

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

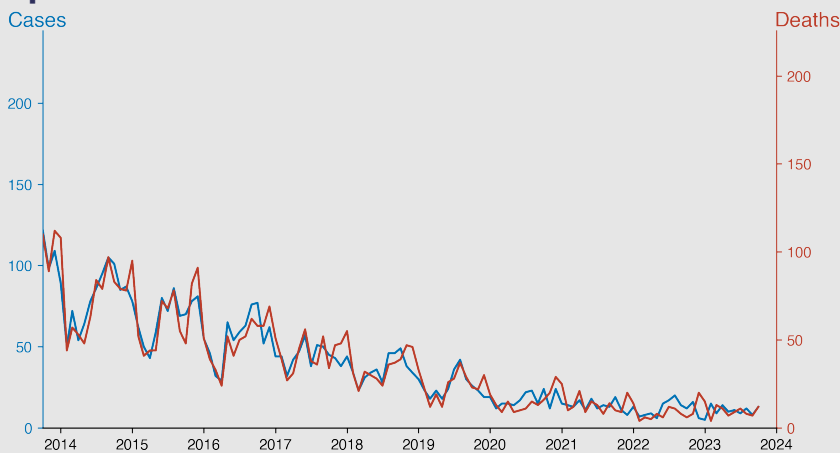
Rabies

October 2023

Introduction

Rabies is a viral zoonotic disease that causes progressive and acute encephalitis. The rabies virus is transmitted through the saliva of infected animals, commonly through bites or scratches. Domestic dogs are the most common reservoir of the virus, although it also circulates among wild mammals like bats, raccoons, skunks, and foxes. Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal. Fortunately, it can be prevented through vaccination of animals and post-exposure prophylaxis in humans. Worldwide efforts to control rabies primarily focus on vaccinating dogs and providing education on prevention to at-risk communities.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

There has been a significant decline in both rabies cases and deaths in mainland China from January 2010 to October 2023, indicating effective disease control and prevention measures.

- The peak in rabies cases and deaths observed in the summer months (June-July) of earlier years has subsided, suggesting improved management during historically vulnerable periods.
- The years 2011-2012 saw higher numbers with a gradual reduction in subsequent years, with 2023 showing the lowest figures, indicating sustained progress over the last decade.
- The fatality rate remains high, as deaths closely follow the trend in cases, emphasizing the continued need for public health interventions, particularly in post-exposure prophylaxis and vaccination campaigns.

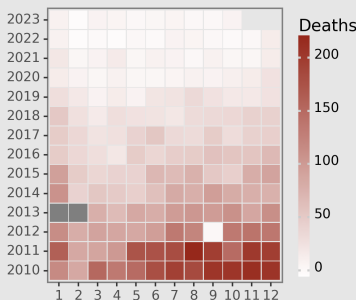
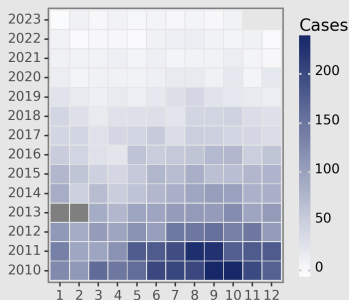
Cases Analysis

Rabies cases in mainland China, from January 2010 to October 2023, displayed a clear decrement. The initial year saw monthly cases as high as 233, with a significant decrease over time. By 2023, monthly cases were consistently below 20. This reduction could suggest improved vaccination, increased public awareness, and better control of rabid animal populations. Seasonal fluctuations were evident, with summer months often experiencing a rise in cases—potentially linked to increased human-animal interactions.

Deaths Analysis

Deaths due to rabies in China from 2010 to 2023 reflect a similar descending trend as seen with cases. Initially, the months recorded death counts surpassing 100, peaking at 208 in November 2010, which dwindle to single digits by 2023. This trend signifies that the public health response has effectively reduced mortality, likely through post-exposure prophylaxis and education. Nonetheless, the proportion of cases resulting in death remained high throughout, likely indicating underreporting of cases or delays in accessing treatment.

Distribution



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Version: 2023-12-24 (UTC+)

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