

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

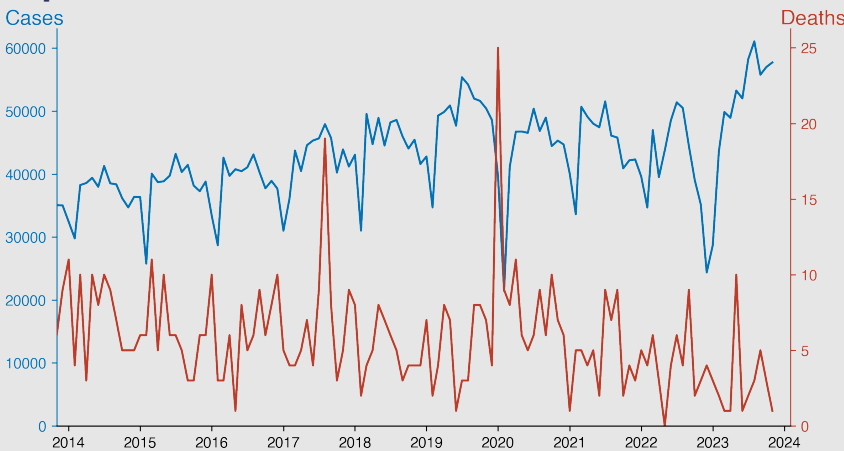
Syphilis

November 2023

Introduction

Syphilis is a bacterial infection primarily transmitted through sexual activity. Caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*, it may initially present as sores, rashes or lesions. If untreated, the infection can progress over multiple stages spanning years, potentially causing serious health problems including neurological and cardiovascular complications. Transmission can occur via direct contact with a syphilis sore during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Syphilis can also be passed from a pregnant woman to her baby, causing congenital syphilis. It is easily detected through blood tests and effectively treatable with antibiotics.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- A gradual increase in reported syphilis cases from November 2013 (35,051 cases) to November 2023 (57,719 cases), indicating a rising trend over the decade.
- A noteworthy reduction in cases observed in December 2022 (24,367 cases), which was significantly lower than the surrounding months; however, cases rebounded thereafter.
- Overall mortality associated with syphilis remained low, with single-digit deaths in most months; there were episodic increases, such as January 2020 (25 deaths), which appears to be an outlier.
- The highest number of cases reported in a single month occurred in August 2023 (61,068 cases), suggesting a peak in transmission during this time period.

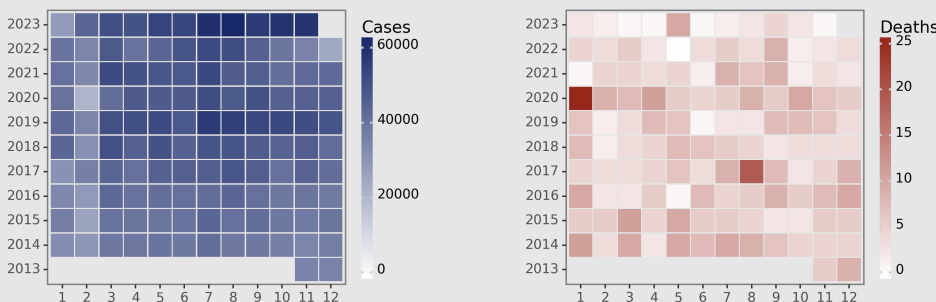
Cases Analysis

The provided data on syphilis cases in the Chinese mainland over a decade indicate fluctuating but overall increasing trends. Initial months in 2013 recorded approximately 35,000 cases per month, which gradually increased to averages often exceeding 45,000 by 2023. Seasonal fluctuations are seen with peaks often occurring in the warmer months, such as July and August, and dips commonly in February. The highest recorded cases were in August 2023, with 61,068 cases, suggesting a concerning upward trajectory that necessitates enhanced public health interventions and awareness programs.

Deaths Analysis

Deaths due to syphilis have remained low throughout the decade, often in single digits per month, indicating effective management once cases are identified. A stark anomaly occurs in January 2020 with a sudden spike to 25 deaths, potentially indicating either a reporting surge or an issue with treatment access or efficacy during that period. Despite the overall rise in cases, deaths have not proportionately increased, which could reflect improvements in diagnosis, treatment access, and disease management. The data show continued low mortality, with only 1 death in November 2023 despite high case numbers.

Distribution



CNIDs

Free, Lightweight, Open-source,
Smart Surveillance for
Chinese Infectious Diseases

Version: 2024-01-07 (UTC+)