Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

Human infection with H5N1 virus

March 2024

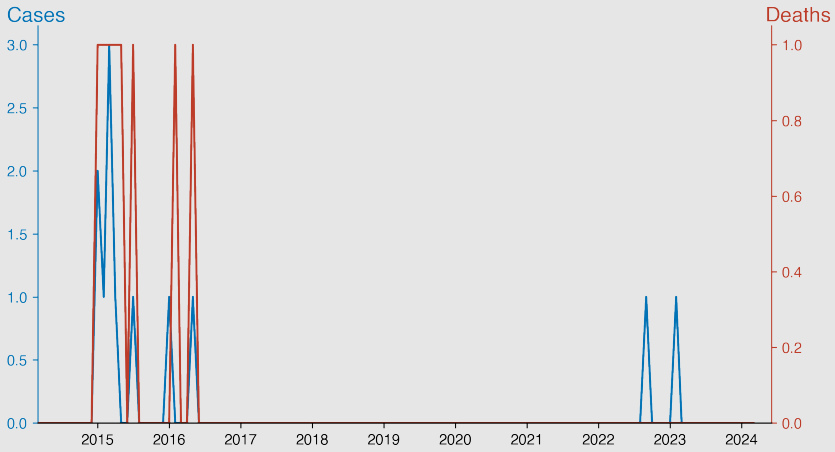
Introduction

Human infection with H5N1 virus, also known as avian influenza or bird flu, is a highly contagious viral illness. H5N1 is primarily found in birds, but infections can occur in humans after direct or indirect contact with infected poultry. The virus can cause severe illness or death in humans, with symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, and sometimes severe respiratory diseases such as pneumonia. It's important to note, however, that the virus cannot yet be transmitted efficiently among humans. Efforts to monitor and control the virus are watchful, as mutation or reassortment may enable this capability.

Highlights

- There has been no significant activity or outbreak of H5N1 in the Chinese mainland since 2016, with only sporadic cases in 2022 and 2023.
- There are no reported cases or deaths from the H5N1 virus in Chinese mainland in the current year (2024) up to March.
- The H5N1 virus maintained a high mortality rate, with 6 deaths out of 9 reported cases during the span of activity from 2015 to 2016.
- Overall, the trend shows that the virus is largely under control, with a continuing decrease in cases and deaths since 2016.

Temporal Trend



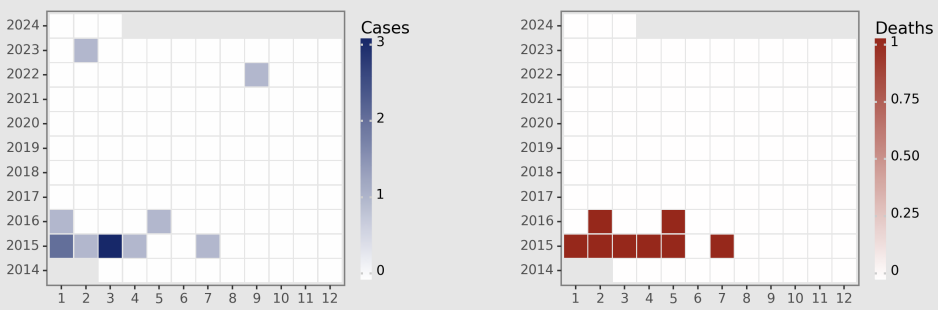
Cases Analysis

The reported data shows sporadic cases of human infection with H5N1 virus in the Chinese mainland over the years. A significant outbreak occurred between 2015 to 2016 where there were 8 instances of infection. It's noteworthy that for almost eight years from 2014 to early 2022, there were no H5N1 reported cases, indicative of a significant control over the virus in the region. However, there have been 2 new cases reported in 2022 and 2023 respectively. These are isolated incidents and do not signify an outbreak. The overall situation seems to be under control with low incidence rates.

Deaths Analysis

The pattern in deaths resulted from the H5N1 virus aligns with the incidence of cases. The initial cases in 2015 were significantly deadly, boasting a high case-fatality rate with 6 deaths among the 7 reported infections. 2016 also depicted a high fatality rate with 2 deaths among 2 reported cases. Post-2016, the severity of the disease seems to have decreased or containment measures may have improved, given the lack of any associated deaths in the sporadic instances that occurred. Precisely, no deaths associated with the H5N1 virus have been reported since May 2016.

Distribution



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