

Effects of Temperature and Humidity on COVID-19 Transmission in California, US: A Time-Series Study

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Research

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1 **Effects of temperature and humidity on COVID-19**
2 **transmission in California, US: A time-series study**

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26 **Abstract**

27 **Background:** Previous researches inferred that high temperatures and high humidity
28 might weaken COVID-19 transmission. However, with the warming weather coming,
29 the COVID-19 pandemic is still intensifying.

30 **Methods:** This study aims to evaluate the associations between daily temperature,
31 relative humidity, and COVID-19 cases using the Distributed Lag Non-linear Model
32 (DLNM) from Jan 27th to July 15th, 2020, in California, US.

33 **Results:** There was a statistically significant difference between COVID-19 and
34 temperature from 6 °C to 9 °C, relative humidity from 80% to 98%. It increased the
35 risk of 95.4% at 6 °C (RR:1.954; CI: 1.032-3.701). It increased the risk of 70.3% when
36 the humidity was 98% (RR: 1.703, CI: 1.049-2.765). At low temperature group, it
37 increased the risk of 46.3% (RR = 1.463, 95%CI: 1.054-2.030) on lag 0-4 days. At high
38 humidity group, it increased the risk of 42.3% (RR = 1.423, 95%CI: 1.070-1.892) on
39 lag 0-6 days.

40 **Conclusions:** We found that low temperature and high humidity were the risky factors
41 of COVID-19 transmission, and higher temperature and lower humidity had no effect
42 on the transmission of COVID-19, which indicated that it might not slow down due to
43 weather factors in summer in the Mediterranean climate.

44 **Keywords:** COVID-19, temperature, humidity, DLNM.

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50 1. Introduction

51 COVID-19 is caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus
52 2 (SARS-CoV-2), a novel coronavirus. The World Health Organization (WHO)
53 categorized COVID-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 ([https://www.who.int/
54 dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-
55 covid-19---11-march-2020](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020)). Due to the high contiguousness and widespread, the
56 COVID-19 pandemic has been the most serious global crisis, affecting almost
57 all countries on our planet since the World War-II [1]. Globally, as of July 9th,
58 2020, there have been 11,874,226 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 545,4
59 81 deaths, reported to WHO ([https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-
60 general-opening-remarks-at-the-member-state-briefing-on-the-covid-19-pandemic-ev-
61 aluation---9-july-2020](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-opening-remarks-at-the-member-state-briefing-on-the-covid-19-pandemic-evaluation---9-july-2020)). The pandemic is still growing in most countries and is
62 far from under control.

63 Many studies suggested that environmental factors were risk factors for acute
64 infectious diseases. For instance, a study based on Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Beijing,
65 and Taiyuan indicated that the outbreaks of SARS were significantly related to
66 temperature [2]. Another study in US cities indicated that humidity was the best
67 predictor of COVID-19 transmission [3].

68 The relationship between environmental factors and COVID-19 has been a hot
69 topic of great concern by scholars all over the world since the emergence of COVID-
70 19. Temperature and humidity played a significant role in the seasonal spread of
71 coronaviruses [4]. A laboratory review suggested that SARS-CoV-2 can survive longer

72 in environments with lower temperature and lower relative humidity [5]. Another
73 laboratory study also reported that the viability of coronaviruses reduced rapidly when
74 the temperature or relative humidity increased [6]. Most epidemiological studies [3,7-
75 9] also suggested that the weather with low temperature and low humidity likely
76 favored the transmission of COVID-19. However, a Brazilian study [10] showed that
77 higher mean temperature and average relative humidity favored the COVID-19
78 transmission, differently from reports from coldest countries or periods under cool
79 temperatures.

80 People generally believe the hypothesis that coronaviruses are not easily
81 transmitted in hot and humid conditions [11]. In 2005, Lin et al. found that the risk of
82 increased daily incidence of SARS in lower temperatures was 18.18-fold (95% CI: 5.6-
83 8.8) higher than that in higher temperatures in Hong Kong [12]. Like the SARS, its
84 epidemic was gradually faded with the warming weather coming and was ended in July
85 2003 [2,13,14].

86 Liu et al. indicated that the COVID-19 might gradually ease as a result of rising
87 temperatures in the coming months [8]. However, another study having the same
88 research background showed that mean temperature and COVID-19 confirmed cases
89 was an approximately positive linear relationship in the range of <3 °C and became flat
90 above 3 °C and COVID-19 may not perish of itself without any public health
91 interventions when the weather becomes warmer [15]. Bashir et al. also reported similar
92 findings for COVID-19 cases in New York, US [16]. Auler et al. concluded that high
93 temperature and humidity did not reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in tropical

94 regions [10]. Therefore, there is currently no consensus on the impact of temperature
95 and humidity on the transmission of COVID-19.

96 The temperature is gradually warming, but the global epidemic is still intensifying,
97 breaking through 10 million, and there is no downward trend. Due to the severe
98 situation and the heterogeneity of different regional backgrounds, the relationship
99 between temperature, humidity, and COVID-19 deserves further discussion.

100 California is located on the west coast of the United States, with an area of about
101 410,000 square kilometers, a population of about 37.69 million, and a population
102 density of about 86 people per square kilometer. California has been one of the hardest-
103 hit states since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States. As of July 26th,
104 California ranked first in the United States with more than 440,000 cases. California
105 has a Mediterranean climate, with high temperature and low humidity in summer and
106 low temperature and high humidity in winter.

107 In this study, we explored the effects of temperature and humidity on COVID-19
108 transmission in California, US during the period Jan 27th-July 15th, 2020. We
109 investigated the effects of daily temperature, daily relative humidity on the daily new
110 confirmed COVID-19 cases using the Distributed Lag Non-linear Model (DLNM), and
111 investigated the delayed effects of specific temperature and humidity. This will
112 contribute to investigating the association between meteorological variables and
113 COVID-19 cases in the Mediterranean region. It had a longer research period than
114 previous reports.

115 **2. Materials and methods**

116 **2.1. COVID-19 data**

117 As of July 15th, 2020, data on daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases were
118 collected from the Johns Hopkins Center for Systems Science and Engineering
119 repository (<https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19>). Since uncertain and
120 anonymous data on the incidence of cases were obtained from a publicly accessible
121 data website, this study did not involve the consent of the participants, and there was
122 no need for institutional review.

123 **2.2. Meteorological data**

124 The monitoring station, SACRAMENTO MCCLELLAN AFB, CA, US was used.
125 Sacramento, the capital of California, is located between 38°34'N and 121°28'E. Daily
126 meteorological data, including daily average temperature, average dew point, and
127 average wind speed, were obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
128 Administration Center ([https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/search/data-search/global-
129 summary-of-the-day](https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/search/data-search/global-summary-of-the-day)).

