



IMPACT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS, INFECTIONS AND VACCINATION STATUS ON UK RUNNERS

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Background

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted physical activity levels.

Running participation became more popular

- To help maintain a healthy body weight
- To reduce the risk of severe Covid-19 symptoms
- To improve overall mental and physical health

Lockdown restrictions and the 'Work From Home' directive also increased the time available for fitness activity participation.

Aim

To compare the impact on running activities of the third Covid-19 lockdown in the UK, during the phased exit from lockdown and once all restrictions ended.

Methods

- Data was collected from UK community runners, joggers and Nordic Walkers as part of 'Running Through', a global prospective cohort study between February to December 2021.
- Baseline data was collected via electronic survey; Covid-19 and injury status via weekly emails; and training data shared via smartwatches and mobile phone apps.
- Lockdown categories chosen were determined based on UK Covid-19 restrictions:
 - **Full Lockdown:** Pre-8 March 2021
 - **Tiered/Phased Lockdown:** 8 March–18 July 2021
 - **No Restrictions:** 19 July 2021–8 December 2021
- Mean, standard deviation (SD) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated for weekly distance (km/week) and running pace (min/km), and adjusted for injury status, Covid-19 infection and Covid-19 vaccination status using linear regression.

Results

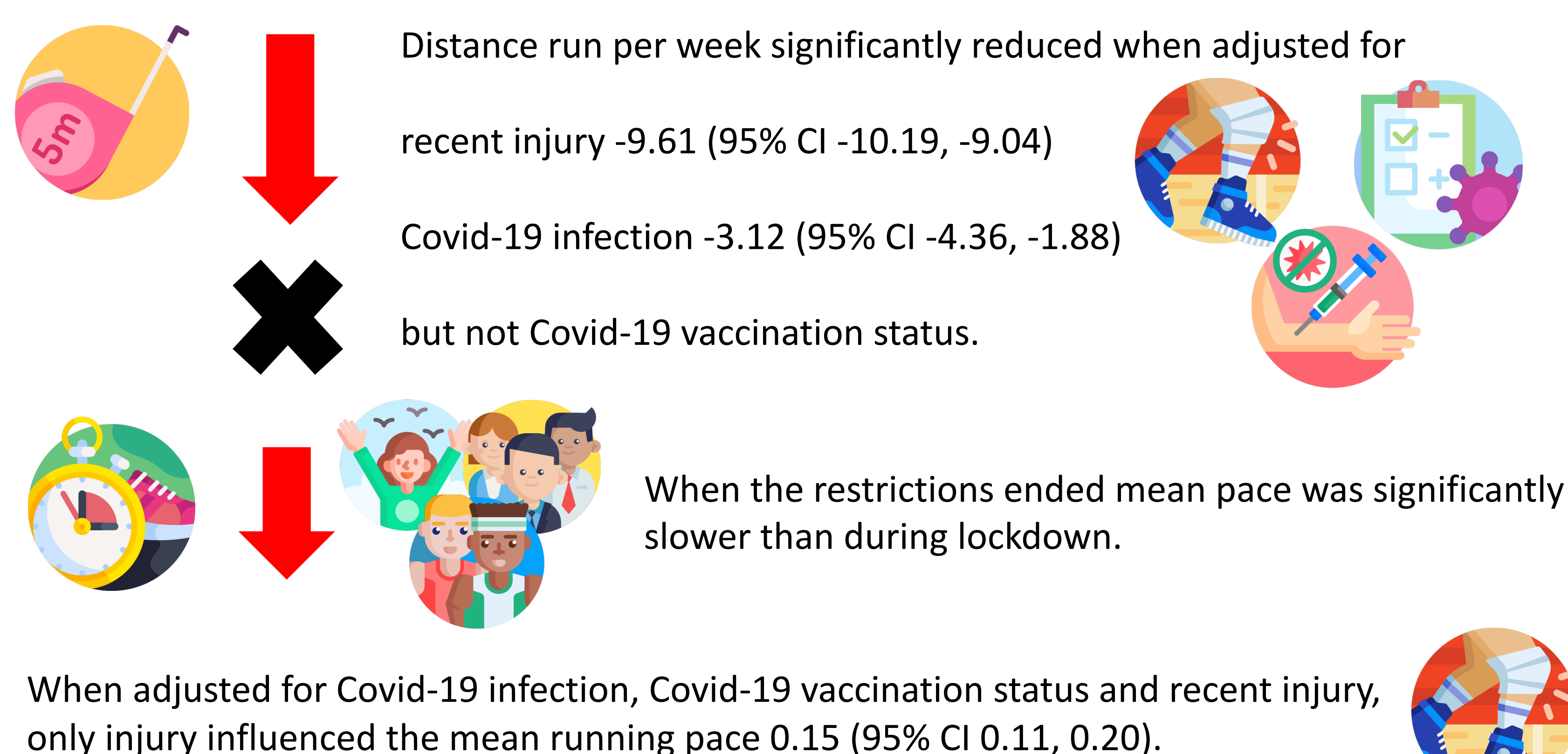
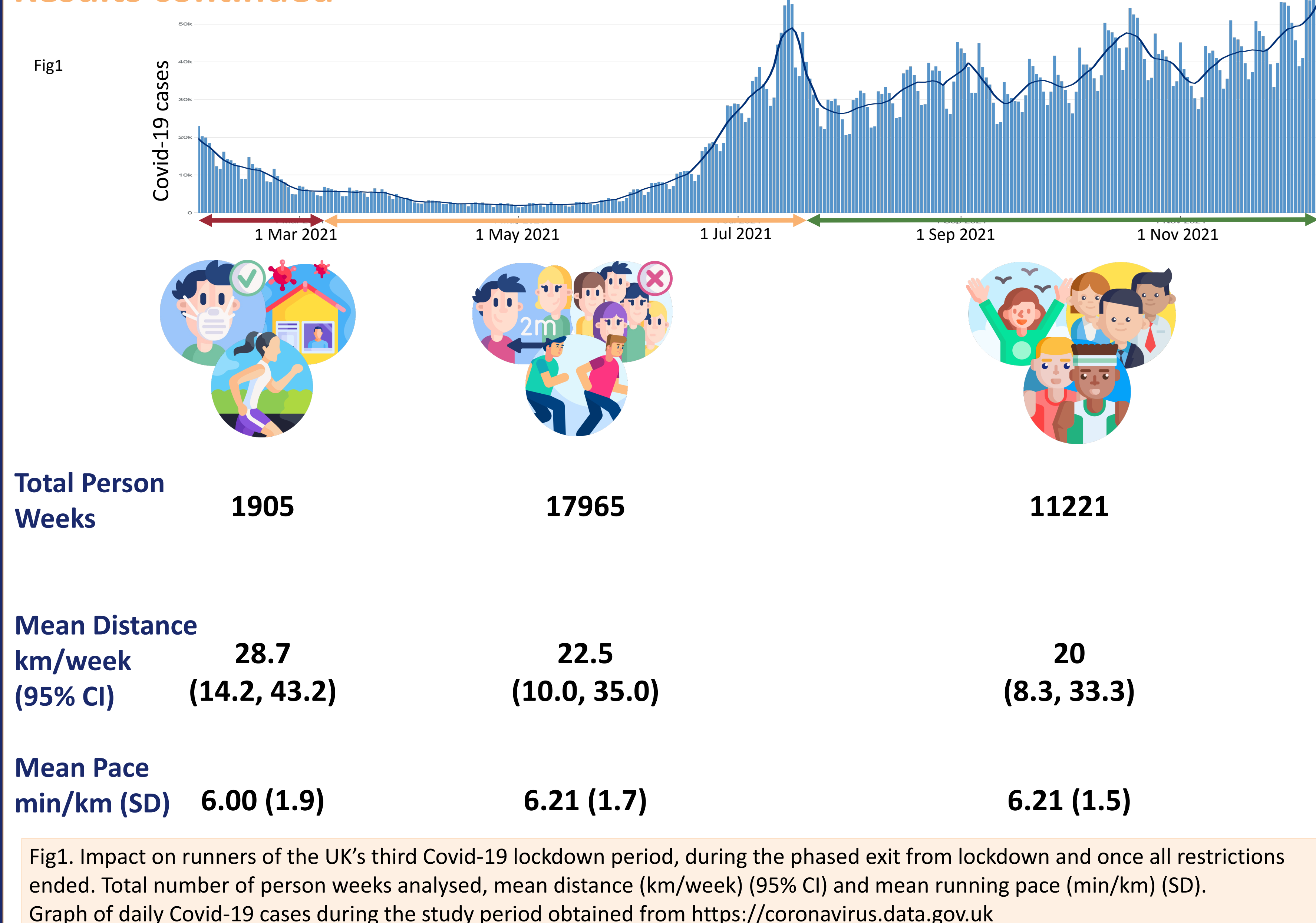
Baseline characteristics

