How Viruses Spread

Initial infection

R₀ = 1

1 secondary infection is caused by the initial infection

The single secondary infection causes 1 more infection

Each additional infection causes 1 more subsequent infection

R₀ = 3

3 infections are caused by the first infection

Each secondary infection causes 3 more infections

Each additional infection causes 3 subsequent infections

*The basic reproduction number (R₀) describes how much a disease will spread without any intervention measures.
Sources: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/planning-scenarios.html
https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/7/20-0282_article