
Letter to Editor

Sharing Alcoholic Drinks and a COVID-19 Outbreak

Rujittika Mungmungpantip^{1,*}, and Viroj Wiwanitkit^{2,3}

¹26 Medical Center, Bangkok Thailand

²Dr DY Patil University, Pune, India

³Hainan Medical University, Haikou, China

*Corresponding author: E-mail: rujittika@gmail.com

COVID-19, the new respiratory infection, has spread from China to more than 100 countries (Hsia, 2020). Alcohol-containing hand sanitizer is part of the strategy to prevent person-to-person transmission. In Thailand, we have witnessed the incorrect belief that drinking alcohol can prevent COVID-19. We made the following observation from a group of COVID patients in Thailand (six females and five males, aged 25–28 years old). These patients had joined the same farewell party and drank alcoholic beverage by using the same glass. The cluster of outbreak among these patients occurred within 1 week after the farewell party. The disease investigation showed that there were four other persons joining that party but who did not drink. Those four persons did not develop illness. The incident illustrates that drinking alcoholic beverage does not help prevent COVID-19: the alcoholic concentration in alcoholic beverage is not high enough to kill the virus. In fact, in animal models, alcoholic consumption can cause immune impairment and increased susceptibility to respiratory virus (Meyerholz *et al.*, 2008).

It is well-established that the virus is shed in oral pharyngeal secretion and sputum, so it is not surprising that infection spread among individuals who shared a drinking glass.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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