SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic: The Potential Super Spreaders And Their Role In Driving The Pandemic

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Super spreaders have been identified for many outbreaks caused by viral and bacterial pathogens including SARS and influenza virus. A common feature for super spreaders is transmission within a close setting that serves as an amplification source. A large percentage of secondary cases of SARS-CoV-2 have been associated with 10 to 20% of the index cases. We have identified asymptomatic and symptomatic individuals with super high and high viral genomic loads who could potentially be super spreaders in the right amplification setting, and may be a major driver of SARS-CoV-2 pandemic waves.

Q Bi et al., Epidemiology and Transmission of COVID-19 in 391 Cases and 1286 of Their Close Contacts in Shenzhen, China: a Retrospective Cohort Study. Lancet Infection 2020;20:911

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