



SHAREABLE PDF

# To compare the incomparable: COVID-19 pneumonia and high-altitude disease

Giacomo Strapazzon<sup>1,2</sup>, Matthias P. Hilty<sup>3</sup>, Pierre Bouzat<sup>4</sup>, Lorenza Pratali<sup>5</sup>, Hermann Brugger<sup>1,2</sup> and Simon Rauch<sup>1,6</sup>

**Affiliations:** <sup>1</sup>Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine, Eurac Research, Bolzano, Italy. <sup>2</sup>Dept of Anaesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine, Medical University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria. <sup>3</sup>Intensive Care Unit, University Hospital of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland. <sup>4</sup>Dept Anaesthesia and Critical Care, University Hospital of Grenoble, Grenoble, France. <sup>5</sup>Institute of Clinical Physiology, National Council of Research – CNR, Pisa, Italy. <sup>6</sup>Dept of Anesthesia and Intensive Care Medicine, “F. Tappeiner” Hospital, Merano, Italy.

**Correspondence:** Giacomo Strapazzon, Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine, Eurac Research, Via Ipazia 2, 39100 Bolzano, Italy. E-mail: giacomo.strapazzon@eurac.edu

 @ERSpublications

**COVID-19 pneumonia is a viral infection; high-altitude pulmonary oedema is a non-cardiogenic oedema. Some clinicians have found the clinical features similar. It is important to clarify such misconceptions to prevent erroneous treatment strategies** <https://bit.ly/2KOBi3F>

**Cite this article as:** Strapazzon G, Hilty MP, Bouzat P, *et al.* To compare the incomparable: COVID-19 pneumonia and high-altitude disease. *Eur Respir J* 2020; 55: 2001362 [<https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.01362-2020>].

This single-page version can be shared freely online.

*To the Editor:*

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is overwhelming healthcare systems worldwide. There is no evidence from randomised clinical trials that any potential therapy improves outcome in COVID-19 pneumonia, and therapeutic strategies have been based on a progressively increasing knowledge of the clinical presentation of the disease. Some clinicians have found the clinical features of COVID-19 pneumonia to be similar to high-altitude pulmonary oedema (HAPE) [1], and such theory has been amplified *via* social media. We question this relationship.