130 **2.3. Calculation of relative humidity**

131 The relative humidity is the ratio of the actual water vapor pressure to the saturated
132 water vapor pressure at the current temperature, calculated using the following formula:

133
$$RH = \frac{E}{E_w} \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

134 *RH* represents the relative humidity. *E* (hPa) contributes to the air vapor pressure
135 at temperature *t* (°C). *E_w* (hPa) gives the saturated vapor pressure of the pure horizontal
136 liquid surface at the dry bulb temperature *t* (°C). The dew point is the temperature at

137 which the air must be cooled to become saturated with water vapor. The dew point
 138 temperature can be used to calculate the actual vapor pressure E , and the actual
 139 temperature can be used to calculate the saturated vapor pressure using the Magnus
 140 formula [17]:

$$141 \quad E = E_0 \times e^{\frac{At}{B+t}} \quad (2)$$

142 where E_0 represents the saturated vapor pressure at the reference temperature T_0
 143 (273.15 K) which equals 6.11 Mb. A is a constant of 17.43 and B is a constant of 240.73.
 144 t ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) is the actual temperature or dew point.

145 **2.4. Statistical analysis**

146 We conducted the time-series regression analysis to find associations between
 147 daily temperature, relative humidity, and daily new confirmed cases of COVID-19. As
 148 the response variable was composed of daily new counts, we used the quasi-Poisson
 149 regression model, which can capture over dispersion often present in count data [18].
 150 We used the DLNM to capture non-linear relationships and lagged associations with
 151 the application of the “*cross-basis*” function (a two-dimensional basis function) [19].

152 The model is as follows:

$$153 \quad y_t \sim \text{quasi-Poisson}(\mu_t) \quad (3)$$

$$154 \quad \log(\mu_t) = \alpha + \beta_1 cb.Temp + ns(RH, 3) + ns(WDSP, 3) + ns(time, 3) \quad (4)$$

$$155 \quad \log(\mu_t) = \alpha + \beta_1 cb.RH + ns(Temp, 3) + ns(WDSP, 3) + ns(time, 3) \quad (5)$$

156 In the model, y_t was the counts of daily new confirmed cases of COVID-19 for
 157 day t (added one to avoid taking the logarithm of zeros [20]). α was the intercept. $Temp$
 158 represented daily average temperature. β_1, β_2 were the vector of regression

159 coefficients for *cb.Temp*, *cb.RH*, which were the *cross-basis* matrix of temperature,
160 relative humidity. The maximum lag day was set as 7 days, which was based on
161 previous studies [3]. We allowed for non-linear relationships by using a natural cubic
162 spline with 3 degrees of freedom (df), and the lagged effects were modeled using a
163 natural cubic spline with an intercept and three internal knots placed at equally-spaced
164 log-values. *ns ()* is the natural cubic spline. *WDSP* represented average wind speed, 3
165 df was used to adjust for average wind speed. Besides, *time* was used as a variable to
166 control the long-term trend effect using 3 df.

167 According to the three-dimension plot between temperature (**Fig. 2a**), relative
168 humidity (**Fig. 3a**), and COVID-19 cases, determine a temperature of 20 °C and relative
169 humidity of 60% as reference values. Set the 5th (defined as low), 25th (defined as
170 lower), 75th (defined as higher), and 95th percentile (defined as high) of daily
171 temperature and relative humidity as different groups to study delayed effects of
172 specific temperature and humidity on daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases.

173 All the statistical analyses were performed in R 3.6.2 software with the ‘*dlnm*’ and
174 ‘*splines*’ packages. The two-sided P-value<0.05 was considered statistically significant.

175 **2.5. Sensitivity analysis**

176 To evaluate the robustness of the model, a sensitivity analysis was performed using
177 the assessment of several dfs: temperature (df =2,4), relative humidity (df = 2,4), wind
178 speed (df = 2,4), time (df =2,4). The maximum lag day of temperature, relative humidity
179 was also set to 6,8 to examine the sensitivity of the effects.

180

181 **3. Results**

182 **3.1. Characteristics of COVID-19 and meteorological variables**

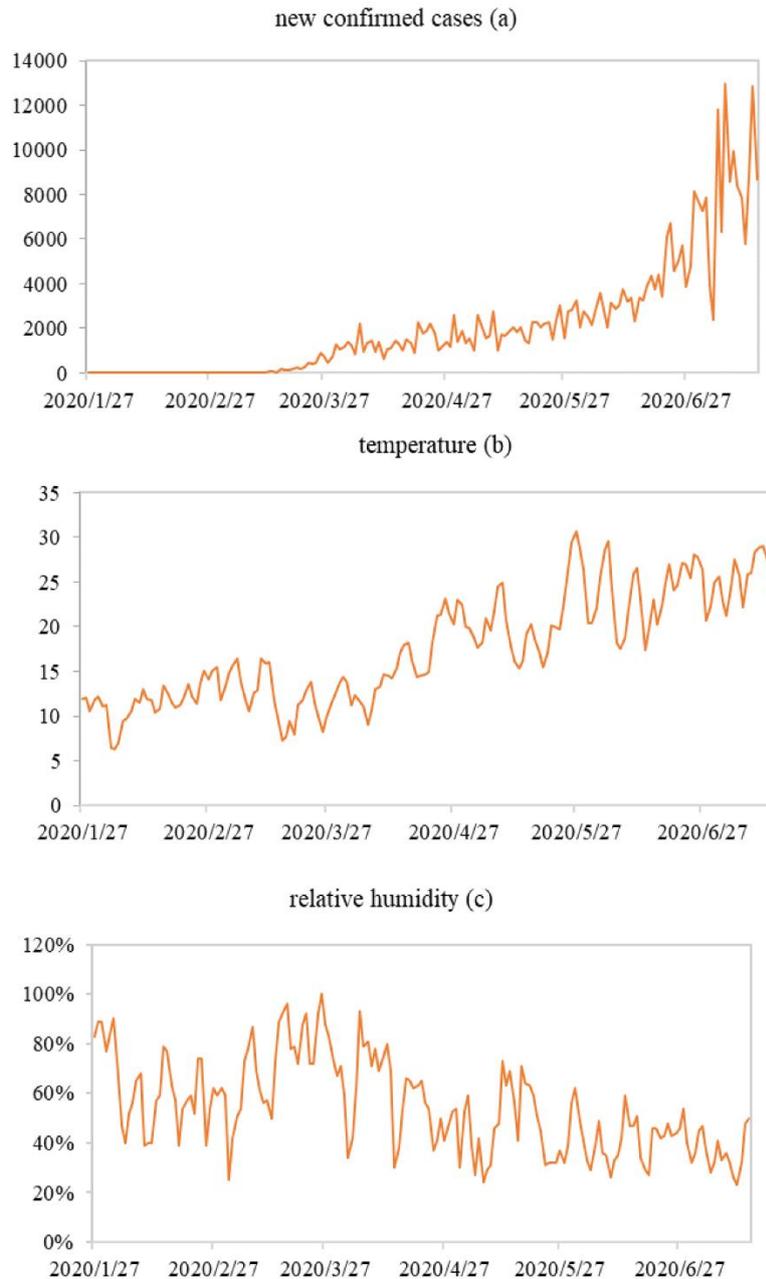
183 The characteristics of COVID-19 and meteorological variables were shown in
 184 **Table 1.** During the study period from Jan 27th to July 15th, 2020 (171 days), a total of
 185 355285 confirmed cases were included in California, US. The number of daily new
 186 cases during this period ranged from 0 to 12978 (mean \pm SD, 2076 \pm 2604, median
 187 1372). The temperature gradually increased during the observation period. The
 188 temperature levels ranged from 6.33 °C to 30.72 °C (mean \pm SD, 17.53 \pm 6.13, median
 189 16.39). The relative humidity gradually decreased during the observation period. The
 190 relative humidity levels ranged from 23% to 100% (mean \pm SD, 55% \pm 0.19, median
 191 53%). **Fig. 1** (a), (b), (c) showed trends for daily new confirmed cases, temperature,
 192 and relative humidity respectively.

