Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Influenza

February 2024

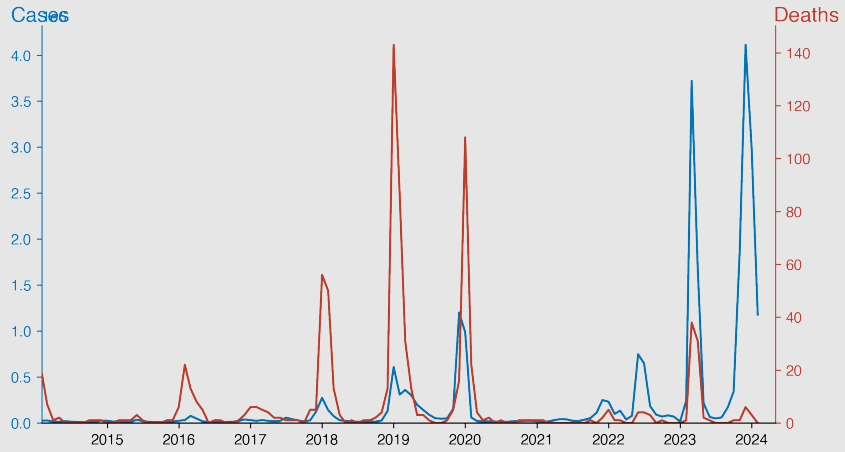
Introduction

Influenza, or the flu, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It affects the nose, throat, and occasionally the lungs. It spreads through airborne droplets from coughs or sneezes of infected individuals, leading to mild to severe disease. Severe cases can cause fatal complications. The disease intensity varies seasonally, with vaccines designed to mitigate its effects. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, and fatigue. Antiviral medications can treat severe cases or those at risk of complications.

Highlights

- Major influenza outbreak observed in March 2023 with over 3.7 million cases, followed by 1.7 million in April 2023.
- High case numbers persisted in November and December 2023, indicating continuous disease transmission.
- By February 2024, substantial case decrease observed (1,179,029 cases), with zero influenza-associated deaths, hinting improved control measures.
- Clear seasonal influenza pattern: peaks during winter months, with record numbers in January 2019 and December 2023.

Temporal Trend



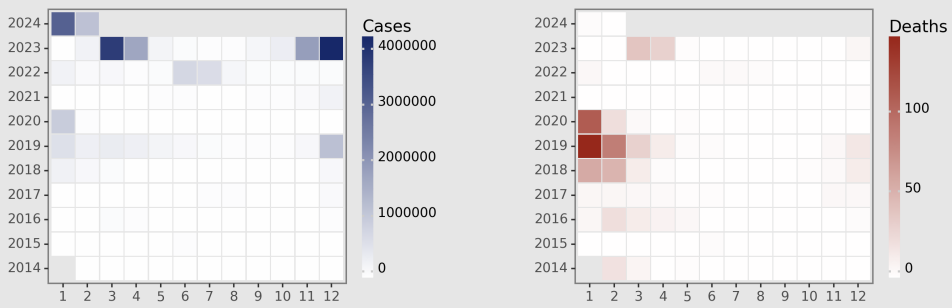
Cases Analysis

The data demonstrate a seasonal pattern with peaks in cases typically during the early months of each year, indicating increased influenza activity in the winter season. The most notable surge occurred in 2023, with a record 3,721,370 cases in March and 4,113,326 in December. Additionally, extraordinary high caseloads occurred in January and November 2024, suggesting a possible major epidemic or changes in reporting practices. Conversely, summer months usually exhibited significantly lower case counts, although the summer of 2022 was an outlier with an exceptionally high number of cases in June and July.

Deaths Analysis

Despite the large number of influenza cases, the overall deaths remained relatively low. The highest death count was recorded in January 2019 with 143 deaths. Collectively, the death rate appeared to rise during seasons with higher reported influenza cases, specifically around winter months. However, the mortality rate remained relatively stable and did not exceed 0.02% in any given month. This suggests that while the transmissibility of the disease might be high, its fatality rate is considerably low in the context of the Chinese mainland.

Distribution



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