

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

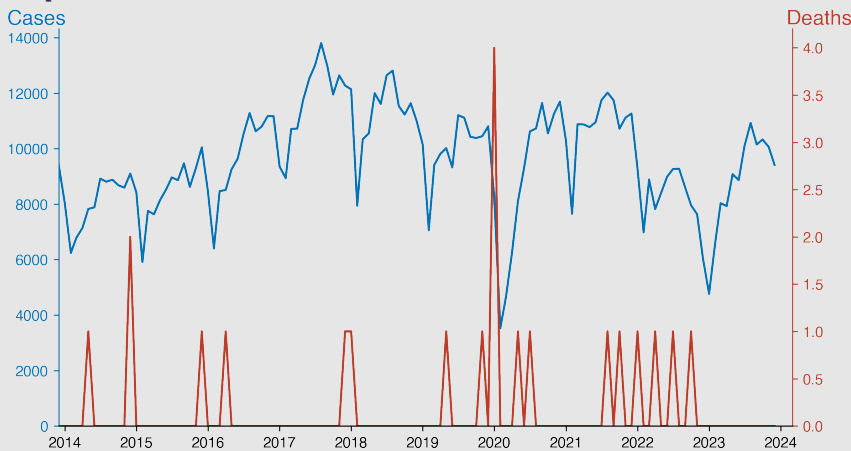
Gonorrhea

December 2023

Introduction

Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted bacterial infection caused by *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. It primarily affects the mucous membranes of the body, including the urethra, rectum, throat, and in women, the cervix. Symptoms, if present, may include painful urination or abnormal discharge, but many infected individuals may remain asymptomatic. Early detection and treatment with antibiotics are essential to prevent severe complications like infertility or disseminated infections. It is preventable through safe sex practices and regular screening.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- Fluctuating gonorrhea cases in Chinese mainland from 2013 to 2023, with a noticeable rise starting in 2016 and a decline in 2020 coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.
- Extremely low mortality associated with gonorrhea, as evidenced by infrequent deaths, shows the condition's non-fatal nature under treatment.
- A stark decrease in cases observed in 2020, likely due to pandemic-related restrictions affecting sexual activity or case reporting.
- Trends from late 2022 through 2023 indicate a rebound in case numbers toward pre-pandemic levels as public health restrictions ease.

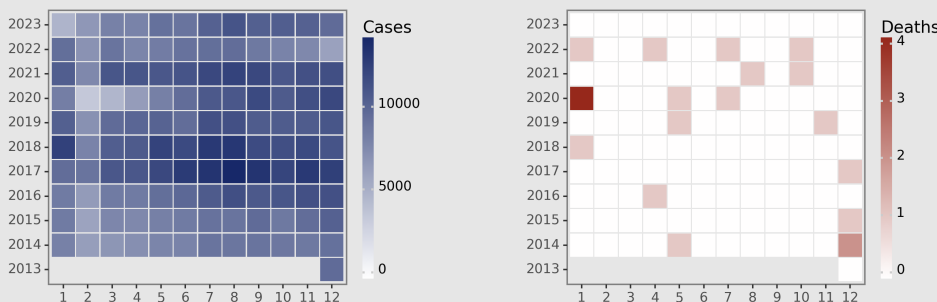
Cases Analysis

From December 2013 to December 2023, reported gonorrhea cases in mainland China show seasonality with troughs early in the year and peaks around summer. Notably, February 2020 had a sharp decline in cases (3524), which might be attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated control measures. Overall, a gradual increase is evident from 9418 cases (December 2013) to yearly highs, peaking in 2017 (13803 in August) and then declining moderately towards 2023. The data suggests active transmission with fluctuating intensities, possibly influenced by public health campaigns, social behaviors, and reporting capabilities.

Deaths Analysis

Over the decade (2013-2023), gonorrhea-associated mortality is notably rare, with only 13 deaths reported despite considerable morbidity. Deaths are sporadic, with no evident temporal trend, occurring both in months with relatively lower cases (May 2014, one death) and higher cases (January 2020, four deaths), suggesting that fatalities may be more associated with complications or comorbidities rather than the overall incidence rate. The low death rate indicates that while gonorrhea is widespread, it is rarely fatal, possibly due to effective antibiotic treatment or case management strategies in China.

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