193 **Table 1.** characteristics of COVID-19 and meteorological variables 2020.1.27-2020.7.15.

Group	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Median	Frequency distribution			
						P5	P25	P75	P95
Cases	2076	2604	1	12978	1372	1	17	2783	8256
Temp	17.53	6.13	6.33	30.72	16.39	9.42	12.06	22.34	27.951
RH	55%	0.19	23%	100%	53%	29%	39.5%	69%	89%
WDSP	6.28	2.80	0.80	15.70	6.00	2.16	4.30	8.20	11.18

194 Cases, daily new cases of COVID-19; SD, standard deviation; Min, minimum; Max, maximum. P5, P25,

195 P75, P95: the 5th percentile, the 25th percentile, the 75th percentile, the 95th percentile.



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197 **Fig. 1.** The time series of the daily new confirmed cases(a), daily temperature(b), and relative

198 humidity(c) in California, US, 2020.1.27-2020.7.15.

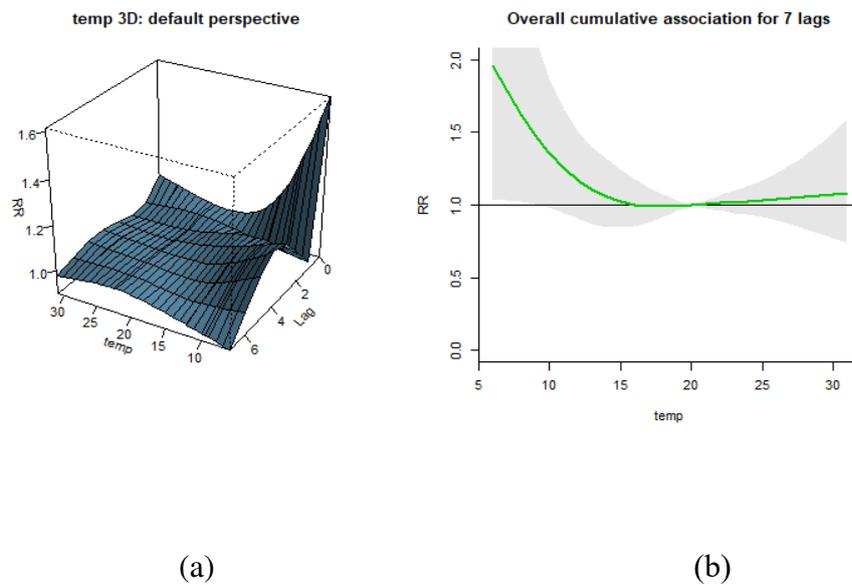
199 **3.2. Overall effects of temperature and humidity on COVID-19 transmission**

200 The relationship between temperature and new daily confirmed COVID-19 cases

201 was presented in **Fig. 2a**. At lag0, there was a non-linear relationship between

202 temperature and the relative risk (RR) of COVID-19, with a temperature of 20 °C

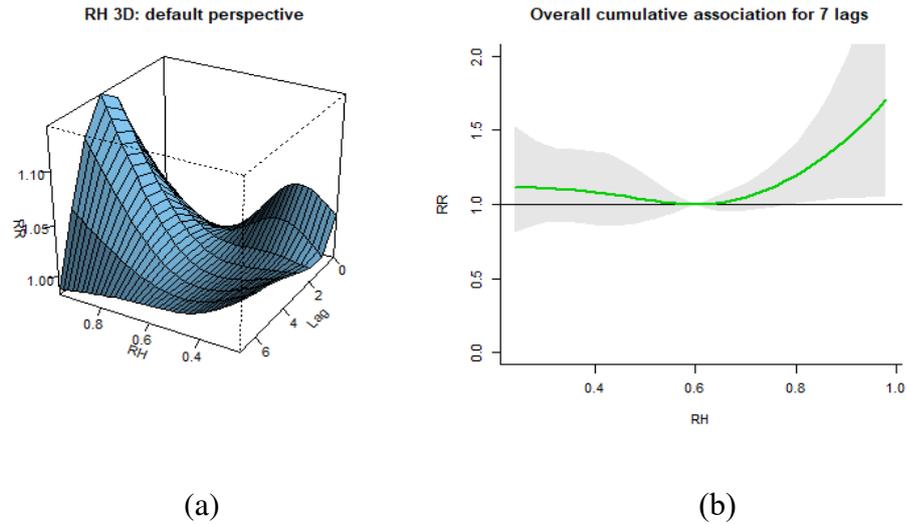
203 corresponding to the minimum COVID-19 risk. As the number of lag days increased,
 204 the effect was gradually diminishing. The overall cumulative relative risk was presented
 205 in **Fig. 2b**. We found that as the temperature rose, the effect gradually weakened. The
 206 RR at 6-9 °C (RR: 1.475-1.954; CI: 1.008-3.701) was statistically significant and was
 207 the maximum at 6 °C (RR: 1.954; CI: 1.032-3.701).



208
 209
 210 (a) (b)

211 **Fig. 2.** Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new confirmed cases along
 212 with temperature in California, US.

213 The relationship between relative humidity and new daily confirmed cases was
 214 presented in **Fig. 3a**. There was an obvious lag effect under high humidity conditions.
 215 At RH=98%, Lag=4, the RR of relative humidity was the highest (RR: 1.094, CI:
 216 1.015–1.177) compared to the reference of 60%. The overall cumulative relative risk
 217 was presented in **Fig. 3b**. We found that as the relative humidity rose, the effect
 218 gradually strengthened. The RR for relative humidity was statistically significant from
 219 80% to 98% (RR: 1.196–1.703, CI: 1.019–2.765) with the reference of 60%, and was
 220 the maximum at 98% (RR: 1.703, CI: 1.049–2.765).



