

Chinese Notifiable Infectious Diseases Surveillance Report

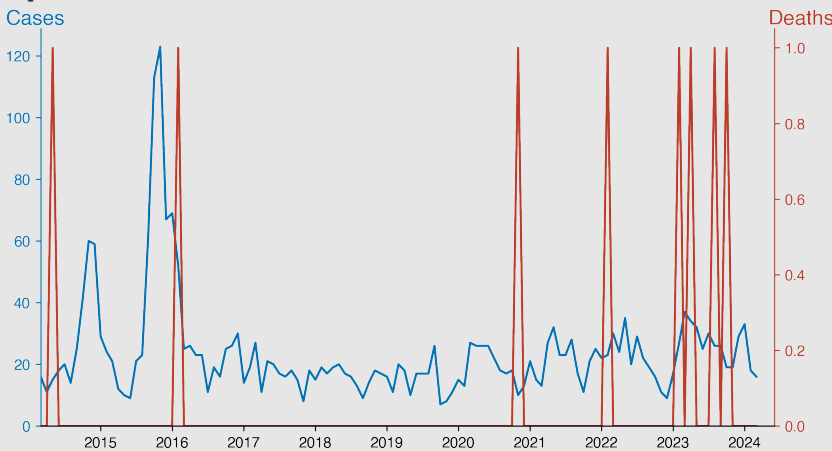
Kala azar

March 2024

Introduction

Kala Azar, also known as Visceral Leishmaniasis, is a widespread tropical and subtropical disease caused by a parasite, *Leishmania donovani*, transmitted through the bite of sandflies. The disease affects the body's internal organs, particularly the spleen, liver, and bone marrow, causing high fever, weight loss, anemia, and swelling of these organs. If left untreated, Kala Azar can be fatal. The disease is prevalent in certain regions of India, Bangladesh, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Brazil. Effective treatments are available, but access in endemic areas can be challenging. Disease control efforts focus on early detection and complete treatment.

Temporal Trend



Highlights

- Trend of Kala azar cases has moderately fluctuated in China over the past 10 years, but overall the disease prevalence has plateaued to approximately 20-30 cases per month.
- Cases tend to increase during spring (March-April) and autumn (September-October), possibly correlating to seasonal variations affecting vector populations.
- A significant peak was observed in 2015 with 123 cases in November, but such high numbers have not recurred since, indicating successful control measures.
- Disease mortality is very low with only 6 deaths reported from 2014 to 2024, suggesting effective case management and treatment in the country.

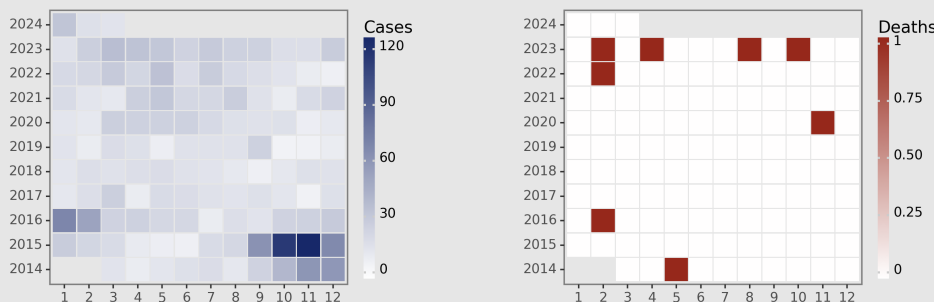
Cases Analysis

From 2014 to 2024, the Kala azar incidence in Chinese mainland saw certain trends over time. An annual cyclical pattern was visible where cases peaked around October/November each year, followed by a decline. Two significant surges occurred in October 2015 and September 2016 showing the highest recorded numbers of cases. Overall, the annual case trend descended from 2014 to mid-2017, remained relatively stable till 2019, and saw incremental increased from 2020 and 2024 with occasional drops.

Deaths Analysis

Remarkably, the deaths due to Kala azar are extremely rare given the number of reported cases. Throughout these ten years, there have only been six reported deaths in total, accounting for less than 0.1% of the overall cases. These deaths are scattered over different years and months, indicating no clear correlation or trend. This low death rate suggests effective treatment and control measures have been put in place to manage Kala azar in the Chinese mainland, considering the potentially fatal nature of the disease.

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