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Study Website: RunningThrough.org
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Study Title: The impact of COVID-19 infection on runners: risks, recovery and complications

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research Ethics Reference: FMHS 113-1120
Version 2.1 Date: 06/01/2021

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us anything that is not clear.

What is the purpose of the research?

COVID-19 is affecting all our lives. Through changes to our working, family or social circumstances, the current pandemic is having a great effect on our mental and physical health. It is also anticipated that many keen adult runners in the general population will be affected either by contracting COVID-19 or through a significant change in their running activities.

Through inviting members of the running community to share their training data, we hope to examine changes in running habits associated with the current restrictions.

Understanding of the relationship between COVID-19 and other common viral infections, changes in the running activities and early symptoms of poor recovery is needed to help understand the impact of the pandemic on running communities. If found to be beneficial, running could then also be prescribed to the wider population.

The lack of a regular racing season will also provide a unique opportunity to investigate patterns of injuries in runners. Currently, it is not clear what training regime changes are linked with an increased risk of injury. Some suggest that changes of running intensity rather the weekly distance, as well as common viral infections, have strong links to injury.

The Running Through research team aims to use data provided by the running community to enable the production of data-driven recommendations regarding training load, intensity or infection recovery. Finally, many previously active adults who have tested positive for COVID-19 have reported experiencing prolonged tiredness, alongside cardiac or respiratory symptoms during the recovery period. This is often described as 'Long COVID'.

Running Through will monitor runners return to training following recovery from COVID-19 and the impact on subsequent physical activity, training performance and cardiorespiratory complications.

The research team aims to identify characteristics of those runners who are at higher risk of developing symptomatic COVID-19 infection, developing common injuries and subsequently poor recovery after the infection.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to take part because you are a user of Garmin, Strava, MyFitnessPal, Fitbit or WattsonBlue, or you are a member of a running club who engages in regular running activities and aged 18 years or over.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide if you want to take part in this research study. If you wish to proceed and participate in this study, your consent to be involved in the study and questionnaire will be completed online. However, you would still be free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason and without any negative consequences, by advising the researchers of this decision. This would not affect your legal rights.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you wish to take part, then the questionnaire will start automatically after you complete the consent form on the next screen. If you do not wish to take part, please feel free to close this window. Please note, if you chose to participate in this study, you would not be required to change any part of your routine or lifestyle.

The questionnaire has four sections which you will be required to answer. It should take you about 5 minutes to complete. No background knowledge is required. The information asked will be used for research purposes only.

We will request an email address from you to enable us to contact you further as necessary with weekly questionnaires updating us with your health status. If you indicate, you have a new injury you may be invited to complete an additional survey about this. You can withdraw from the study and unsubscribe from these emails at any time using the link at the bottom of the emails.

We would also like to invite you to continue participating in our longer study by giving permission for us to have access to your data which you already record through Garmin, Strava, My Fitness Pal, Fitbit or Wattson Blue. This may include activities, location, heart rate and related metrics, calories burned, sleep patterns and other health or personal data.

All information will be kept confidential within the immediate research team and NOT be shared with third parties.

Are there any risks in taking part?

As there will be no changes to your existing training or lifestyle, there are no anticipated risks to taking part in this research study.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in this research but your contribution may help to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the running communities and enable the production of data-based recommendations regarding training load, intensity or infection recovery.

What happens to the data provided?

All data are kept on password-protected databases sitting on a restricted access computer system with only the research team having access to the research data.

All research data and records will be stored for a minimum of 12 years after publication or public release of the work of the research.

We would like your permission to use anonymised data in future studies and to share the study research data (e.g. in online databases) with other researchers in other Universities and organisations both inside and outside the European Union. This would be used for research in health and social care. Sharing research data is important to allow peer scrutiny, re-use (and therefore avoiding duplication of research) and to understand the bigger picture in particular areas of research. All personal information that could identify you will be removed or changed before any information is shared with other researchers or results are made public.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

Even after you have signed the consent form, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving any reason and without your legal rights being affected.

If you withdraw, we will no longer collect any information about you or from you, but we will keep the anonymous research data that has already been collected and stored as we are not allowed to tamper with study records. This information may have already been used in some analyses and may still be used in the final study analyses.

Who will know that I am taking part in this research?

Data will be used for research purposes only and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Under UK Data Protection laws the University is the Data Controller (legally responsible for the data security) and the Chief Investigator of this study (named above) is the Data Custodian (manages access to the data). This means we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited as we need to manage your information in specific ways to comply with certain laws and for the research to be reliable and accurate. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible.

You can find out more about how we use your information and read our privacy notice at:

https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/utilities/privacy.aspx/

Designated individuals of the University of Nottingham may be given access to the data for monitoring and/or audit of the study to ensure we are complying with guidelines.

With your consent, we will keep your personal information on a secure database in order to contact you for future studies.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Results from the study will be published in various sources, including PhD thesis, MSc dissertations, and academic peer-reviewed journals. Also, we hope to present this work at academic conferences both locally and internationally. No participants will not be identified in any report/publication.

Who has reviewed this study?

All research involving people is looked at by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Reference number: FMHS 113-112).

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being organised by the University of Nottingham and is being funded by an EU grant: TECHNOPOLIS CONSULTING GROUP BELGIUM (TGB), EOSCsecretariat.eu.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this project, please speak to the researcher Natasha Jumbu or the Principal Investigator Dr Stefan Kluzek who will do their best to answer your query. The researcher should acknowledge your concern and give you an indication of how he/she intends to deal with it. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you can do this by contacting the FMHS Research Ethics Committee Administrator, Faculty Hub, Medicine and Health Sciences, E41, E Floor, Medical School, Queen's Medical Centre Campus, Nottingham University Hospitals, Nottingham, NG7 2UH or via E-mail: FMHS-ResearchEthics@nottingham.ac.uk.

Contact Details

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

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