

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Rubella

October 2023

Introduction

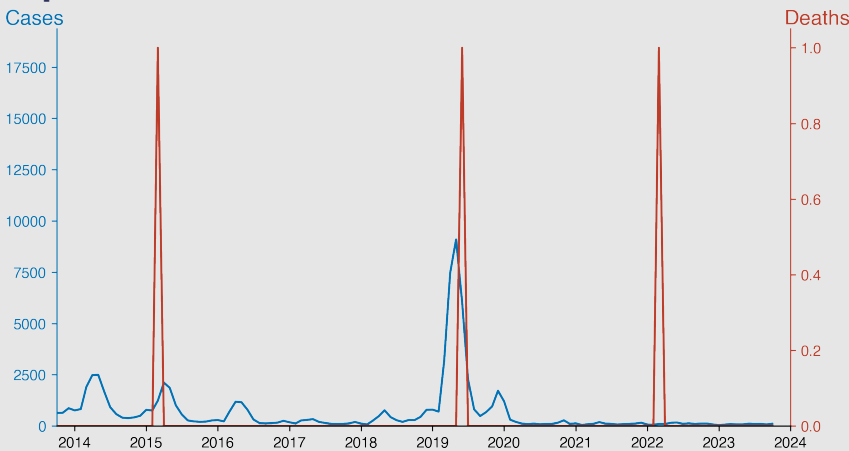
Rubella, also known as German measles or three-day measles, is a contagious viral disease characterized by low-grade fever, sore throat, and a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body. It is caused by the rubella virus, primarily transmitted via airborne droplets when infected people sneeze or cough. While generally mild in children and adults, rubella infection during early pregnancy can lead to serious congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) in the fetus, resulting in a range of birth defects. Vaccination is effective for prevention.

Highlights

A declining trend in rubella cases observed, with a peak in 2010 and 2011, followed by a significant decrease to fewer than 200 cases per month since 2017.

- Sporadic outbreaks with higher numbers of cases occurred in certain months and years (e.g., April 2019 with 7471 cases), suggesting that rubella is not entirely controlled in the population.
- Overall low mortality, with very few deaths reported over the years, indicating that while transmission occurred, it was not commonly associated with high fatality.
- The data for 2023 show consistently low case numbers, with cases remaining below 120 per month, suggesting ongoing but low-level transmission of rubella in mainland China.

Temporal Trend



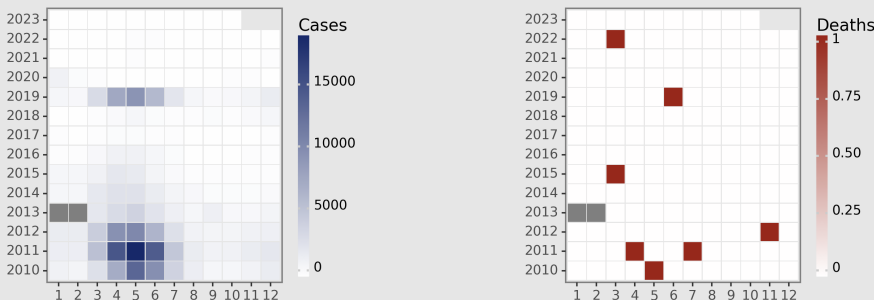
Cases Analysis

Rubella cases in mainland China peaked significantly in May 2010, April 2011, and May 2011 but have not reached those figures since. There appears to be a seasonal trend with higher cases in the spring months, particularly from March to May. Post-2011, there has been a notable decline in the number of cases, with a substantial drop observed from 2019 to 2023. No data was reported for January and February 2013, potentially indicating missing values or reporting issues. The decline beginning in 2020 might be associated with public health measures for COVID-19 that also mitigated rubella transmission.

Deaths Analysis

The data shows a very low mortality rate associated with rubella, with only three recorded deaths over the 13-year period. The first death occurred in May 2010, followed by a single death in April 2011 and another in July 2011. Then a death in March 2015, June 2019, and March 2022. This infrequency suggests that rubella, while highly infectious, is not typically a deadly disease in the reported population, and/or that there may be under-reporting of mortality or effective management and treatment that prevent death in rubella cases on the mainland of China.

Distribution



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Version: 2023-12-24 (UTC+)

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