



# Personality and Early Susceptibility to COVID-19 in the United Kingdom

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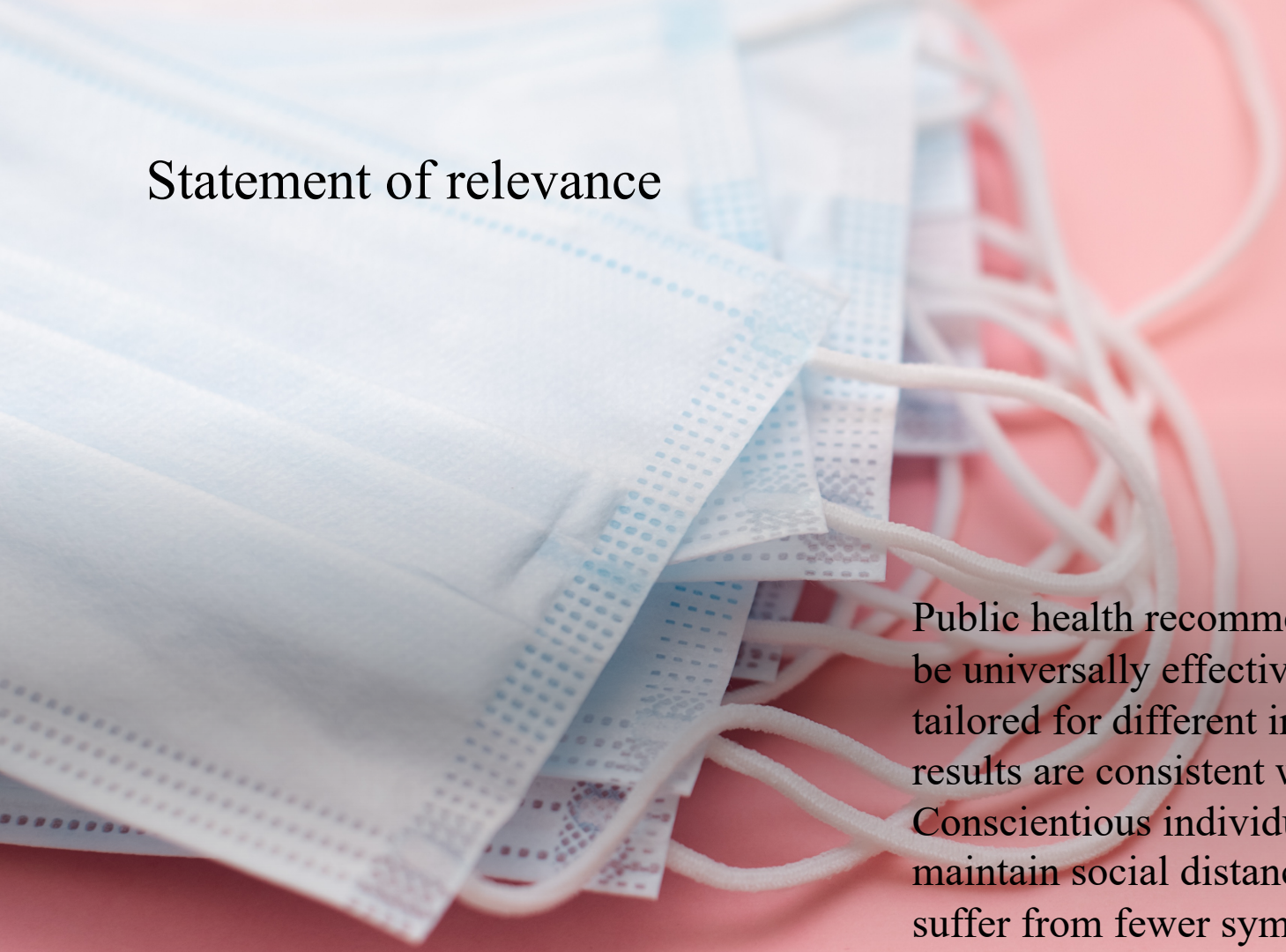
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## Statement of relevance

Public health recommendations and regulations by the government may not be universally effective for all individuals at all times, and may need to be tailored for different individuals of varied personality types. Some of the results are consistent with such recommendations and regulations. More Conscientious individuals are more likely to comply with the requirement to maintain social distance and they are less likely to contract COVID-19 and suffer from fewer symptoms. Other results are inconsistent with government regulations. More Agreeable individuals are more likely to comply yet at the same time more likely to contract COVID-19 and suffer from a larger number of symptoms. More Open and more Neurotic individuals are no less likely to comply yet more likely to contract COVID-19 and suffer from a larger number of COVID-19 symptoms.



Data: National Child Development Study COVID-19 Survey (May 2020)  
in the United Kingdom

Outcome measures: Compliance with social distancing requirement  
COVID-19 contraction  
Number of COVID-19 symptoms

Predictors: Big Five personality factors  
Openness to experience  
Conscientiousness  
Extraversion  
Agreeableness  
Neuroticism

Controls: Sex  
Education  
Earnings



## Findings

Consistent with public health guidelines:

Conscientious individuals are more likely to maintain social distance,  
and less likely to contract COVID-19.

Men are less likely to maintain social distance, and more likely to contract COVID-19.

*However:*

Agreeable individuals are more likely to social distance, yet more likely to contract COVID-19.

Open and Neurotic individuals are no less likely to social distance, yet more likely to contract COVID-19.



## Conclusions

COVID-19 has provided the first opportunity in history for modern personality science to explain human behavior during a global pandemic.

Studies show that personality factors manifest themselves under the pandemic mostly as they do under more ordinary circumstances.

The results suggest that public health recommendations and guidelines may not work for all individuals equally, and may need to be tailored for different individuals of varied personality traits.