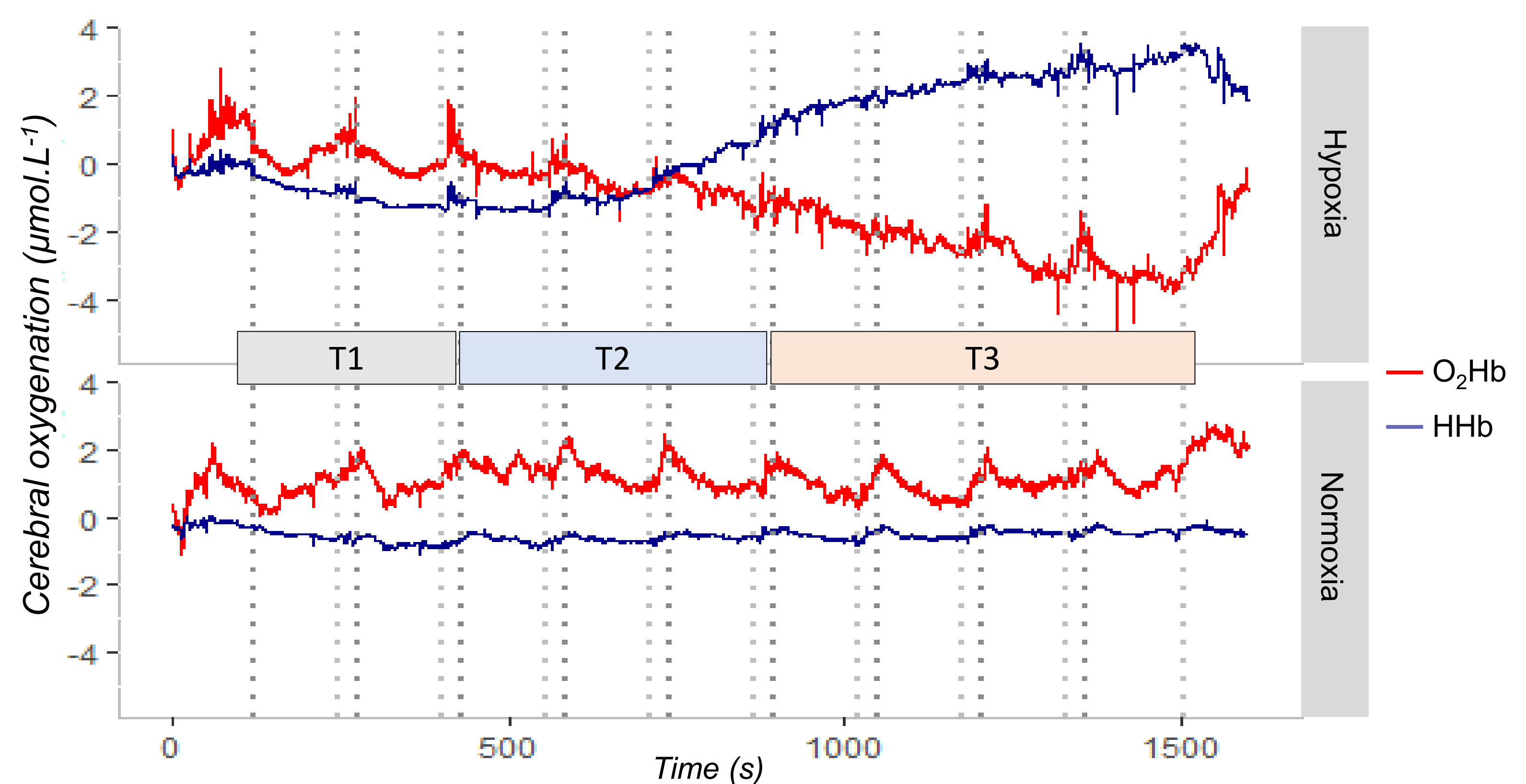


Fig.3: Cerebral oxygenation under N and H during the cognitive task

### IN BRIEF

#### Working Memory (Fig.2)

- No difference of condition (H / N) on performance and RT
- No difference of time on performance and RT

#### Cerebral oxygenation (Fig.3)

- Difference between N and H on O<sub>2</sub>Hb and HHb
- ↘ O<sub>2</sub>Hb and ↗ HHb with time in H

#### NASA-TLX

- Hypoxia ↗ perceptive workload (p < .05)

## 04 CONCLUSION

► Hypoxia (~5000m) induced reduction in cerebral oxygenation but not with cognitive performance.

The difficulty of WM might be too low in altering the cognitive performance.

► Other executive functions must be taken in consideration (e.g., inhibition and selective attention with the Stroop task)

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> EuroMov Digital Health in Motion, Univ Montpellier, IMT Mines Alès, Montpellier, France

<sup>2</sup> Semaxone, Rochefort du Gard (30650), France

### References

- Malle C, et al. (2013). Aviat Space Environ Med. DOI: 10.3357/ASEM.3482.2013
- Williams TB, et al. (2019). Exp Physio. DOI: 10.1113/EP087647

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