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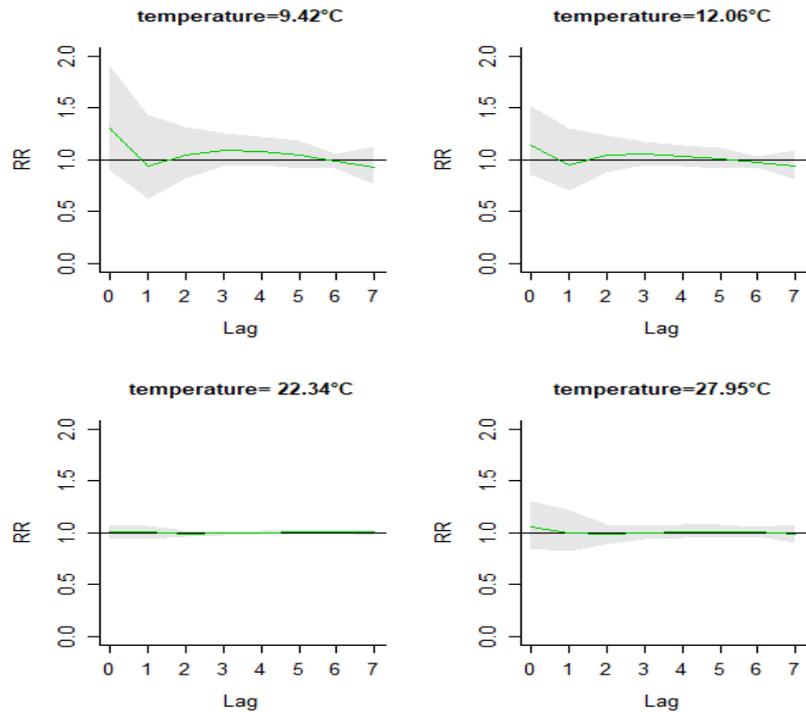
236

237

Fig. 3. Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new confirmed cases along with relative humidity in California, US.

3.3. Delayed effects of specific temperature and humidity on COVID-19 transmission

Delayed effects between the RRs of COVID-19 and temperature in different groups (P5, 9.42 °C; P25, 12.06 °C; P75, 22.34 °C; P95, 27.95 °C) were presented in **Fig. 4** and **Table 2** respectively. With the reference of 20 °C, the single-day lagged effects of specific temperature on daily new confirmed cases were shown in **Fig. 4**. The single-day lagged effects of specific temperature on COVID-19 cases were not statistically significant. The cumulative lag effects of specific temperature on daily new confirmed cases were shown in **Table 2**. At low temperature (P5: 9.42 °C) group, the cumulative lag effect increased the risk of COVID from lag 0–4 days (RR = 1.463, 95%CI: 1.054–2.030) and lasted until lag 0–7 days (RR=1.423, 5%CI:1.000–2.026). The greatest cumulative lag effect emerged on lag 0–4 days and increased 46.3% of the risk of on daily new confirmed cases (RR = 1.463, 95%CI: 1.054–2.030).



238

239 **Fig. 4.** single-day lagged effects of specific temperatures (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various
 240 lag times (in days), with reference of 20 °C.

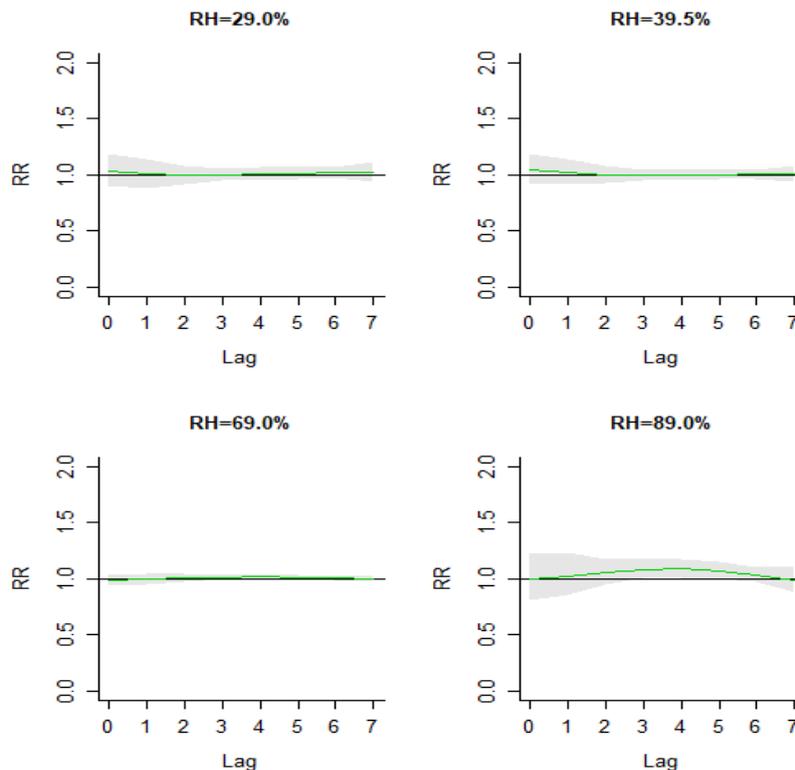
241 **Table 2.** cumulative lag effects of specific temperatures (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various
 242 lag times (in days), with reference of 20 °C.

lag	P5	95%CI	*	P25	95%CI	P75	95%CI	P95	95%CI
0-4	1.463	(1.054 - 2.030)	*	1.203	(0.946 - 1.530)	1.008	(0.956- 1.066)	1.050	(0.863-1.278)
0-5	1.458	(1.041 - 2.044)	*	1.178	(0.926 - 1.500)	1.016	(0.961- 1.074)	1.056	(0.856-1.301)
0-6	1.462	(1.029- 2.077)	*	1.173	(0.917 - 1.502)	1.018	(0.960- 1.079)	1.059	(0.847-1.322)
0-7	1.423	(1.000 – 2.026)	*	1.165	(0.906 - 1.499)	1.016	(0.956- 1.080)	1.060	(0.842-1.335)

243 P5; P25; P75; P95: the 5th percentile(9.42 °C); the 25th percentile (12.06 °C) ; the 75th perc
 244 entile (22.34 °C) ; the 95th percentile (27.95 °C) .

245

246 Delayed effects between the RRs of COVID-19 and humidity in different groups
 247 (P5: 29.0%, P25: 39.5%, P75: 69.0%, P95: 89.0%) were presented in **Fig. 5** and **Table**
 248 **3** respectively. With the reference of 60%, the single-day lagged effects of specific
 249 humidity on daily new confirmed cases were shown in **Fig. 5**. At high humidity (P95:
 250 89.0%) group, the single-day lagged effects had statistical significance from lag3 to
 251 lag5. The RR value reached the highest at lag 4 (RR = 1.093, 95% CI: 1.016–1.177),
 252 which indicated that the risk of lag effect increased by 9.3%. However, the single-day
 253 lagged effects in the other groups were not statistically significant. At high humidity
 254 (P95: 89.0%) group, the cumulative lag effect increased the risk from lag 0–4 days (RR
 255 = 1.376, 95%CI: 1.031–1.837) and lasted until lag 0–7 days (RR=1.410, 95%CI:1.040–
 256 1.911). The greatest cumulative lag effect emerged on lag 0–6 days and increased 42.3%
 257 of the risk of on daily new confirmed cases (RR = 1.423, 95%CI: 1.070–1.892).



