

	SARS-CoV-2	SARS-CoV	Pandemic influenza 1918	Pandemic influenza 2009	Interpretation
Transmissibility, R_0	2-5	2-4	2-0	1-7	SARS-CoV-2 has the highest average R_0
Incubation period, days	4-12	2-7	Unknown	2	Longer incubation period; SARS-CoV epidemics form slower
Interval between symptom onset and maximum infectivity, days	0	5-7	2	2	SARS-CoV-2 is harder to contain than SARS-CoV
Proportion with mild illness	High	Low	High	High	Facilitates undetected transmission
Proportion of patients requiring hospitalisation	Few (20%)	Most (>70%)	Few	Few	Concern about capacity in the health sector
Proportion of patients requiring intensive care	1/16 000	Most (40%)	Unknown	1/104 000	Concern about capacity in the health sector
Proportion of deaths in people younger than 65 years out of all deaths	0-6-2-8%	Unknown	95%	80%	SARS-CoV-2 might cause as many deaths as the 1918 influenza pandemic, but fewer years of life lost and disability-adjusted life-years, as deaths are in the older population with underlying health conditions
Risk factors for severe illness	Age, comorbidity	Age, comorbidity	Age (<60 years)	Age (<60 years)	--

Data from the following references.²³⁵⁻³⁶ MERS-CoV=Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus. SARS-CoV=severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus. SARS-CoV-2=severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2.

Table 1: Characteristics of SARS-CoV-2, SARS-CoV, and pandemic influenza

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[Comparing SARS-CoV-2 with SARS-CoV and influenza pandemics](#)

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