

# Unveiling the shadows - substance use among para-athletes: a qualitative study with Swiss elite para-athletes

## Low levels of substance use, but differences related to...

- On/off-season
- Sports discipline
- Time of entrance into professional sports



- Professionalization
  - More doping controls
  - Healthier lifestyle and focus on marginal gains
  - Increased media interest & athlete as role model



## Perceived connections between substance use and para-sports...

- Negative effect on athletic performance
- Negative correlation with professionalization
- Increased risk of health issues and injuries



- Stress and negative emotions
- Physical pain
- Different backgrounds (lifestyle and consumption habits before accident/illness)

