

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

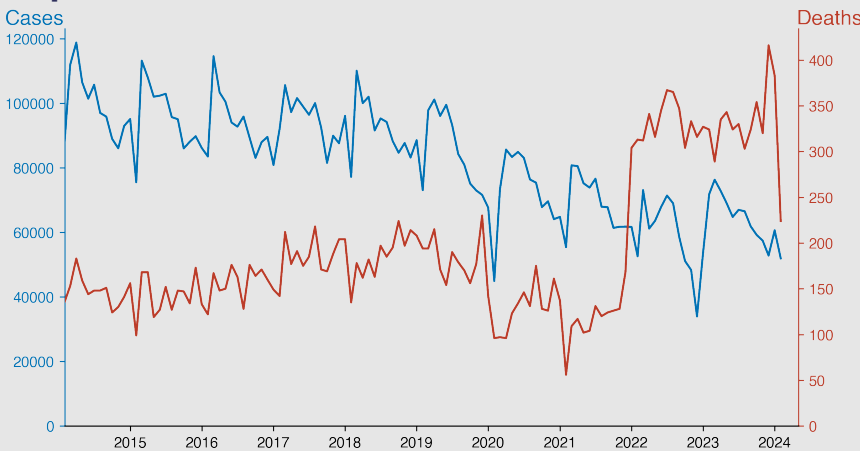
Tuberculosis

February 2024

Introduction

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease primarily affecting the lungs and caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It is transmitted through airborne droplets when people with pulmonary TB cough, speak, or sneeze. TB can be latent, where the bacteria remain inactive within the body without causing symptoms, or active, leading to illness. Symptoms of active TB include a persistent cough, fever, night sweats, and weight loss. Without proper treatment, TB can be life-threatening. A combination of antibiotics over an extended period is required to fully eradicate the infection. Vaccination, using the Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine, offers partial protection.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- Tuberculosis (TB) cases in mainland China show a downward trend from averages of 100,000 per month in 2014 to 50,000-70,000 in 2024.
- TB-related deaths have alarmingly more than doubled from 2014 (150-200/month) to 2024 (300-400/month), suggesting higher virulence or treatment issues.
- Case numbers usually peak around March-April and fall to their lowest in November-December, a consistent annual trend.
- Death numbers lack a seasonal pattern, implying factors like healthcare availability or disease strain severity may drive mortality rates.

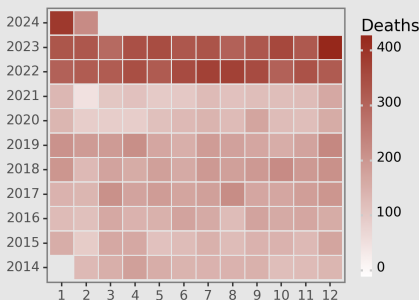
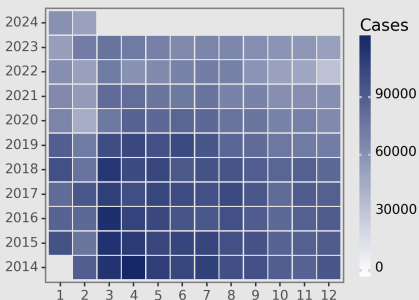
Cases Analysis

Over time, reported tuberculosis cases in mainland China have shown a significant decline, with a noticeable dip in 2020 February, which coincides with the COVID-19 pandemic's escalation that may have disrupted both reporting and transmission patterns. A gradual recovery follows, but the numbers remain below pre-pandemic levels. The previous peaks around March yearly could suggest seasonal effects or a culmination of reporting from prior months. Post-2020, there is not a clear return to previous trends, indicating potential long-term impacts on tuberculosis case rates.

Deaths Analysis

Reported deaths from tuberculosis in China show a gradual increase from 2014 through 2019. Despite the drop in reported cases in 2020, the number of reported deaths fluctuates with no clear trend. A dramatic increase in mortality is observed beginning in January 2022, which persists throughout the year. This sharp rise could be due to several factors, such as changes in reporting accuracy, delayed healthcare access due to COVID-19, or actual increases in tuberculosis mortality. It is crucial to investigate these changes to determine the direct causes and address the heightened mortality rates.

Distribution



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