Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

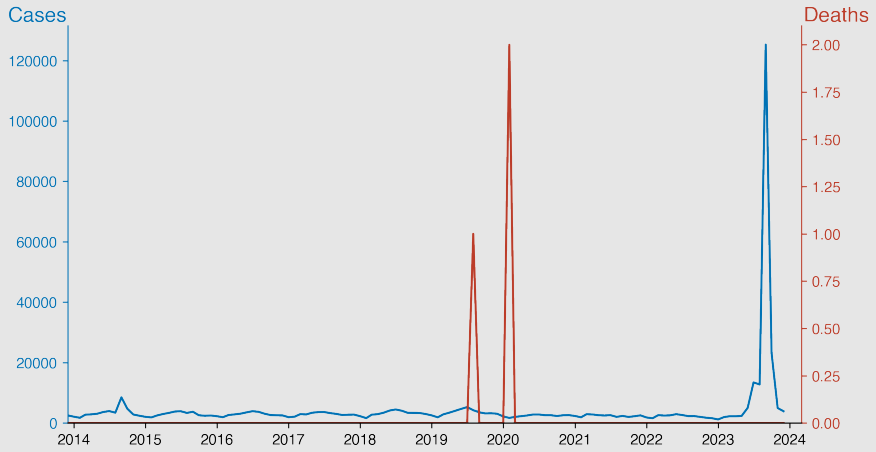
Acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis

December 2023

Introduction

Acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis (AHC) is a highly contagious viral infection primarily affecting the surface of the eye. It is characterized by sudden onset of symptoms such as redness, swelling, and severe pain in the eyes, accompanied by bleeding under the conjunctiva and clear, watery discharge. Commonly caused by Enterovirus 70 and Coxsackie A24 variants, AHC can affect people of any age and is known to cause large-scale outbreaks, particularly in tropical and subtropical regions. Although frightening, it is generally self-limiting with recovery usually occurring within 1-2 weeks.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- The data reveals clear seasonal patterns, with cases peaking each summer, highlighted by an unprecedented surge in September 2023 with 125,264 cases.
- A general upward trend in annual cases is noted, culminating in the highest numbers observed in 2023 since the dataset's inception.
- Mortality remains exceptionally low, with only three deaths recorded across the entire dataset, suggesting a generally non-fatal disease course.
- Given the massive rise in cases in 2023, an immediate epidemiological response is imperative to uncover underlying factors and implement effective public health interventions.

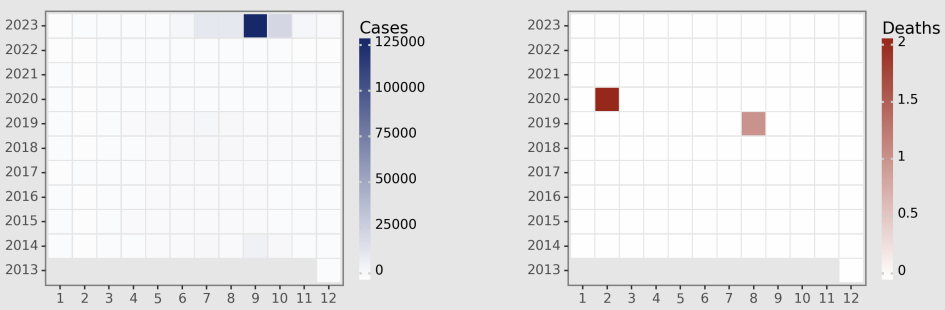
Cases Analysis

The data indicates a seasonal pattern for Acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis (AHC) with peaks typically in the summer months, particularly July and August. There was a dramatic increase in reported cases beginning in June 2023, reaching an unprecedented peak in September 2023 with 125,264 cases, which is substantially higher than any previous month. Following this peak, case numbers declined but remained elevated compared to the prior historical data. This suggests a potential outbreak or an improved surveillance and reporting system implemented around mid-2023.

Deaths Analysis

Throughout the observed period, there have been only three reported deaths associated with AHC, which indicates a very low mortality rate for this disease. The first death occurred in August 2019, and the other two in February 2020. Given the significant rise in cases in 2023 without any reported deaths, it suggests either an improvement in the management and treatment of AHC or that the strain(s) circulating during this time was less virulent. Careful analysis of the cause of these deaths and their lack in the wake of the 2023 surge would be needed for a definitive interpretation.

Distribution



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