# Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

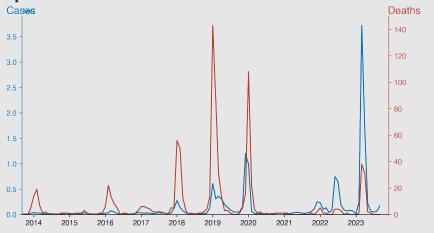
# Influenza

September 2023

### Introduction

Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is an infectious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It affects the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. Symptoms can range from mild to severe and typically include fever, cough, sore throat, muscle aches, and fatigue. Influenza spreads from person to person primarily via respiratory droplets. It can lead to complications, especially in high-risk groups. Annual vaccination is the primary prevention strategy. Antiviral medications are available for treatment. Flu outbreaks occur yearly, usually in cooler months, and can sometimes lead to pandemics with widespread illness.

### **Temporal Trend**



### **Highlights**

There is a seasonal surge in Influenza cases, with peaks typically seen in the colder months (January to March) and smaller peaks in the summer months (June to July), aligning with typical global influenza seasons.

- The highest number of cases was reported in March 2023 with over 3.7 million cases, an unprecedented increase in the trend.
- Despite the high fluctuation in case numbers, the number of deaths remains relatively low indicating a low case fatality rate throughout the years.
- To date, as of September 2023, there are approximately 168,963 cases reported with no deaths indicative of the low severity of Influenza this season.

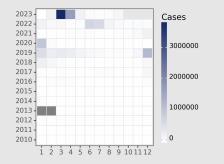
## **Cases Analysis**

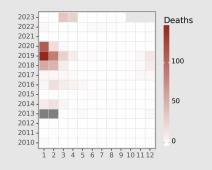
Over the past 13 years, the number of influenza cases in mainland China typically peaked in the winter months, whilst hitting the lowest point in the summer. The amount of detected cases began to rise significantly from 2017, reaching its zenith in March 2023 with a total of 3721370 cases. The trend of reported cases in recent years showed an increase in flu activity, suggesting that enhanced surveillance, improved diagnostic testing or more severe flu seasons potentially enhanced the reported case numbers. The sudden fall in cases in April 2020 might be due to infection-control measures for the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing influenza transmission.

## **Deaths Analysis**

The death rate remains relatively low irrespective of the number of cases reported, suggesting effective clinical management of influenza in China. The years with the highest death rates were observed in 2014, 2018, and 2019, each reporting more than 50 deaths, the majority occurring in January - considered the peak of China's flu season. However, the death rate remained consistently low in the past few years with only minor fluctuations. This could be due to improved medical practices, increased vaccination, and prompt antiviral treatment. It's important to note that the death count only includes laboratory confirmed Influenza deaths, actual death toll may be higher.

#### Distribution





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