



RCSI SCHOOL OF
PHYSIOTHERAPY



Guardian
Information
Leaflet

Training Load and Injury Risk in Leinster Schoolboys' Rugby - the SCRUM Study Phase 2

2022/23



Guardian Information Leaflet

Study title: Training load and injury risk in Schoolboys' Rugby - the SCRUM study Phase 2

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Your son is being invited to take part in a research study to be carried out at secondary schools in Leinster by researchers at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

Before you both decide whether or not you wish him to take part, you should read the information provided below carefully and, if you wish, discuss it with your family, friends or GP (doctor). Take time to ask questions – don't feel rushed and don't feel under pressure to make a quick decision.

You should clearly understand the risks and benefits of your son's participation in this study so that you can make a decision that is right for you both. This process is known as 'Informed Consent'. In order for your son to participate, we require his consent if he is 18 years or older. We require both your consent and his assent if your son is under 18. He does not have to take part in this study. You can both change your mind about his taking part in the study any time you like. Even if the study has started, you can still opt out. You don't have to give us a reason.

Why is this study being done?

Rates of injury in professional and club rugby are well documented internationally, but less attention has been focused on the schoolboys' level. During the 2019 –20 season, 17 schools involved in the Senior and

Vinnie Murray Cups participated in our first phase of the SCRUM study, which recruited 501 players and captured 20 weeks of the season. We found injury incidence (or rate) of almost **20 injuries per 1000 match hours**, leading to a median time loss of 22 days. Openside flankers and inside centres experienced the most injuries during matches. Although injuries to the head and shoulder were most common, injuries to the knee and ankle resulted in more time loss from playing. Training injury incidence was less than **1 per 1000**, with a shorter median time loss of 14 days. Across both matches and training, tackling was the match event in which most injuries happened. The most common illness recorded was respiratory tract infection. We also captured training load, with the aim of investigating to what extent it affected an individual player's injury risk, but we didn't receive enough data to thoroughly investigate this.

This second phase of the SCRUM study will prospectively capture the injury risk in schoolboys' rugby in all participating schools in Leinster across a full season, and additionally capture training load in the first 12 schools to volunteer (in order to support their data collection more closely), to explore this link between load and injury. Unlike SCRUM phase 1, players will now have access to a fortnightly summary of their training load throughout the season. In a recent focus group study, players told us that this would be of value to them, and likely foster better compliance with data collection. Studies such as the SCRUM study are a crucial step in the future development of injury prevention strategies, as well as optimising performance from season to season.

Who is organising and funding this study?

The SCRUM research team is made up of researchers from RCSI, in collaboration with Prof. John Quinlan (Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon, Tallaght University Hospital) and Mr. Cliff Beirne (Consultant Maxillofacial Surgeon, Sports Surgery Clinic, Santry). The principal investigators are Prof. Helen French and Louise Keating from the School of Physiotherapy, RCSI. Sarah Murphy is a co-investigator. Prof. Ronan Conroy (Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, RCSI) is also a member of the research team and Dr. Chris Bleakley (Ulster University) is acting as study consultant.

This study is funded by the IRFU Charitable Trust (IRFUCT).

Permission has been given for the study by the Leinster Rugby Schools Committee.

Why is my son being asked to take part?

Your son is being invited to participate as a player on the first or second team of his school's senior rugby squad for 2022-23. Every squad member is being invited to join this study.

How will the study be carried out?

All Leinster schools involved in senior competitions will be invited to participate in the SCRUM study Phase 2 which plans to cover one full rugby season from **September 2022 to end of their season**. This study will collect injury information covering training and matches from all Leinster schools during league fixtures and cup competitions (Senior Cup and Vinnie Murray Cup). This will require that players consent to their injuries being recorded only.

In 12 of participating schools, participating players will also be asked to record their weekly training load in a smartphone app, and will have access to fortnightly summaries of their load on the dashboard of the app.

What will happen to your son if you and he agree to his involvement?

At the beginning of the study, we will visit his school and collect information from players such as playing position, injury history, use of personal protective equipment, age when first started playing rugby and participation in other sports. **Adobe Acrobat sign and Kitman Lab's Athlete App** and or hardcopy questionnaire forms will be used to gather this information. We will also measure height and weight to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI).

If your son has a smartphone, he will be asked to download **Kitman Lab's Athlete App**, from the Apple or Android app store and a personal profile will be set up in the app (after consent/assent is gained). If he does not own a smartphone, he can participate using a tablet device stored at his school. Before he is cleared to use the app, we will also need your electronic consent, and this can be done via our study's website. You will need to submit your email address in order to provide verifiable access to DocuSign.com, to provide us with your consent. Once consent and your son's assent has been given, he will be given access to **Kitman Lab's Athlete App**. For the duration of the study, he will then be asked to log in at least once per week to provide his rate of perceived exertion (RPE) for each session attended and answer how well he slept after training and questions about mood, stress and fatigue.

We will also be collecting information about any injuries or illnesses that affect his ability to play rugby. If he misses any training or matches during the season due to illness or injury, a dedicated person at his school such as the team coach, physio or doctor, will send information about his absence to us using **Kitman Lab's Performance Medical web portal**. This will include diagnosis, severity, treatment and time loss from training and match play.

What are the benefits?