258

259 **Fig. 5.** single-day lagged effects of specific humidity (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various lag
 260 times (in days), with reference of 60%.

261 **Table 3.** cumulative lag effects of specific humidity (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various lag
 262 times (in days), with reference of 60%.

lag	P5	95%CI	P25	95%CI	P75	95%CI	P95	95%CI
0-4	1.029	(0.844 - 1.254)	1.040	(0.849 - 1.273)	1.043	(0.969- 1.123)	1.376	(1.031-1.837) *
0-5	1.064	(0.866 - 1.307)	1.065	(0.869 - 1.305)	1.039	(0.965- 1.118)	1.383	(1.047-1.825) *
0-6	1.092	(0.874 - 1.365)	1.082	(0.873 - 1.342)	1.040	(0.962- 1.126)	1.423	(1.070-1.892) *
0-7	1.110	(0.869 - 1.417)	1.085	(0.864 - 1.363)	1.040	(0.956- 1.132)	1.410	(1.040-1.911) *

263 P5; P25; P75; P95: the 5th percentile(29.0%); the 25th percentile (39.5%) ; the 75th percentil
 264 e (69.0%) ; the 95th percentile (89.0%) .

265 * P < 0.05.

266 3.4. Sensitivity analysis

267 The result of sensitivity analysis indicated that the model was robust when the dfs
 268 were altered for temperature (df =2,4), humidity (df = 2,4), wind speed (df = 2,4), time
 269 (df =2,4) (**Fig. S1, Fig. S2**). Changing the maximum lag day into 6,8 in the model didn't
 270 show significant differences for the fitting effect of the model either (**Fig. S3, Fig. S4**).

271 The exposure-response curve was similar before and after adjusting.

272

273 4. Discussion

274 The COVID-19 pandemic is a global health crisis and the greatest challenge facing
 275 the world [17]. In this study, we examined whether temperature and humidity were

276 associated with the transmission of COVID-19 in California, US. We applied the
277 DLNM to assess the non-linear and delayed effects of temperature, humidity on
278 COVID-19 transmission.

279 We found that as the temperature rose, the overall cumulative effect gradually
280 weakened. A preprint study had a similar result using DLNM from 31 provincial-level
281 regions in mainland China between Jan 20 and Feb 29, 2020 [4]. In our study, the RR
282 at 6–9 °C had statistically significant between COVID-19 and temperature, and
283 increased risk of illness. The RR value was maximum at 6 °C, and it increased by 95.4%
284 of the risk. Furthermore, at the low temperature (9.42 °C) group, the greatest cumulative
285 lag effect emerged on lag 0–4 days and increased 46.3% of the risk. These suggested
286 that temperature was a risk factor under low-temperature conditions. Many previous
287 studies supported this finding. Chin et al. reported that SARS-CoV-2 was highly stable
288 at 4 °C but sensitive to heat. The virus survival time was shortened to 5 min as the
289 incubation temperature increased to 70 °C [21]. Ujiie et al. suggested that there was an
290 association between low temperature and increased risk of COVID-19 infection [9].
291 Xie and Zhu also indicated that mean temperature and COVID-19 confirmed cases were
292 the approximately positive linear relationship in the range of <3 °C, each 1 °C rose was
293 associated with a 4.861% (95% CI: 3.209–6.513) increased in the daily number of
294 COVID-19 confirmed cases [15].

295 In our study, when the temperature was bigger than 10 °C, we found a weaker or
296 insignificant relationship. It indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic could not be
297 suppressed with temperature increases. A case-crossover design with DLNM in Albany

298 GA US, which median daily temperature was 18.78 °C, shown that temperature was
299 not a significant predictor of COVID-19 cases [3]. Another study from Brazil showed
300 that the COVID-19 transmission rate was favored by higher mean temperatures
301 (27.5 °C) [10]. These studies supported this finding. However, in a cross-sectional study
302 across the temperature range (-10 °C - 30 °C), the researcher collected data from 429
303 cities around the world, divided into low-temperature group and high-temperature
304 group with a limit of 10 °C. In the high-temperature group, for every 1°C increase in
305 temperature, the cumulative number of cases decreased by 0.86 [22]. It was inconsistent
306 with our finding, probably because it was a time-space cross-sectional study.

307 We found that as the relative humidity rose, the overall cumulative effect gradually
308 strengthened. The RR was only statistically significant from 80% to 98%. It increased
309 by 70.3% of the risk at 98%. Furthermore, at high humidity (89.0%) group, the single-
310 day lagged effects had statistical significance from lag3 to lag5. It indicated that
311 humidity had a certain delayed effect on COVID-19. A study on multiple cities in the
312 United States also explored the relationship between humidity and COVID-19 cases. In
313 the high-humidity cities of Albany and New Orleans (median the relative humidity:
314 9.88 g/kg, 12.99 g/kg), there was a significant relationship between the transmission of
315 COVID-19 and humidity. Humidity resulted in an up to the two-fold increased risk of
316 transmission. In New York City, where the humidity is lower (median the relative
317 humidity: 3.98 g/kg), no relationship was observed between humidity and COVID-19
318 cases [3]. This study was similar to ours that humidity was a risk factor under higher
319 humidity conditions and there was no correlation under lower humidity conditions.

320 Auler et al. also found that higher average relative humidity ($>77.7\%$) might favor the
321 evolution of COVID-19 in Brazil [10].

322 However, some studies have reported conflicting results. Liu et al. reported that
323 for relative humidity, the negative association with COVID-19 case counts were
324 statistically significant in lag 7 and lag 14 [8]. Wu et al. also reported that for every
325 1% increase in humidity, daily new cases of COVID-19 reduced by 0.85%. It might be
326 because the research background was in cold and dry winter and the humidity range
327 was limited [17].

328 The advantages of this study are as follows. First, as of July 15th, 2020, all COVID-
329 19 cases confirmed in California have been included in our study, corresponding to
330 more meteorological data and stronger factual evidence. Second, this study was a time
331 series analysis using DLNM, which not only allowed the model to maintain a detailed
332 time course of the non-linear exposure-response relationship, but it also generated an
333 estimate for the overall effect of an exposure on a health outcome over different lagged
334 or delayed periods [19]. Third, we eliminated the long-term trend of the COVID-19
335 epidemic, and daily meteorological data were used to accurately reflect the effect of
336 temperature and humidity on the transmission of COVID-19.

