

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Hepatitis B

December 2023

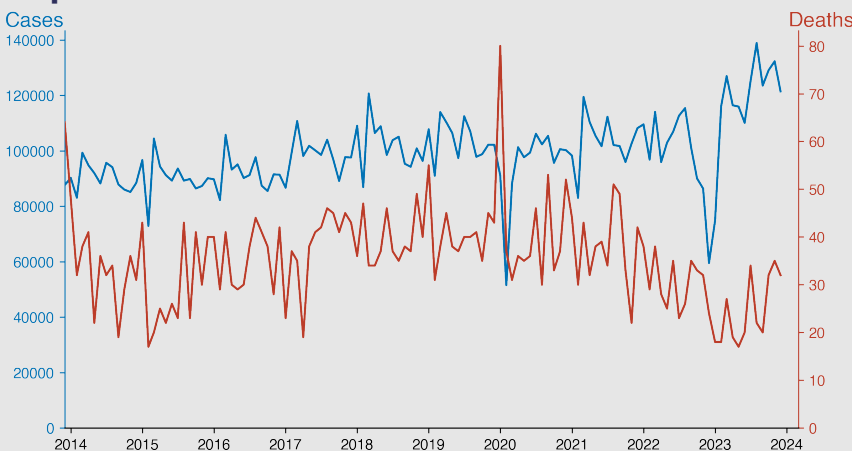
Introduction

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV). It's transmitted through contact with the blood, semen, or other body fluids of an infected person. It can cause both acute and chronic disease, ranging in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness. Chronic HBV can lead to liver cirrhosis, cancer, or failure. Vaccination can prevent the infection and is recommended for all infants at birth, or for those at high risk.

Highlights

- Hepatitis B case numbers have shown an increasing trend over the decade, reaching a peak in August 2023 with 138,875 cases.
- The death rate associated with Hepatitis B has remained relatively low throughout the period, with a notable trough in January and February 2023, each reporting only 18 deaths.
- Despite fluctuations, there is no clear trend in the mortality data, suggesting improvements in treatment or access to care over time.
- December 2023 concluded with 121,415 cases and 32 deaths, indicating ongoing transmission and the continued need for public health intervention.

Temporal Trend



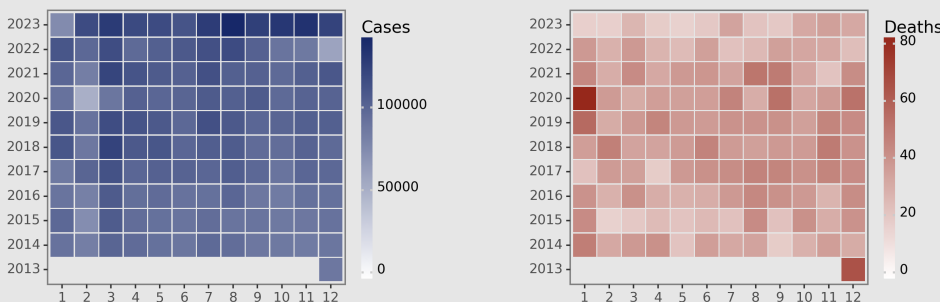
Cases Analysis

Hepatitis B cases in Chinese mainland show a sustained high endemicity, presenting monthly fluctuations but with an apparent seasonal pattern; cases tend to peak during the spring and summer months. The years 2013 to 2023 display varied incidence rates, with a notable increase from 2013 to peak levels in 2023. An uncharacteristic dip in February 2020 corresponds temporally with the COVID-19 pandemic onset, suggesting potential impacts on surveillance or health-seeking behaviors. However, the quick resurgence to pre-pandemic levels implies adaptation to the concurrent epidemic conditions.

Deaths Analysis

From December 2013 to December 2023, deaths due to Hepatitis B in the Chinese mainland were relatively low compared to the high number of cases reported. Monthly death counts remained generally stable, with minor variations and no clear upward or downward trend. The case-fatality rate over the period was consistently low, indicating effective management and treatment protocols. Sporadic spikes in mortality, such as in January 2020, are observed, but without a sustained increase, these likely reflect natural variability rather than a deteriorating situation or failure of healthcare responses.

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