Your son's participation will benefit his team as the coaching staff will have real time access a summary of information about squad injuries, via the Kitman Lab's web-portal. If his school participates in training

load capture, he will also benefit by seeing a summary of his own training load a minimum of every fortnight throughout the season. The individual training load summaries will be shared via the **Kitman labs Athlete App** messaging platform. In addition, his coach will also receive a summary of the squad's training load, as well as have access to view individual load data. This combined information should help coaches plan next season's training activities to minimise injury and illness risk and allow your son to see his own individual training response during the season.

The top 3 players from each school who demonstrate the best engagement with **Kitman Lab's Athlete App** during the SCRUM study will be entered in to two prize draws for €100 voucher for Elvery's or Argos; one to be held before Christmas and the second, at the end of the season.

Once our study results are published, it will improve understanding of the demands and injury risk of schoolboys' rugby and will assist in the design of effective injury prevention strategies.

What are the risks?

There are no known risks to your son by participating in this study. Participation in this study will not affect his involvement in training and matches with his team.

Involvement in this study will only make a demand on his time to provide us with weekly information about training, well-being, injury, or illness, through **Kitman Lab's Athlete App**, which should take no longer than 5 minutes.

What if something goes wrong when taking part in this study?

Your son's involvement in this study will not affect his usual care pathway for dealing with injury or illness e.g., through the team doctor, physio and / or GP. As well as his injuries being reported to us (by his school's injury data collector) as part of this study, he should continue to report any injuries or illnesses that prevent him from playing to his coach / team physio / doctor as usual, to ensure he can access usual care pathways.

He will be free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Will it cost anything to take part?

There are no costs involved in participating in this study. **Kitman Lab's Athlete App** can be downloaded for free to Apple and Android phones. If your son does not own a smartphone, a tablet device containing the app will be available at his school for his weekly use.

Is the study confidential?

Yes – all information recorded during this study will remain completely confidential and the study's findings will be presented and published in summary form, ensuring no player can be identified. All information is stored in an encrypted and coded (pseudonymised) way on secure servers.

Data Protection Notice

Personal Data that we Process

We will collect and process the following personal data in connection with this study and **Kitman Lab's Athlete App** and / or **Kitman Lab's Performance Medicine web portal** and **Adobe Acrobat sign or hard copy questionnaire forms**:

- Personal details such as your name, your son's name, date of birth and your email addresses
- Details of his team, playing position, injury history, use of personal protective equipment, age when first started playing rugby and participation in other sports
- His training and match details
- Sensitive personal data relating to his health including injuries and illnesses affecting rugby participation, and general well-being i.e., stress, mood, sleep and fatigue.
- Information that we obtain relating to him from his team's injury data collector
- Any other personal information that he has provided directly to us e.g., via **Kitman Lab's Athlete App and Adobe Acrobat sign and or hard copy questionnaire forms**.

Purposes of Processing and Legal Basis

All personal data will be processed for the purposes of:

- Carrying out a research study to investigate training loads and injury risk in schoolboys' rugby in Leinster and explore if training loads are linked to injury and illness risk.
- Providing summary data to coaches and medical staff for the purposes of optimising training load and minimising injury and illness risk.

The legal basis for collecting and using personal data is your consent and falls under Article 6(1)(f) Legitimate Interests & Article 9(2)(j) Scientific Research purposes.

Who will our data be disclosed to?

We may disclose personal data to:

- Kitman Labs personnel in order to manage the app data
- Third parties who Kitman Labs engage to provide services in connection with their app and web portal
- Your son's school coach and medical staff (in summary form only)

Will our data be transferred abroad?

Your son's data will be stored on a secure server at RCSI, 123 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin after transfer from its initial source on secure cloud servers used by Kitman Labs in Ireland and the UK. A legal agreement is in place between RCSI and Kitman Labs to ensure all data processors will comply with Irish GDPR regulations. By using Adobe Acrobat Sign to provide consent and or complete baseline questionnaire, your email address and questionnaire data will be stored in their cloud server, which is also based in the EU.

How long will our data be retained?

We will retain your data in RCSI for the duration of the research study and after publication, we will electronically store it in a completely anonymous form for a further 5 years.

Will our data be kept secure and confidential?

Study information will be stored electronically in an encrypted directory on RCSI's secure network without any identifying details, such as your son's name. Smartphone data inputted by him and the school's injury data collector, will use team codes to identify the school and a unique identification number (UIN) to identify each player. Smartphone data and the encrypted UIN code key will initially be stored on cloud servers and will be securely transferred separately to RCSI's secure network on a weekly or monthly basis. Kitman Labs have also adopted appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect information from unauthorised access and against unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction or damage. Storage of electronic data on secure servers in RCSI in a coded way will further minimise the impact of any unexpected data breach.

What rights do we have in relation to my data?

You have the following rights, in certain circumstances, in relation to your family's personal data:

- access to your personal data
- the right to request rectification and / or erasure of your personal data
- the right to restrict the use of your personal data
- the right to object to automated processing of your personal data
- the right to receive your son's personal data, which he provided to us, in a structured, commonly used, and machine-readable format or to require us to transmit that data to another controller.

In order to exercise any of these rights or to withdraw your consent or son's assent, please contact us at SCRUMstudy@rcsi.ie

Complaints

If you are not happy with the way we have used your information or addressed your rights, you have the right to make a complaint to the Irish Data Protection Commissioner by emailing info@dataprotection.ie.

Where can I get further information?

If you have any further questions about the study or if you want to opt your son out of the study once involved, you can do so at any time.

Please contact:

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