337 However, several limitations must be considered. First, we did not adjust for
338 other environmental parameters and social factors including various interventions.
339 Second, the impact of temperature and humidity on sex and age could not be analyzed
340 because the key information was not available on the official website. Third, the
341 interaction between temperature and humidity was not discussed. Qi et al. suggested

342 that every 1°C increase in the temperature led to a decrease in the daily confirmed
343 cases by 36% to 57% when relative humidity was in the range from 67% to 85.5% in
344 Hubei, China [23].

345

346 **5. Conclusions**

347 We found that low temperature and high humidity were the risky factors of
348 COVID-19 transmission. Higher temperature and lower humidity had no effect on
349 COVID-19 transmission. Our results indicated that COVID-19 transmission might not
350 slow down due to meteorological factors in summer in the Mediterranean climate.

351

352 **Declarations**

353 **Ethical approval and consent to participate**

354 Not applicable.

355 **Consent for publication**

356 Not applicable.

357 **Availability of data and material**

358 The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the
359 websites.

360 **Competing interests**

361 The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or
362 personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this
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370 **Authors' Contribution**

371 Conceptualization, Lanlan Fang. and Dingjian Wang.; methodology, Lanlan
372 Fang.; software, Dingjian Wang.; validation, Dingjian Wang.; formal analysis, Lanlan
373 Fang.; investigation, Dingjian Wang.; resources, Lanlan Fang.; data curation, Dingjian
374 Wang.; writing—original draft preparation, Lanlan Fang; writing—review and editing,
375 Guixia Pan.; visualization, Lanlan Fang.; supervision, Guixia Pan.; project
376 administration, Guixia Pan.; funding acquisition, Guixia Pan. All authors have read and
377 agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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463

464 **Figure legends**

465 **Fig. 1.** The time series of the daily new confirmed cases(a), daily temperature(b), and
466 relative humidity(c) in California, US, 2020.1.27-2020.7.15.

467 **Fig. 2.** Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new
468 confirmed cases along with temperature in California, US.

469 **Fig. 3.** Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new
470 confirmed cases along with relative humidity in California, US.

471 **Fig. 4.** single-day lagged effects of specific temperatures (P5; P25; P75; P95) on
472 COVID-19 at various lag times (in days), with reference of 20 °C.

473 **Fig. 5.** single-day lagged effects of specific humidity (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-
474 19 at various lag times (in days), with reference of 60%.

475 **Fig. S1.** exposure-response diagram under different df (2,4) between temperature and
476 COVID-19.

477 **Fig. S2.** exposure-response diagram under different df (2,4) between humidity and
478 COVID-19.

479 **Fig. S3.** exposure-response diagram under between temperature, humidity, and
480 COVID-19 when the maximum number of lag days is 6.

481 **Fig. S4.** exposure-response diagram under between temperature, humidity, and
482 COVID-19 when the maximum number of lag days is 8.

Figures

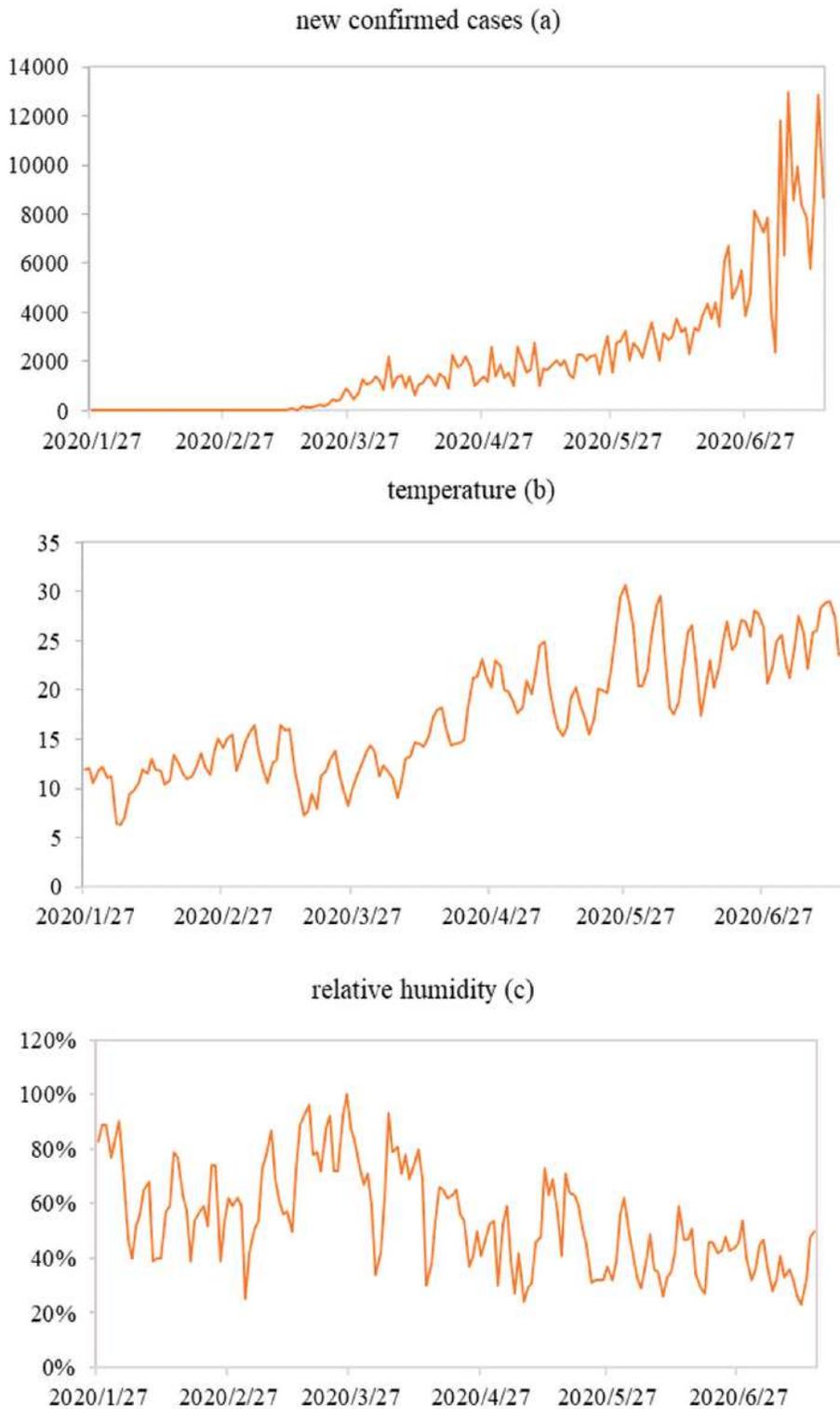


Figure 1

The time series of the daily new confirmed cases(a), daily temperature(b), and relative humidity(c) in California, US, 2020.1.27-2020.7.15.

