

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Hand foot and mouth disease

December 2023

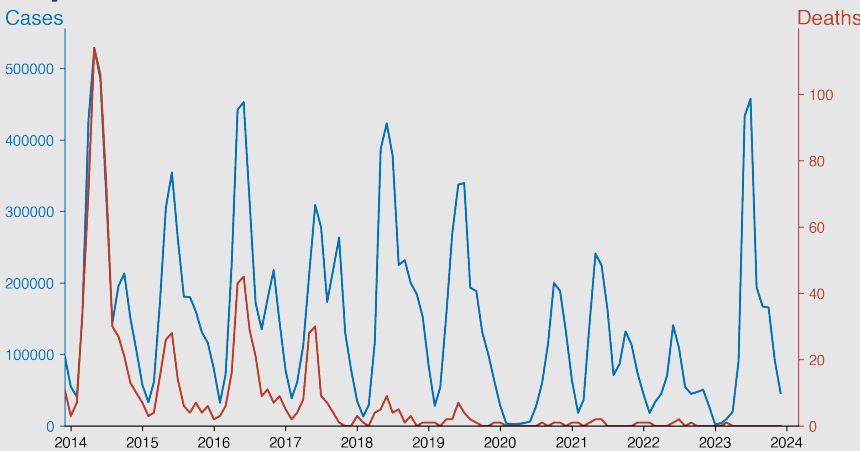
Introduction

Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) is a contagious viral infection common in children. It is primarily caused by the Coxsackie virus. Symptoms include fever, mouth sores, and skin rash on the hands and feet. It spreads through direct contact with unwashed hands or surfaces contaminated by feces. It can also spread through respiratory droplets from a sick person's cough or sneeze. There's no specific treatment for HFMD, but symptoms can be managed with medications for pain and fever relief. Good hand hygiene is key for prevention.

Highlights

- Seasonal peaks in Hand, foot, and mouth disease cases are evident from May to July, signifying a robust seasonal pattern in disease outbreaks.
- A substantial drop in both cases and deaths was observed in 2020, with lower reported rates persisting through 2023, reflecting possibly effective interventions or changes.
- December 2023 data reveals 46,150 cases with zero fatalities, maintaining the low incidence observed in recent years and suggesting continued disease control.
- Mortality has consistently declined, with no deaths since March 2023, indicating potential improvements in healthcare responses or disease management strategies.

Temporal Trend



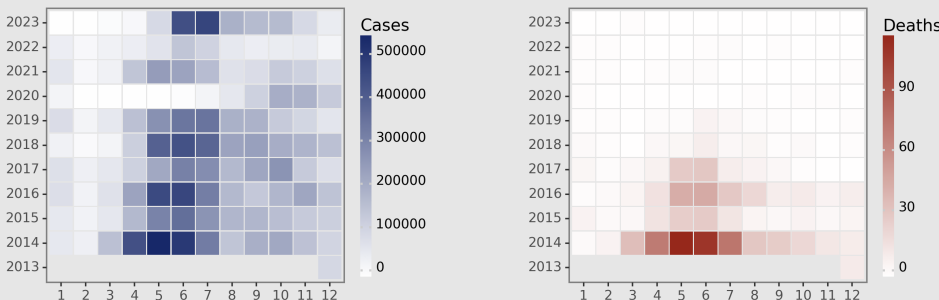
Cases Analysis

The data indicates a seasonal pattern for Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) in China, with cases peaking sharply between April and July each year from 2013 to 2022. This coincides with warmer months, suggesting conducive conditions for the pathogens. A stark decrease in cases is seen in early 2020, likely due to COVID-19-related measures such as social distancing and improved hygiene practices. As these measures have relaxed, the data for 2023 indicate a return to the seasonal trend with increased case numbers, yet they have not reached pre-pandemic levels.

Deaths Analysis

Fatalities from HFMD are relatively low despite high infection rates. Death rates peaked concurrently with case numbers between April and July from 2014 through 2016, emphasizing the critical period for intervention. An overall decreasing trend in deaths is noted from 2014 (with the highest death count at 114 in May) to 2023, where no deaths were recorded despite a significant number of cases. This suggests improved medical management and possibly increased herd immunity. No fatalities have been reported since the start of 2023, despite a resurgence in cases, indicating continuing advancements in disease control and treatment.

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