

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

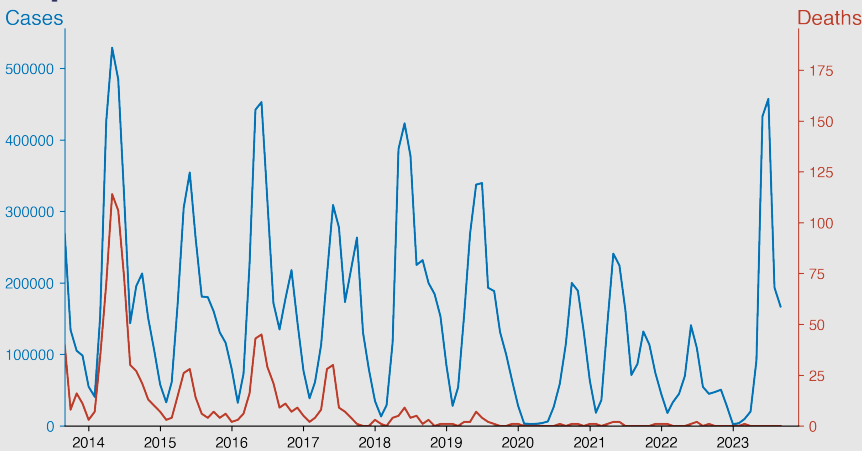
Hand foot and mouth disease

September 2023

Introduction

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is an infectious illness typically caused by coxsackievirus A16 and enterovirus 71. It commonly affects children but can occur in adults. Characterized by fever, sore throat, and blisters on the hands, feet, and inside the mouth, HFMD spreads through direct contact with nasal secretions, saliva, fluid from blisters, or stool of an infected person. While normally self-limiting and resolving within 7 to 10 days, HFMD can sometimes lead to complications, especially with enterovirus 71 infections. Preventative measures include good hygiene practices and isolating infected individuals to limit transmission.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

Significant reduction in Hand foot and mouth disease cases in China from 2010 with over 354,000 cases and 186 deaths in May to September 2023 with 166,980 cases and no deaths reported. This is indicative of improved disease management and prevention.

- Peaks are prominently noticed during the warmer months (May-June) across the years. Exemplifying this, the jump from 20,105 to 433,084 cases was seen from April to June in 2023. Hence, the disease exhibits clear seasonality.
- Even though consistent fluctuations are noted in the disease cases, a positive trend is the relatively low number or lack of fatalities especially evident post-2017.

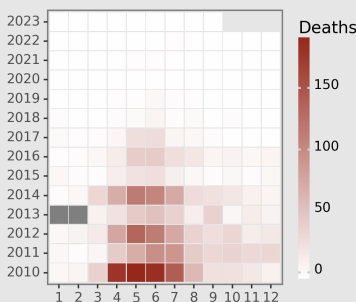
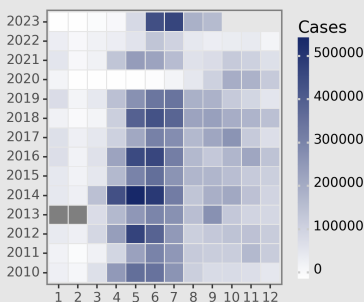
Cases Analysis

There has been a marked disparity in reported cases of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) over the years in mainland China, with a noticeable seasonal pattern. A sharp increase is observed during April, reaching a peak around June, and then declining from July onwards. While the exact number of cases fluctuates each year, there has been a trend of an overall increase in yearly case numbers since 2010. However, there was a significant drop in cases in 2020, which might be due to stringent health measures during the Covid-19 pandemic. Reports for 2023 show an unprecedented surge in June, indicating potentially evolving dynamics of disease transmission.

Deaths Analysis

The number of deaths from HFMD presents a generally low mortality, with the highest number recorded in April 2010 with 175 fatalities. A decrease in the number of deaths can be seen over the years, despite the increasing number of cases. This might suggest improvements in healthcare facilities and early detection strategies. The highest death rate coincides with the peak of cases around April-June, indicating deaths are closely related to the severity of the outbreak. Similar to the cases, there has been a noticeable drop in fatalities recorded during 2020, aligning with the pandemic period. Interestingly, no fatal cases are reported after April 2023 despite the surge in disease cases.

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