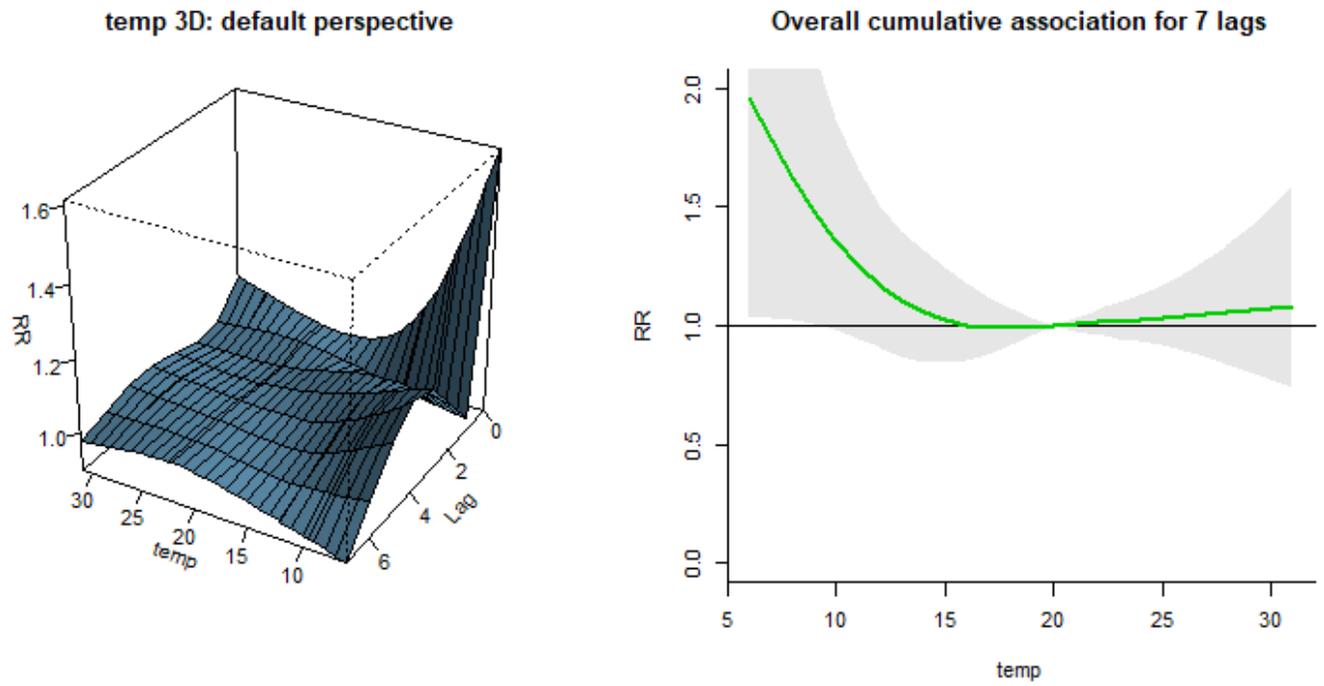


Figure 2

Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new confirmed cases along with temperature in California, US.

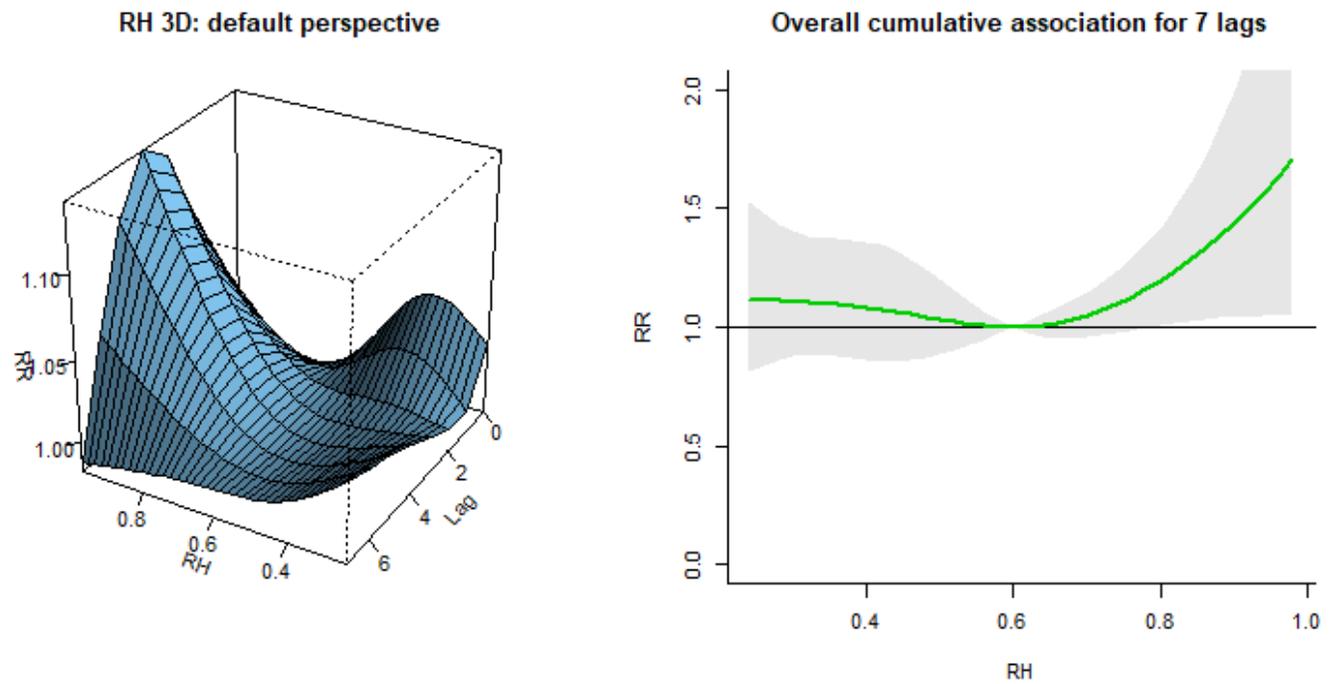


Figure 3

Three-dimension plot and overall cumulative relative risk of daily new confirmed cases along with relative humidity in California, US.

