

SYNOPSIS

02/19/2020

Review of “The epidemiological characteristics of an outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) – China, 2020”

Article citation: Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia Emergency Response Epidemiology Team. The epidemiological characteristics of an outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) – China, 2020. *CCDC Weekly*. 2020;2(x):1-10. Available from:

<https://github.com/cmriivers/ncov/raw/master/COVID-19.pdf>

One-Minute Summary

- The Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention conducted a descriptive analysis of 72,314 coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases in China diagnosed as of February 11, 2020. Of these:
 - 44,672 (61.8%) were confirmed cases (defined as having a positive nucleic acid laboratory test)
 - 16,186 (22.4%) were suspected cases (diagnosed clinically based on symptoms and exposures)
 - 10,567 (14.6%) were clinically diagnosed cases (suspected cases with lung imaging consistent with COVID-19 pneumonia)
 - 889 (1.2%) were asymptomatic cases (positive laboratory test, but no symptoms)
- Among confirmed cases (n=44,672):
 - 86.6% were 30 to 79 years of age; 51.4% were males; 74% had no comorbidities; 80.9% experienced mild illness and 2.3% died.
 - Case fatality ratios varied by age: <0.5% in individuals <49 years, 1.3% in 50-59 year-olds, 3.6% in 60-69 year-olds, 8.0% in 70-79 year olds and 14.8% for those ≥80 years.
- In the 422 medical facilities treating COVID-19 patients, there were 3,019 infected healthcare workers. Of these, 1,688* (55.9%) were confirmed by laboratory testing and five have died.
- Epidemiological curves suggest that the peak onset of symptoms for all cases occurred on February 1, 2020.

Additional Information

- Epidemiological curves show a lag of approximately seven days from the onset date of symptoms to the microbiological confirmation of cases.
- The 26,753 cases (37%) that were suspected or clinically diagnosed cases were not tested due to lack of resources. They do not represent cases who were tested and were negative for COVID-19.

PHO Reviewer's Comments

- This article has not been peer-reviewed.
- *Note that there are discordant values provided for the proportion of healthcare workers with confirmed COVID-19: both 1,688/3,019 and 1,716/3,019 were listed in the manuscript.
- In some cases, information was reported incompletely for variables, including Wuhan-related exposure, comorbidities and case severity.
- Follow-up of symptoms and outcomes after entry into the database is not clearly stated and there is no mention of cases lost to follow-up.

Citation

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Review of “The epidemiological characteristics of an outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus diseases (COVID-19) – China, 2020”. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2020.

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