

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Syphilis

November 2023

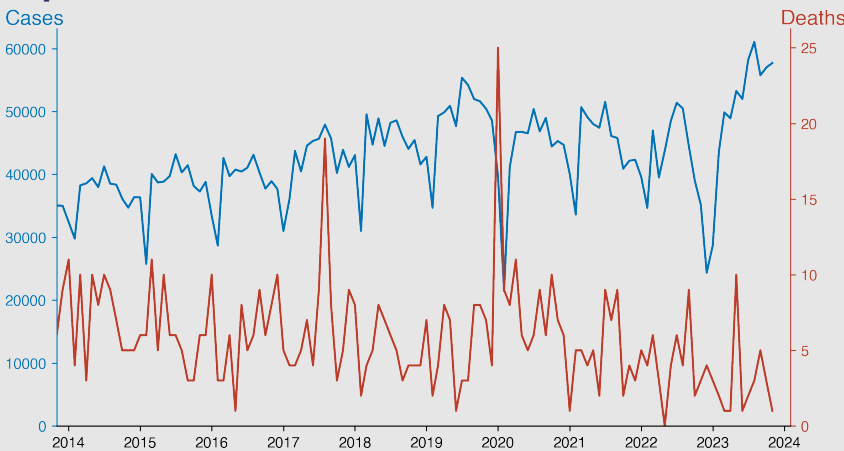
Introduction

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted bacterial infection caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*. The disease progresses in distinct stages, initially presenting as a painless sore, typically around the genital area, rectum, or mouth. If untreated, the infection can give rise to various health problems over the years. Syphilis can spread through sexual contact, shared needles, or from an infected mother to her baby during childbirth. Treatable with antibiotics, prevention methods include safe sex practices and regular testing.

Highlights

- Consistent increase in syphilis cases over the years, with a notable spike in recent months, reaching a high of 61,068 cases in August 2023.
- Mortality rate remains relatively low, with the majority of months reporting single-digit death counts, despite the growing case numbers.
- November 2023 saw 57,719 reported cases of syphilis in the Chinese mainland, which is among the highest monthly case counts observed, with a minimal death count of just 1.
- The overall trend signifies a worsening syphilis situation in terms of case counts, necessitating robust public health interventions to curb transmission.

Temporal Trend



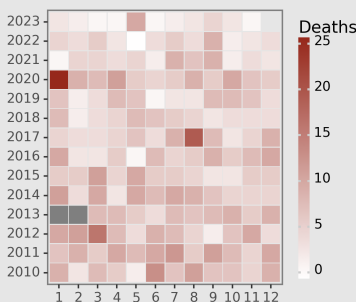
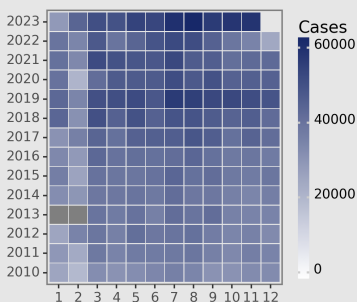
Cases Analysis

Between January 2010 and November 2023, reported Syphilis cases in the Chinese mainland show an upward trend, with peak values occurring in the summer months, indicative of seasonal variation. The data captures an increase in cases from 25,577 in January 2010 to a high of 61,068 in August 2023. Notable fluctuations are evident, such as a dip in February 2020, possibly linked to the COVID-19 outbreak and associated restrictions. The apparent seasonality and year-by-year rise suggest changing sexual health behaviors or reporting practices over the years.

Deaths Analysis

Syphilis-related deaths remained low throughout the same period, with most months reporting single-digit fatalities. The highest reported deaths occurred in January 2020 (25 deaths), an outlier against the overall trend. Deaths do not appear to follow a clear seasonal pattern and are likely influenced by factors such as treatment efficacy and reporting accuracy. The mortality rate is relatively stable, suggesting that while cases are increasing, the management of the disease might be preventing a concomitant rise in deaths.

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