

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

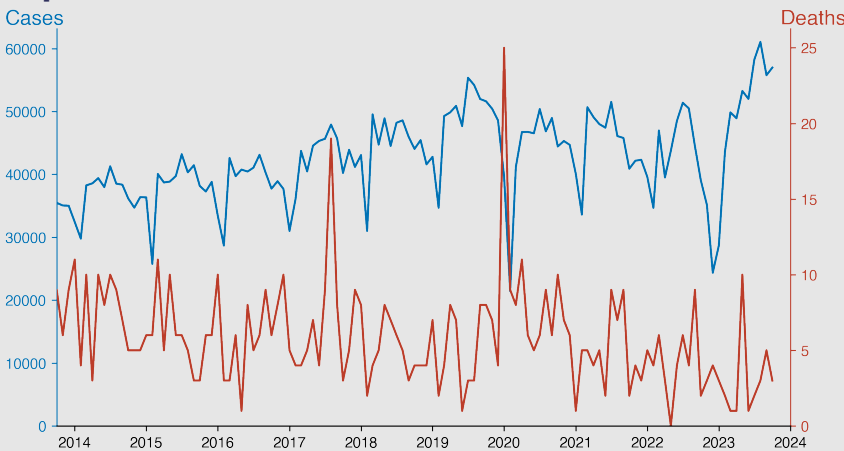
Syphilis

October 2023

Introduction

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*. It is primarily spread through sexual contact, but can also be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy, leading to congenital syphilis. The disease progresses through distinct stages: primary, secondary, latent, and tertiary syphilis, each with varying symptoms. The primary stage often presents with a painless ulcer known as a chancre. If untreated, syphilis can eventually cause serious health problems affecting the heart, brain, and other organs. Diagnosis is through blood tests and direct microscopic examination, with penicillin being the standard treatment.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- Increasing trend in syphilis cases from 2010 to 2023, with a significant surge in the most recent recorded months.
- Despite the rise in cases, the number of deaths remains low, with no clear trend in mortality, and recent months showing minimal fatalities.
- Notable fluctuations in cases possibly related to seasonal changes or reporting practices, with some peaks and troughs observed across years.
- A sharp decrease in cases in 2020 February possibly due to reduced healthcare access or reporting during the COVID-19 pandemic, but a subsequent rebound in case numbers.

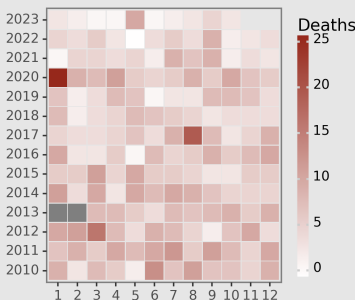
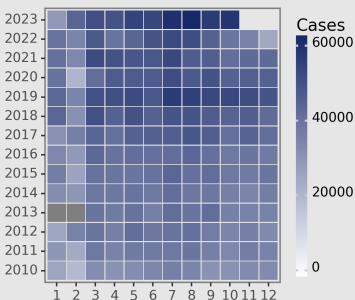
Cases Analysis

Between January 2010 and October 2023, mainland China's reported syphilis cases demonstrate an ascending trend over the years. Initial cases hovered around 30,000 per month but increased significantly to cross the 50,000 mark in later years. Noteworthy peaks occur periodically, suggesting possible seasonal or episodic factors influencing transmission dynamics. The data implies consistent propagation of the infection and underscores the need for effective public health interventions to curb syphilis transmission.

Deaths Analysis

Syphilis-related deaths in mainland China from January 2010 to October 2023 are relatively infrequent considering the volume of cases, with monthly deaths mostly in the single digits and occasionally reaching low double digits. The highest number of deaths recorded in a single month is 25 (January 2020), which is an anomaly in the dataset. This may suggest successful management of complications or underreporting of mortality. Despite low mortality, the persistence of cases emphasizes the need for sustained surveillance and treatment strategies.

Distribution



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