

performance (Table 2) (80, 245, 246). The viral loads of SARS-CoV-2 were measured using N-gene-specific quantitative RT-PCR in throat swab and sputum samples collected from COVID-19-infected individuals. The results indicated that the viral load peaked at around 5 to 6 days following the onset of symptoms, and it ranged from  $10^4$  to  $10^7$  copies/ml during this time (151). In another study, the viral load was found to be higher in the nasal swabs than the throat swabs obtained from COVID-19 symptomatic patients (82). Although initially it was thought that viral load would be associated with poor outcomes, some case reports have shown asymptomatic individuals with high viral loads (247). Recently, the viral load in nasal and throat swabs of 17 symptomatic patients was determined, and higher viral loads were recorded soon after the onset of symptoms, particularly in the nose compared to the throat. The pattern of viral nucleic acid shedding of SARS-CoV-2-infected patients was similar to that of influenza patients but seemed to be different from that of SARS-CoV patients. The viral load detected in asymptomatic patients resembled that of symptomatic patients as studied in China, which reflects the transmission perspective of asymptomatic or symptomatic patients having minimal signs and symptoms (82). Another study,