- 1671 participants
- 57% female
- Mean age 50.2 years (SD 12.5)
- Mean BMI 24.2 (SD 3.9)

Overall

- 31568 total person weeks analysed
- Mean distance: 22.1 km/week (95% CI 9.3, 35.0)
- Mean pace: 6.2 minute/km (SD 1.4)

Results continued



Conclusions

- Mean distance run was greater during the winter lockdown rather than during the restriction-free summer.
- Covid-19 cases increased as restrictions ended and Covid-19 infections significantly influenced reduced weekly distance.
- Covid-19 vaccinations did not significantly impact running pace or distance.

Funded By

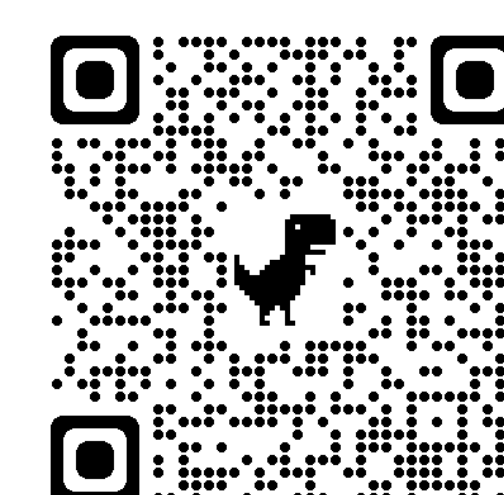


Thank you to all participants and Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) members of the Running Through study for their involvement and continued sharing of their training data.

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