

Frequently asked questions about Para Weightlifting

Is para weightlifting an official sport in Canada? And if so, why is it not public knowledge?

Para weightlifting is not an official sport and the term is used only to distinguish it from para powerlifting which is a recognized para sport in Canada. WCHM supports the inclusion of adaptive athletes, thirty years or older, who wish to be considered as masters para weightlifters, as members of its sports organization.

Is there a para weightlifting organization in Canada?

Since the IWF (International Weightlifting Federation) does not acknowledge any form of adaptive weightlifting, nor does any of its National Weightlifting Federations, which includes Weightlifting Canada Haltérophilie, there is no official para weightlifting organization in Canada.

Please see the WCHM **“Position Statement on Canadian Provincial and International Para Weightlifting.”**

Why is WCHM welcoming para weightlifters?

WCHM is aware that there are adaptive athletes in the community who are training with weights and would welcome the opportunity to compete as para weightlifters. However, competing in the Bench Press, a powerlifting contested lift, in para powerlifting, is not what these adaptive athletes are looking for. As adaptive athletes discover that WCHM will allow them to compete as para weightlifters at our annual Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships, they can be assured that their competitive training has a purpose. The only stipulation is that athletes must be at least thirty years old to belong to Weightlifting Canada Haltérophilie Masters (WCHM), and they must also belong to their respective provincial weightlifting associations that have made accommodations to include adaptive athletes.

How will para weightlifters qualify for the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships?

Para weightlifters will be required to post a total achieved at a local or provincial weightlifting competition exceeding the 50% of our CMWC qualifying total. If a competition was not available, the athlete or coach can submit a video of their athletes' lifts and a written explanation of the athletes' limitations so that WCHM Para Weightlifting advisors can assess whether accommodations can be made.

Does an adaptive athlete need to join their Provincial Weightlifting Association? The WCHM bylaws allow adaptive athletes to make that choice for themselves. However, Provinces that include adaptive athletes in their competitions, particularly their Provincial Masters Championships, then Provincial Association membership is required.

Can a para weightlifter break Canadian Masters Records? Yes. There are eight para weightlifting categories in which athletes can contest or set records. There will be no minimum requirements as the first para weightlifters will set those records with their successful lifts. A description of these categories can be found in our website's para weightlifting section. ***“Canadian Masters Para Weightlifting Records.”***

Do coaches of para weightlifters require special certification? In Canada, coaches are certified by Coaches Association of Canada. There is no official focus on para weightlifting, so it will be up to the potential adaptive athlete coaches to request extra guidance and training. The training of coaches to meet the needs of adaptive athletes is the responsibility of Weightlifting Canada Haltérophilie.

Do technical officials assigned to adjudicate the lifts of para weightlifters require any special certification? No, they do not. WCHM has developed a guide called ***“Para Weightlifting - Directives for Technical Officials.”*** Para Weightlifters will have some modifications made to their lifts, depending on their Para Weightlifting Category. These modifications are easily understood and implemented by astute Technical Officials.

Under whose jurisdiction or affiliation is para weightlifting?

Since para weightlifting is not yet a recognized para sport, it is not under any other organization’s jurisdiction, not even ours at the Canadian Masters. We are simply inviting adaptive athletes to lift in our National Competition as para weightlifters. As the number of para weightlifters grow nationally and internationally, that group of athletes will need to determine how they wish to be organized. Please see the document titled ***“Position Statement on Canadian Provincial and International Para Weightlifting.”***

Since the modifications to the lifts performed by para weightlifters are relatively new, how will we know if the lifts’ technical requirements will work?

To be totally honest, we hope they will work. There may be flaws exposed as technical officials adjudicate the lifts, or as coaches prepare their athletes. That is the wonderful aspect of trying to grow a new sport...we learn and improve through our errors.

Are all physical impairments acceptable to be an adaptive athlete for para weightlifting purposes?

WCHM and its Para Weightlifting Advisory Group have developed a document called ***“Canadian Masters Standards of Eligible Impairments – Olympic-Style Para Weightlifting.”*** This document explains which impairments qualify for the Health Care Professional (***“Health Care Professional Clearance Form”***) to recommend an appropriate para weightlifting category.

Do Para Weightlifters compete separately from able bodied weightlifters at the Canadian Masters Weightlifting Championships?

Para weightlifters will compete beside able-bodied athletes in their respective sessions. Modifications to the rules are made at that time. At international masters weightlifting events that invite and include adaptive athletes as para weightlifters, every attempt will be made to have athletes compete in the appropriate age and bodyweight session alongside able-bodied weightlifters.

Is there a sub-group of para weightlifters within WCHM?

There is no sub-group of any athletes within WCHM. WCHM does have a Para Weightlifting Advisory Group that works with the President to ensure that all rules, regulations, forms etc. are appropriately and respectfully worded. A ***Director for the Advancement of Para Weightlifting*** also works closely with the President.

Is any personal information I provide to WCHM protected?

The only additional information that is required from the adaptive athlete is the name of the para weightlifting category in which they wish to compete at the CMWC. There is a ***Health Care Professional Clearance Form*** in which an authorized Health Care Professional will give their approval for which of the para weightlifting categories is the best fit for the athlete. WCHM does not request, nor does it receive, any personal medical information from the Health Care Professional. Information provided in the membership registration process and the registration for the CMWC, is protected under WCHM's **"Privacy of Information."**