

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

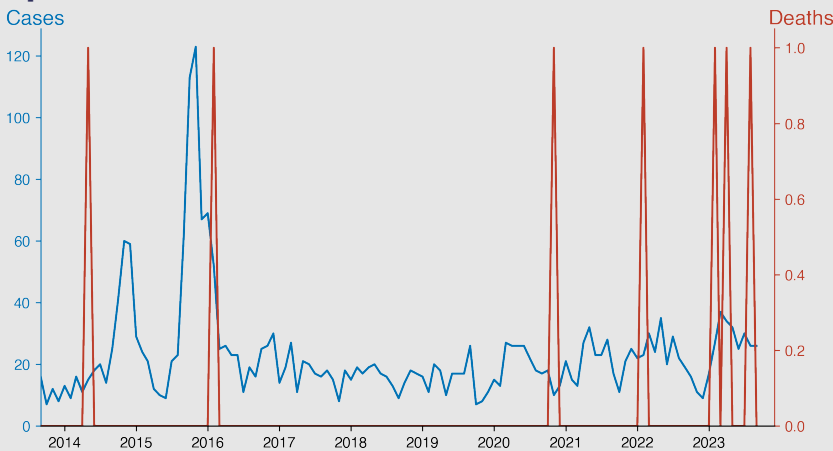
Kala azar

September 2023

Introduction

Kala azar, also known as visceral leishmaniasis, is a parasitic disease caused by the Leishmania genus, transmitted through the bites of infected female phlebotomine sandflies. It affects the visceral organs, predominantly the spleen, liver, and bone marrow. Symptoms include fever, weight loss, anemia, and enlargement of the spleen and liver. It's prevalent in tropical and subtropical regions, with significant occurrences in East Africa, Brazil, India, and Bangladesh. If untreated, kala azar can have a fatal outcome, but effective treatments exist, including antimonial compounds and amphotericin B. Control measures involve reducing sandfly populations and preventing bites.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- There has been a general declining trend in the number of Kala azar cases from 2010, when cases peaked around 50+ monthly, to 2023, with averages around 25 cases per month.
- Deaths linked to Kala azar have remained extremely low, almost negligible, with one death occurring roughly once per year. However, 2023 saw a slight uptick with four deaths.
- Case numbers have shown some seasonal variation, with a trend towards higher case numbers in the first half of the year, typically peaking in the spring.
- Despite reductions in case numbers, Kala azar maintains a persistent presence, indicating the disease is endemic in certain areas in China.

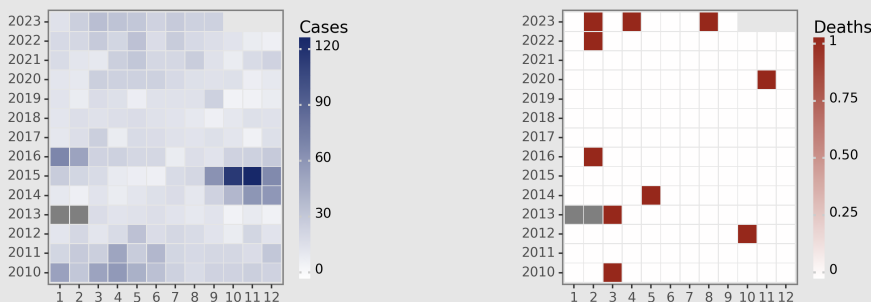
Cases Analysis

The presented data reveals consistent cases of Kala azar in mainland China over the years. The number of cases shows periodic peaks, especially in the cooler months (October to February), followed by a cyclical decrease during the warmer months (June to August). There are exceptional spikes in October 2015 and November 2015, where cases reached 113 and 123 respectively, significant outliers compared to the average monthly case tally. Despite these peaks, a steady declining trend is seen from 2010 where the cases kick-off at 53 in January to fewer cases by 2023.

Deaths Analysis

In contrast to the number of cases, the number of deaths remains extremely low, with most months reporting zero deaths. Only 9 monthly entries out of the total reported a single death each. An increase in deaths is noticed in 2023, with three casualties in February, April and August, however, it's not consistent nor drastic. Overall, the mortality rate is low, implying a potentially successful response from health bodies or the disease's ordinarily low fatality rate in this region.

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