to that of SARS-CoV (17, 87, 254, 255). Several

countries have provided recommendations to their

people traveling to China (88, 89). Compared to the

previous coronavirus outbreaks caused by SARS-

CoV and MERS-CoV, the efficiency of SARS-CoV-

2 human-to-human transmission was thought to be

less. This assumption was based on the finding that

health workers were affected less than they were in

previous outbreaks of fatal coronaviruses (2).

Superspreading events are considered the main

culprit for the extensive transmission of SARS and

MERS (90, 91). Almost half of the MERS-CoV

cases reported in Saudi Arabia are of secondary

origin that occurred through contact with infected

asymptomatic or symptomatic individuals through

human-to-human transmission (92). The occurrence

of superspreading events in the COVID-19 outbreak

cannot be ruled out until its possibility is evaluated.

Like SARS and MERS, COVID-19 can also infect

the lower respiratory tract, with milder symptoms

(27). The basic reproduction number of COVID-19

has been found to be in the range of 2.8 to 3.3 based

on real-time reports and 3.2 to 3.9 based on predicted

infected cases (84).