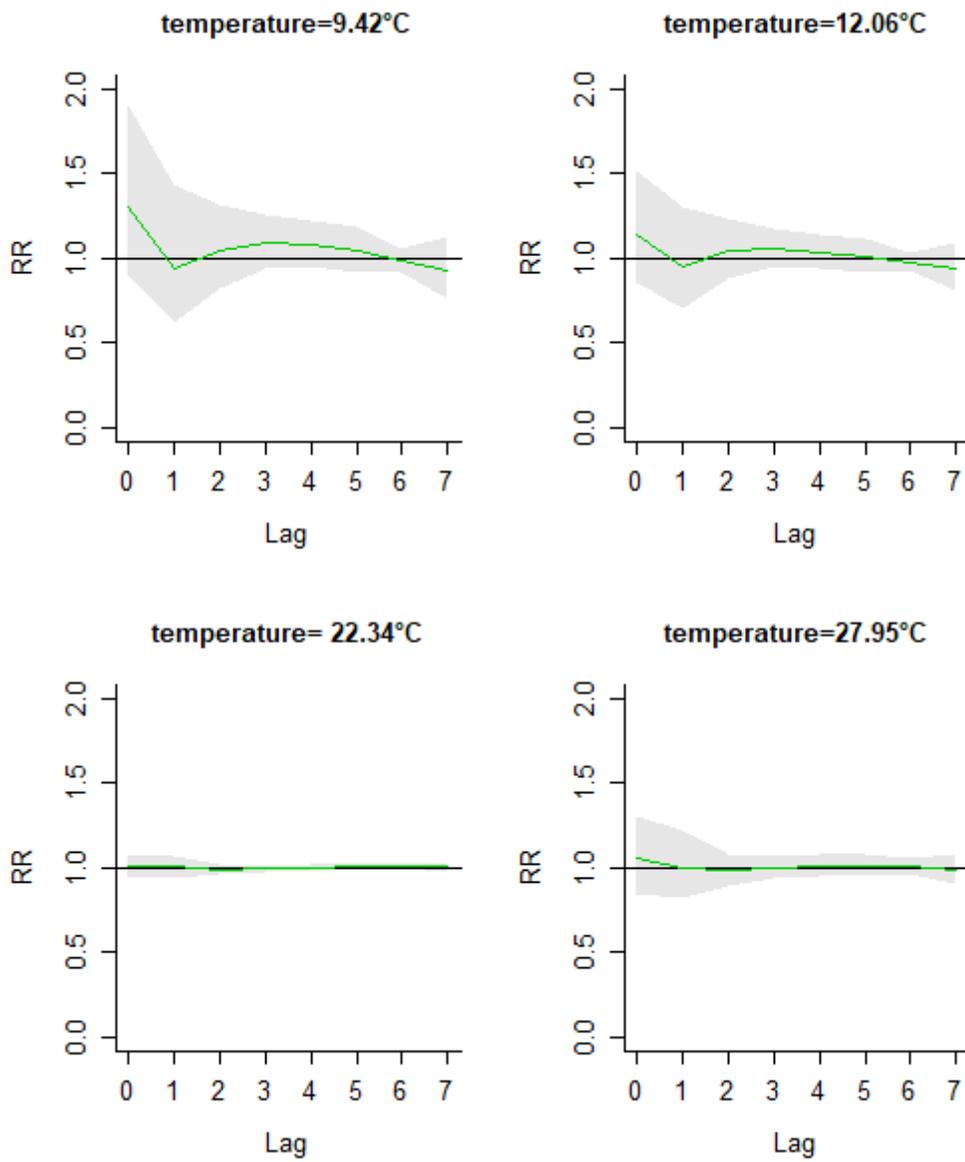


Figure 4

single-day lagged effects of specific temperatures (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various lag times (in days), with reference of 20 °C.

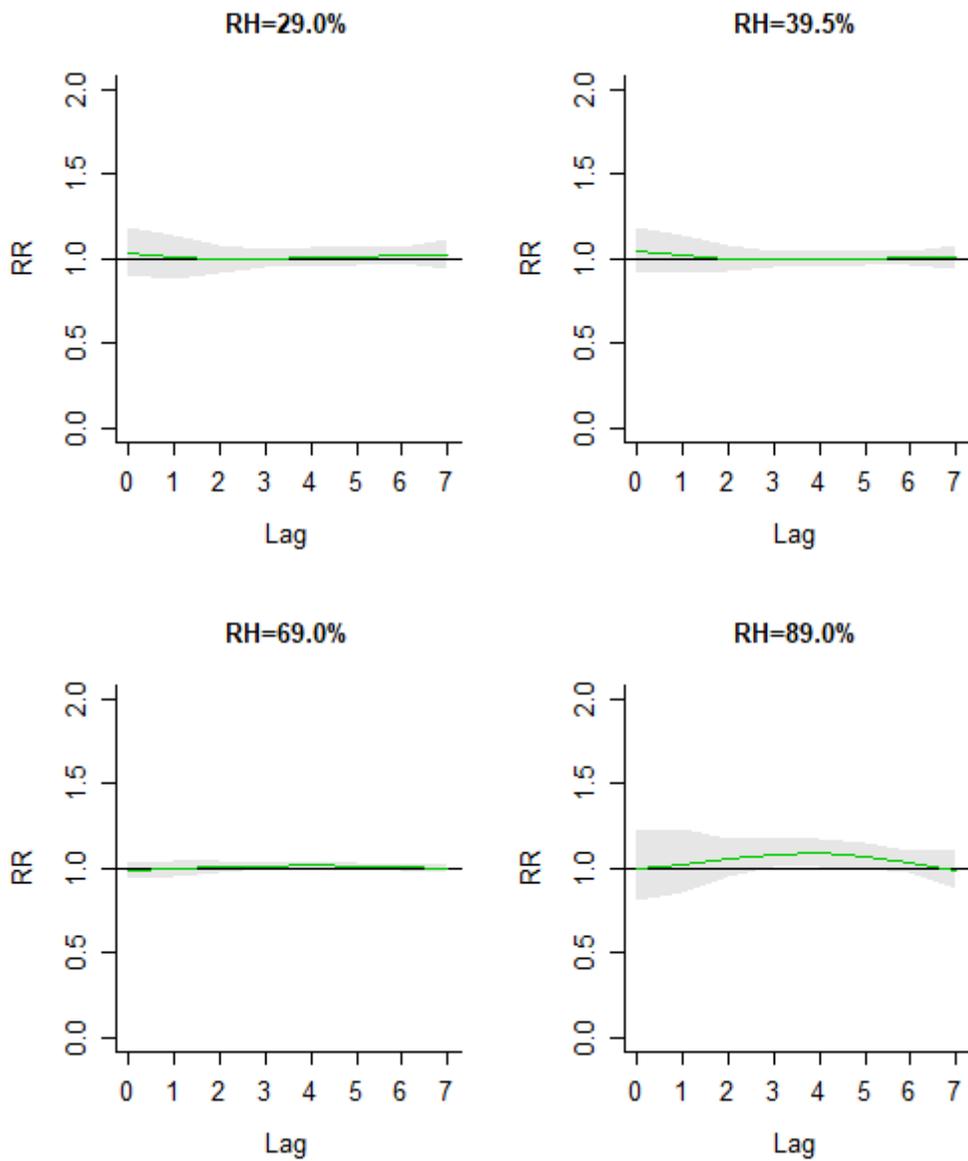


Figure 5

single-day lagged effects of specific humidity (P5; P25; P75; P95) on COVID-19 at various lag times (in days), with reference of 60%.

Supplementary Files

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