Supplementary Table 1. Baseline characteristics of healthy and COVID-19 subjects. Comparisons are performed by two-tailed non-parametric Mann-Whitney U-test. Data are expressed as mean ± S.E.M.. *NS*, not significant.

Baseline characteristics	Healthy subjects	COVID subjects	*P* value
Number of subjects	61	233	-
Age (years)	57±7	60±7	*NS*
Gender (M/F)	37/24	167/66	-
Body Mass Index (Kg/m^2)	27±2	30±6	*NS*
SARS-CoV-2 N antigen (pg/mL)	0.04±0.004	133±32.73	****P <0.0001
CRP (mg/L)	-	9.22±0.62	-
Hospitalized in	-	COVID-19 First Aid (n=95) COVID-19 Ward (n=96) Intensive Care Unit (n=42)	-

Supplementary Table 2. SARS-CoV-2 N-antigen levels in COVID-19 patients stratified on the basis of hospital admission unit. Comparisons are performed by two-tailed non-parametric Mann-Whitney U-test. Data are expressed as mean ± S.E.M..

Hospital Admission Unit	SARS-CoV-2 antigen (pg/mL)	*P* value
COVID-19 First Aid	123±248.1	***P <0.001 *vs* COVID-19 Ward **P <0.01 *vs* ICU
COVID-19 Ward	107.2±53.72	***P <0.001 *vs* COVID-19 First Aid
Intensive Care Unit (ICU)	214.4±121.5	**P <0.01 *vs* COVID-19 First Aid

Supplementary Table 3. SARS-CoV-2 N-antigen levels in COVID-19 patients stratified on the basis of grade of disease, as CRP concentrations. Comparisons are performed by two-tailed non-parametric Mann-Whitney U-test. Data are expressed as mean ± S.E.M..

Grade of disease	CRP	SARS-CoV-2 antigen (pg/mL)	*P* value
Mild	≤ 5 mg/L	24.22±9.07	*****P* <0.0001 *vs* Moderate *****P* <0.0001 *vs* Severe
Moderate	6-20 mg/L	184.3±59.8	*****P* <0.0001 *vs* Mild
Severe	21-80 mg/L	420.2±174.9	*****P* <0.0001 *vs* Mild