Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Plague

November 2023

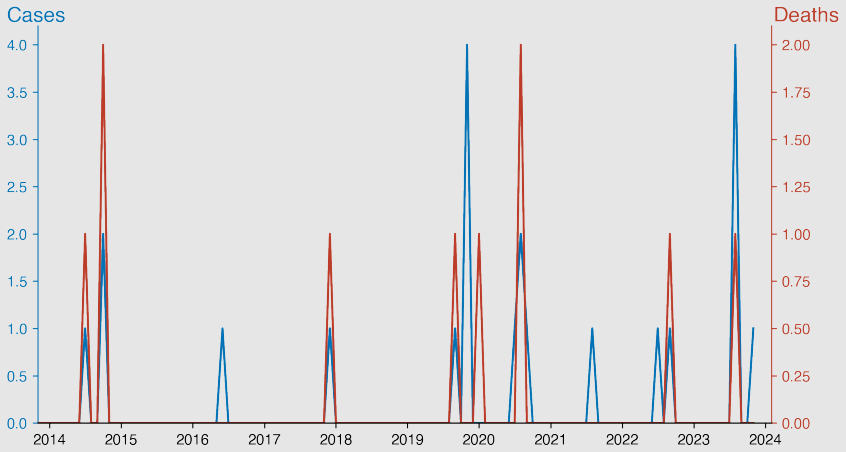
Introduction

Plague is a severe, potentially fatal infectious disease caused by the bacterium Yersinia pestis. It primarily affects rodents such as rats and can spread to humans via flea bites or handling infected animals. Plague is infamous for causing the "Black Death" in the Middle Ages, killing millions. It typically presents in three forms: Bubonic, septicemic, and pneumonic, each with varying symptoms and levels of severity. Despite its historical significance, plague is now rare and treatable with antibiotics if caught early.

Highlights

- Plague occurrences in China mainland are sporadic, with a small number of cases each year and occasional deaths.
- A slight increase in cases occurred in 2019 November (4 cases) and in 2023 August (4 cases, 1 death), indicating potential sporadic outbreaks.
- Mortality associated with reported plague cases is inconsistent, suggesting variability in the detection, reporting, or effectiveness of treatment interventions over time.
- The latest data from 2023 November show a single case with no associated death, pointing to continued surveillance and response efforts.

Temporal Trend



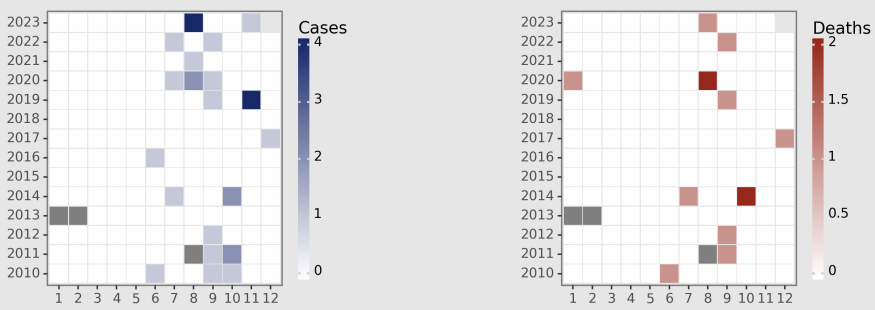
Cases Analysis

The data indicates sporadic plague cases in the Chinese mainland from 2010 to 2023, with a total of 22 instances reported in this period. The cases are few and isolated, with occurrences in June, September, October, and August of various years. The highest number of cases in a single month was recorded in November 2019, with 4 cases. The overall trend suggests infrequent outbreaks with no apparent seasonal pattern, reflecting rare transmissions or limited reporting.

Deaths Analysis

There were a total of 11 deaths from plague between 2010 and 2023, signifying a roughly 50% case fatality rate. The majority of years recorded zero deaths, with the maximum in a single month being 2, observed in October 2014 and August 2020. Deaths occurred in months with reported cases but were not consistent across all reporting months, indicating variable outcomes of infection severity and effectiveness of medical interventions applied upon infection identification.

Distribution



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