SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Table S1. Search strategies for meta-analysis of observational studies reporting the Incubation period of COVID-19.

Database	**Search strategy (publications accessible 1st Dec 2019-8th April 2020)**
Pubmed	("Novel coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "2019-nCoV" OR "COVID-19") AND ("incubation period" OR "incubation")
Cochrane	("Novel coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "2019-nCoV" OR "COVID-19") AND ("incubation period" OR "incubation")
Google Scholar	("Novel coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "2019-nCoV" OR "COVID-19") AND ("incubation period" OR "incubation")
Embase	("Novel coronavirus" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR "2019-nCoV" OR "COVID-19") AND ("incubation period" OR "incubation")
Preprint servers (i.e. preliminary reports of work that have not been peer-reviewed)	
medRxiv and bioRxiv	Pre populated search: https://connect.medrxiv.org/relate/content/181

Quality assessment scale – adapted from Newcastle-Ottawa quality assessment scale for cohort studies.

External validity

1) Representativeness of the study cohort
a) No selection of cases based on age, sex or general health status, supported by descriptive statistics demonstrating comparability with overall population✹
b) No selection of cases based on age, sex or general health status, not supported by descriptive statistics✹
c) Cases are likely to be biased towards those with more severe COVID-19 symptoms due to selection process – e.g. records from hospitalised patients
d) Cases are selected (e.g. based on age or sex) to represent a particular cohort of individuals
e) No description of the derivation of the cohort

Internal validity

Exposure window

2) Ascertainment of exposure
a) original data collected through interview ✹
b) travel period only ✹
c) secondary data (using publicly available reports)

3) Precision of the exposure window for cases used in final analysis

a) only includes cases with a 1-day exposure window ✹
b) only includes cases with less than or equal to 3-day exposure window
c) includes cases with a range of exposure windows but statistical methods are used to account for this
d) includes cases with a range of exposure windows
e) no description/not clear

Outcome

4) Assessment of outcome (onset of symptoms)
a) original data collected through interview ✹
b) no description/not clear

5) Precision of estimate of outcome

a) Precise date ✹
b) Window
c) no description/not clear

Table S2 Quality assessment of final studies used in the meta-analysis of incubation period

Study	**Quality assessment item category**				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Backer et al., 2020	a	b	c	a	a
Lauer et al., 2020	a	b	c	a	b
Li et al., 2020	a	a	e	a	a
Bi et al., 2020	a	a	c	a	a
Jiang et al., 2020	b	c	e	b	c
Linton et al., 2020	b	b	c	b	a
Zhang et al., 2020	b	a	e	a	a
Ma et al., 2020	b	c	b	b	a
Leung, 2020	b	c	c	b	a

Figure S1 – Funnel plot of estimates of mu parameter of the lognormal distribution

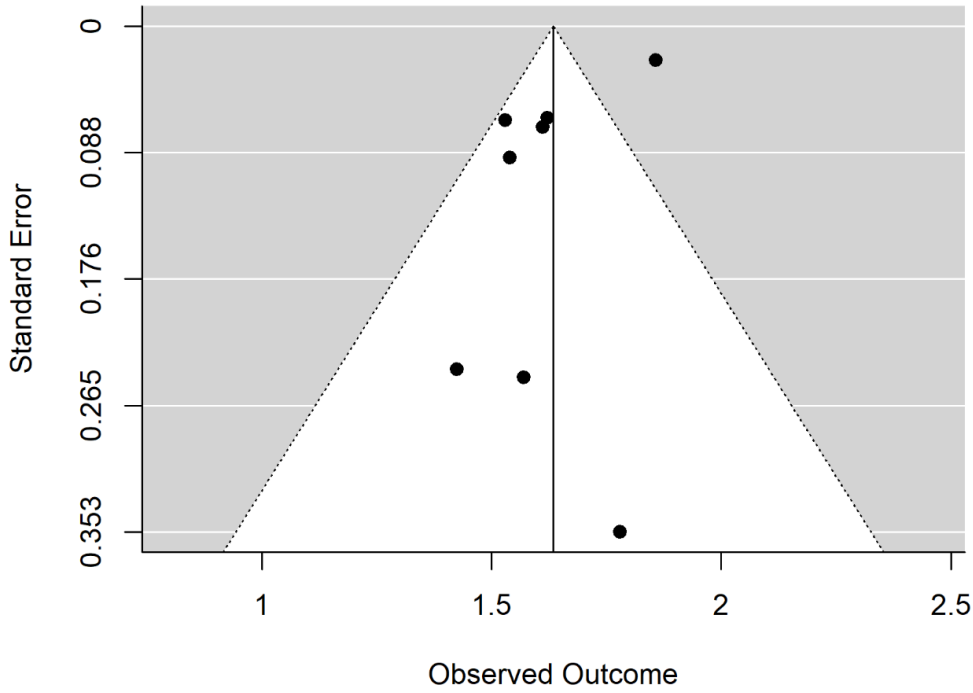

Figure S2 – Funnel plot of the sigma parameter of the lognormal distribution

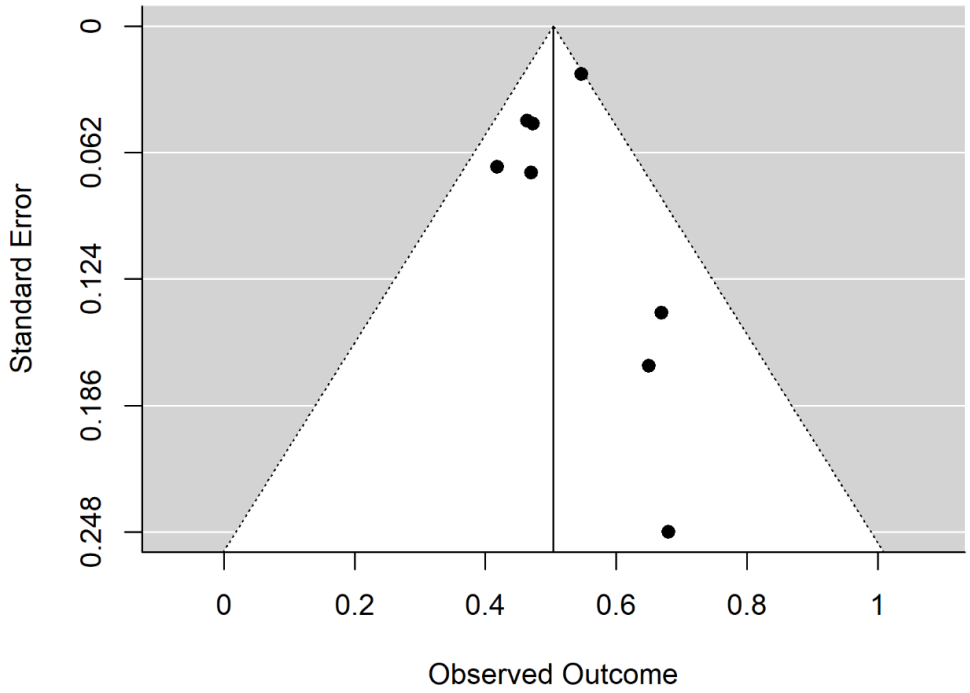

Figure S3 – Incubation period (T1 + T3) in the context of other key parameters important for the transmission of COVID-19.