

# Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

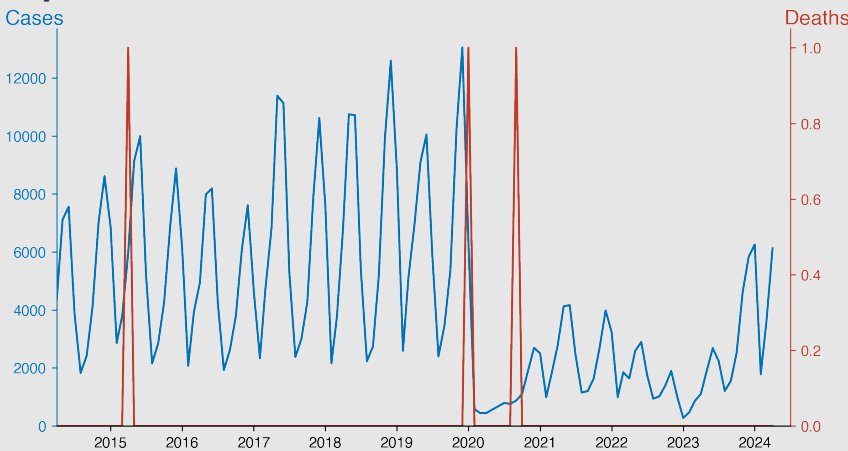
## Scarlet fever

April 2024

### Introduction

Scarlet fever, also known as scarlatina, is an infectious bacterial disease affecting mostly children. It is caused by *Streptococcus pyogenes*, or group A beta-hemolytic streptococci (GABHS). Symptoms include high fever, sore throat, red rashes on the body, and a characteristic red 'strawberry' tongue. It was once a dangerous illness but is now easily treatable with antibiotics. The disease spreads through respiratory droplets in a manner similar to the common cold or the flu. Consequently, strict personal hygiene is highly advocated for prevention.

### Temporal Trend



### Highlights

- Scarlet Fever cases in China fluctuate seasonally, peaking between April-July and decreasing by year-end.
- An alarming upward trend is visible from 2021, heightening in late 2023 and early 2024.
- Despite disease fluctuations, only two deaths were reported since 2014, indicating a low fatality rate.
- April 2024 records 6125 cases, reflecting the usual yearly peak but also continuing the recent concerning trend.

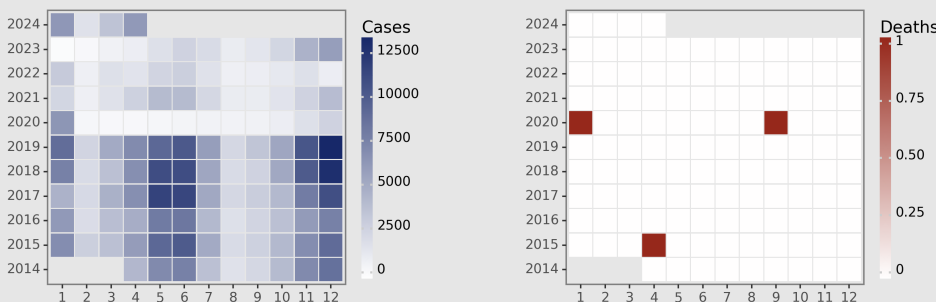
### Cases Analysis

Scarlet fever cases in mainland China display a distinct seasonal trend from 2014 to 2024, with a high incidence rate in late Spring (April to June) and Winter (November to January), followed by a significant decline in Summer (July to August) and Fall (September to October). The peak cases were recorded in December 2019 (13053 cases). However, a significant drop in cases was observed in 2020, possibly due to enhanced surveillance and control measures implemented for the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, the infections have been gradually increasing but have not reached the pre-2020 levels yet.

### Deaths Analysis

Despite the significant number of reported cases over the studied period, the mortality rate due to Scarlet fever remained remarkably low. Only three deaths were reported between 2014-2024, occurring in April 2015, January 2020, and September 2020. This corresponds to an extremely low case-fatality rate, which could be attributed to effective public health interventions, medical treatments and possibly earlier detection of the disease. Despite the low fatality rate, the significant incidence of the disease over time calls for continued surveillance and preventative measures.

### Distribution



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