

# Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

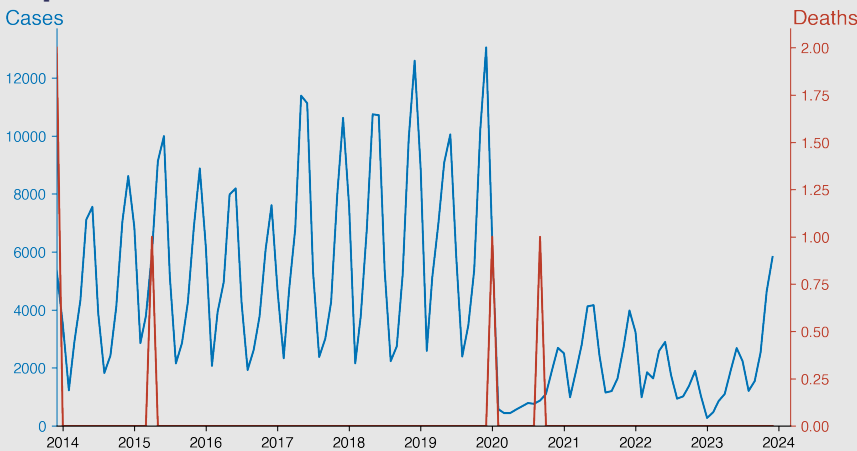
## Scarlet fever

December 2023

### Introduction

Scarlet fever, also known as scarlatina, is a bacterial infection caused by group A *Streptococcus* bacteria. Symptoms typically include a red rash, sore throat, fever, and a 'strawberry' tongue. Primarily affecting children, it was once a severe and deadly illness, but is now treatable with antibiotics. It is highly contagious and spreads through respiratory droplets. Proper hand hygiene practices and avoiding close contact with infected individuals can help prevent the disease.

### Temporal Trend



### Highlights

- Scarlet fever in Chinese mainland peaks seasonally, with cases rising in spring to early summer. For example, from April to June 2023, cases increase from 1,102 to 2,684.
- A sharp decline in cases occurred in 2020, likely due to COVID-19 measures—cases fell from 13,053 in December 2019 to 580 by February 2020.
- Mortality is very low; only five deaths since 2013, suggesting effective treatment of Scarlet fever.
- The trend shows a decrease in cases since December 2019's peak (13,053 cases), with 5,826 cases in December 2023.

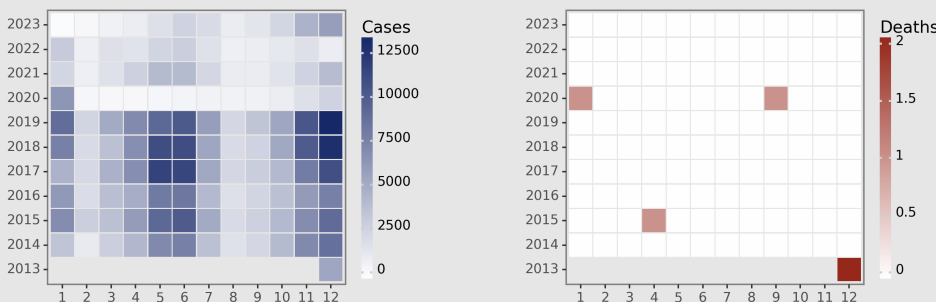
### Cases Analysis

The data on Scarlet fever in China from December 2013 to December 2023 indicates cyclical annual trends with peaks often during May and June, followed by a notable decline during the summer months and a resurgence towards the end of the year. The highest numbers are recorded in the warmer months, particularly May through July, which could be attributed to increased social interactions and the biology of the causative organism during these times. A significant drop in cases occurred in February to April 2020, likely due to COVID-19-related lockdowns and public health measures reducing transmission.

### Deaths Analysis

Throughout the ten-year span, a total of 4 deaths were reported amidst numerous cases, suggesting a low case-fatality rate for Scarlet fever in China during this period. The sparse occurrence of deaths highlights effective treatment protocols, as the disease is treatable with antibiotics. The majority of the data points reflect zero deaths, which indicates successful control of complications arising from Scarlet fever infections. The mortality pattern does not seem to follow the seasonality observed in the cases, with deaths sporadically distributed across different years and not necessarily aligning with peak case numbers.

### Distribution



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