

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

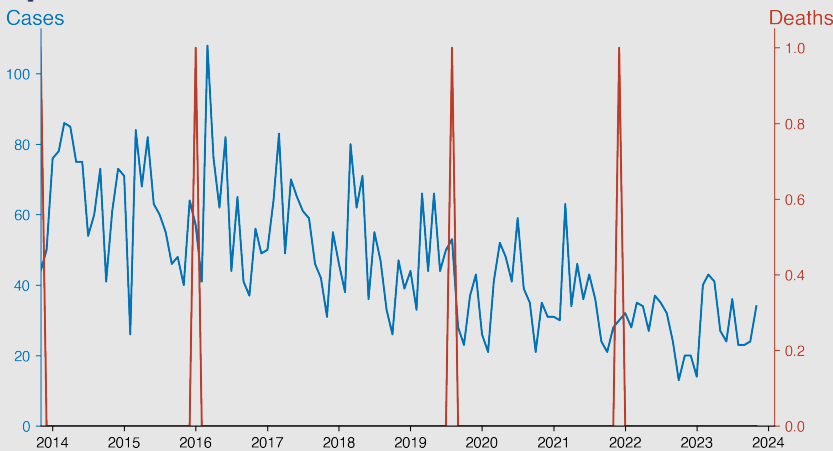
Leprosy

November 2023

Introduction

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic infectious illness caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*. It primarily affects the peripheral nerves and mucosa of the upper respiratory tract, leading to skin lesions, muscle weakness, and numbness. While highly contagious, it has a long incubation period, often taking 5-7 years to show symptoms. Treatable with a multi-drug therapy, early diagnosis is key to preventing disability. Despite dramatic reduction globally, it remains prevalent in parts of Asia, Africa and South America. WHO provides free treatment for all diagnosed cases.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- Trend analysis indicates a decline in leprosy cases in mainland China, with the highest monthly cases (108) in March 2016 and the lowest (13) in October 2022.
- Mortality is very low, with only three deaths reported over ten years, emphasizing effective management of the disease.
- Current data as of November 2023 displays 34 cases and zero deaths, signifying a low but persistent incidence of leprosy.
- Seasonal variations in reporting are apparent, but the overall trend appears to be downward, suggesting improvements in disease control and prevention.

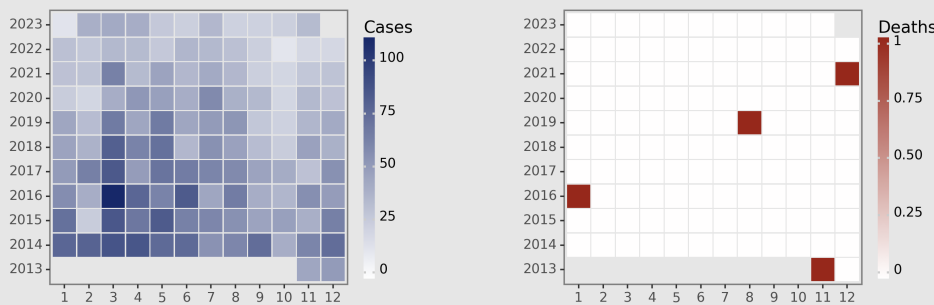
Cases Analysis

Over the observed period from November 2013 to November 2023, leprosy cases in Chinese mainland displayed an overall fluctuating but without clear trend, with monthly case counts ranging from 13 to 108. Notably, there was a peak of 108 cases reported in March 2016, whereas the lowest count of 13 occurred in October 2022. The majority of months reported fewer than 80 cases, suggesting controlled endemicity. However, occasional peaks emphasize the need for ongoing surveillance and targeted interventions.

Deaths Analysis

Throughout the observed span of a decade, leprosy-associated mortality in Chinese mainland was exceedingly low, with only three deaths, each occurring in different years: November 2013, January 2016, and December 2021. The death count never exceeded one per month, indicating a very low case-fatality rate and suggesting that despite the persistence of leprosy cases, the health system's response, in terms of treatment and management, may be effective in preventing fatal outcomes of the disease.

Distribution



CNIDs

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

Version: 2024-01-07 (UTC+)