

# Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

## Syphilis

December 2023

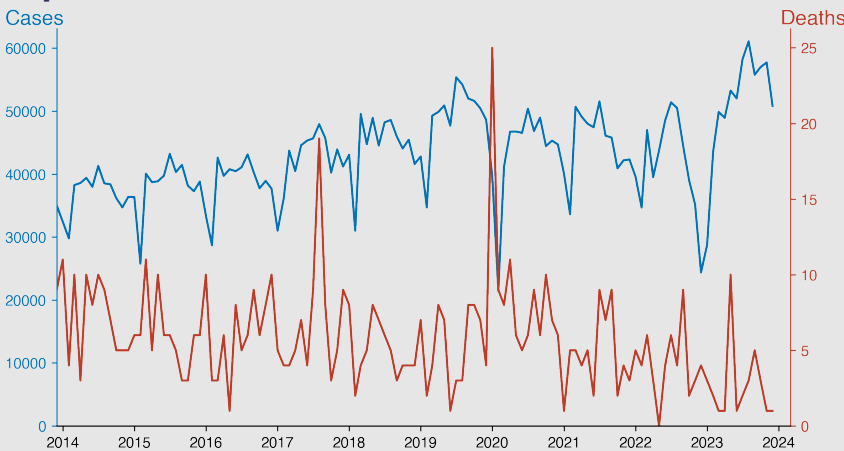
### Introduction

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted bacterial infection caused by the bacterium *Treponema pallidum*. It progresses in stages, starting with sores at the infection site, followed by a rash or fever. Later stages can lead to serious complications, affecting the heart, brain, and other organs if untreated. Transmission occurs predominantly through sexual contact or from mother to fetus during pregnancy. Regular screening and use of barrier contraceptives reduce infection risk, and antibiotics are an effective treatment in early stages.

### Highlights

- Syphilis cases in Chinese mainland show a rising trend, culminating in a record high of 61,068 cases in August 2023, highlighting an escalating concern over disease spread.
- Mortality rates remained consistently low, with deaths rarely exceeding single digits monthly, suggesting effective treatment protocols are in place despite increasing infections.
- A sharp decline in February 2020 to 21,448 cases may signal impacts of interventions or data collection variability, with subsequent resurgence in infection rates.
- December 2023 reports the highest December case count at 50,823, indicating potential growth in transmission or improved detection measures.

### Temporal Trend



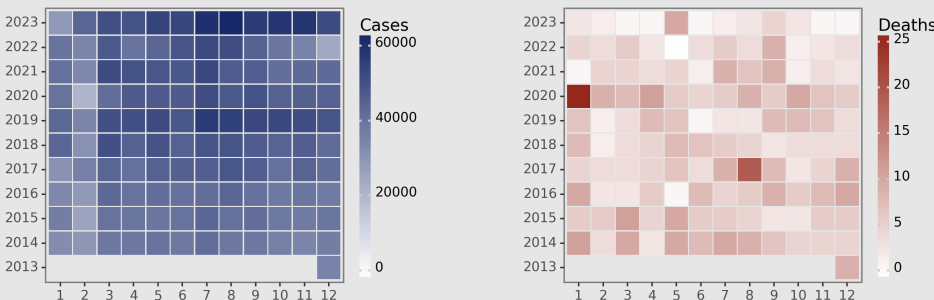
### Cases Analysis

The data shows a fluctuating but generally upward trend in syphilis cases on the Chinese mainland from December 2013 to December 2023. Notably, there is a significant decrease in cases in February 2020, which aligns with the COVID-19 outbreak and associated public health interventions like lockdowns, which may have impacted sexual behavior and healthcare access. Following this dip, cases rise again, reaching the highest reported number in August 2023. Seasonal fluctuations are observed, with cases tending to increase in the warmer months from May to September each year.

### Deaths Analysis

Syphilis-related deaths display no clear upward or downward trend, remaining relatively low, with monthly fatalities typically in the single digits. The mortality data shows an unusual spike in January 2020 with 25 deaths, significantly deviating from the standard range. This might be an anomaly or linked to specific health care challenges during the early COVID-19 pandemic. Beyond this singular increase, death counts revert to the previous range suggesting that despite fluctuating cases, syphilis mortality has been maintained at low levels through the years.

### Distribution



**CNIDs**

Free, Lightweight, Open-source,  
Smart Surveillance for  
Chinese Infectious Diseases

Version: 2024-01-16 (UTC+)