

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

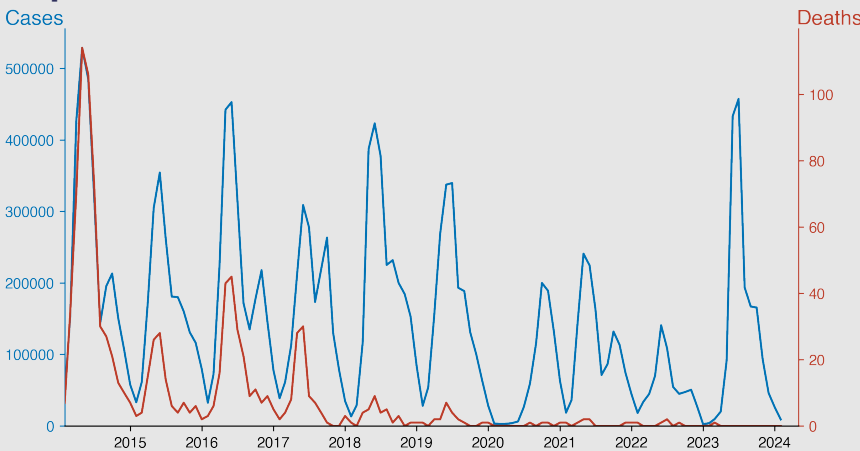
Hand foot and mouth disease

February 2024

Introduction

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common viral illness that primarily affects infants and children. Caused by enteroviruses, such as Coxsackievirus A16 and Enterovirus 71, the disease is characterized by sores in the mouth and a rash on the hands and feet. Transmission occurs through direct contact with an infected person's nose and throat secretions, saliva, fluid from blisters, or stool. HFMD is usually mild and self-limiting, with symptoms including fever, reduced appetite, sore throat, and feeling unwell, followed by blister-like lesions. There is no specific treatment, and prevention relies on good hygiene practices.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- There is a clear seasonal trend, with cases peaking from April to July each year. The highest peak previously seen was in May 2014 with 528,777 cases.
- From 2014 to 2020, there was an overall gradual decrease in both cases and deaths. The number of cases significantly dropped in 2020, likely due to measures implemented amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- However, a sharp increase in cases was observed in June and July 2023, reaching levels comparable to the highs of 2014.
- As of February 2024, the disease situation appears to be under control, with only 9,093 cases and no reported deaths.

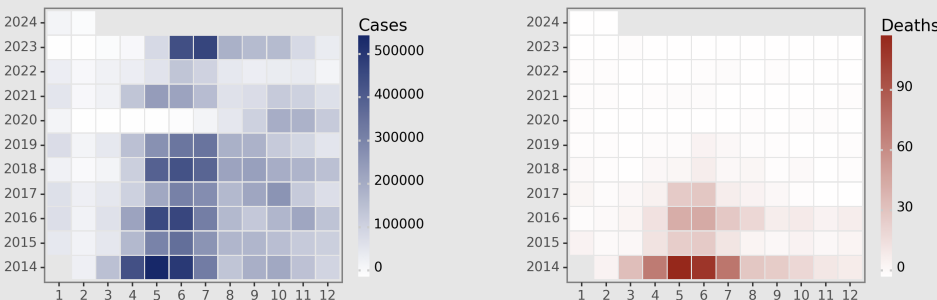
Cases Analysis

Examining the data for Hand foot and mouth disease (HFMD) in Chinese mainland from February 2014 to February 2024, there is some seasonality with peaks usually occurring between April to July each year, indicating a probable increase of cases in warmer months. The highest number of cases was reported in June 2023 with 433,084 incidents. After peaking in mid-2014, 2015, 2016, and 2018, there appeared to be a downward trend from the year 2019. However, in 2023, the pattern suddenly returned to high levels almost comparable to previous peak periods.

Deaths Analysis

The mortality associated with HFMD in Chinese mainland from 2014 to 2024 followed a downward trajectory, showing high fatalities in the early years with a peak of 114 deaths in May 2014. The death counts decreased considerably by 2024, with no deaths reported from March 2023 onward. Initially, the fatality rate was higher during the peak months of transmission but later years demonstrate successful mitigation of severe outcomes, potentially attributed to improved medical care, public health interventions, and possible heightened immunity within the population.

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