Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

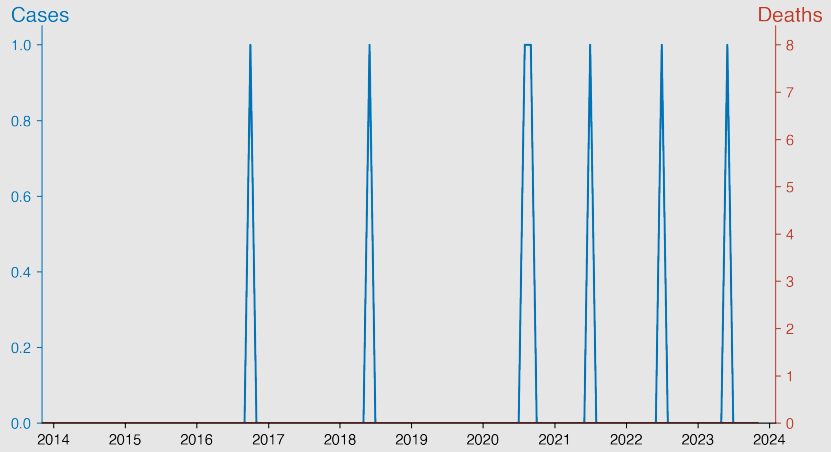
Diphtheria

November 2023

Introduction

Diphtheria is a contagious bacterial disease affecting the upper respiratory tract. It's caused by Corynebacterium diphtheriae, transmitted through respiratory droplets, close physical contact, and rarely, contaminated objects. Symptoms include sore throat, fever, and swollen glands, leading to a thick, gray membrane covering the throat and tonsils. Diphtheria can potentially lead to severe complications like myocarditis and neuritis. Vaccination forms a key part of the prevention strategy.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

Diphtheria incidence in mainland China from 2010 to 2023 has been fairly low, with isolated cases occurring intermittently.
2. There seems to be a pattern of a single case approximately every year from 2016, predominantly during the middle of the year from April to August. This indicates a minimal, potentially seasonal trend.
3. Despite the low incidence, there have been recorded deaths until 2012, though the death count since has been zero, suggesting improved healthcare, more effective treatments, or robust vaccination programs.
4. As of November 2023, there have been no new reported cases or deaths this year, showing consistent effectiveness of disease control measures.

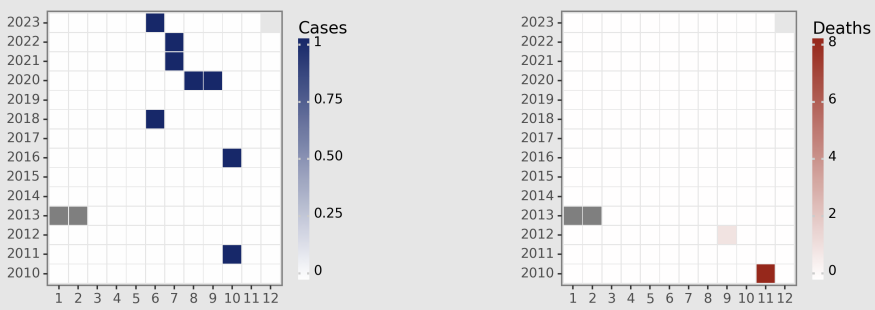
Cases Analysis

Over the 13-year span from 2010 to 2023, the records indicate a very low incidence of diphtheria in mainland China, with reported cases remaining at zero most months. However, there was a sporadic case reported in October 2011, another in October 2016, and single cases reported in June 2018, August and September of 2020, July 2021, and July 2022. The last case occurred in June 2023. This suggests a rare but persistent presence of the disease.

Deaths Analysis

Reported data reveals few instances of fatal diphtheria in the same period. There were two recorded instances of fatalities, both without corresponding reported cases. The first occurred in November 2010 with 8 deaths and the second in September 2012 with a single fatality. Other than these instances, no other fatalities have been reported till the end of the data set in November 2023, which suggests effective management or possibly underreporting of fatal cases.

Distribution



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