

Successful Breastfeeding After Reduction Mammoplasty: A Survey Study

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Montefiore

Background

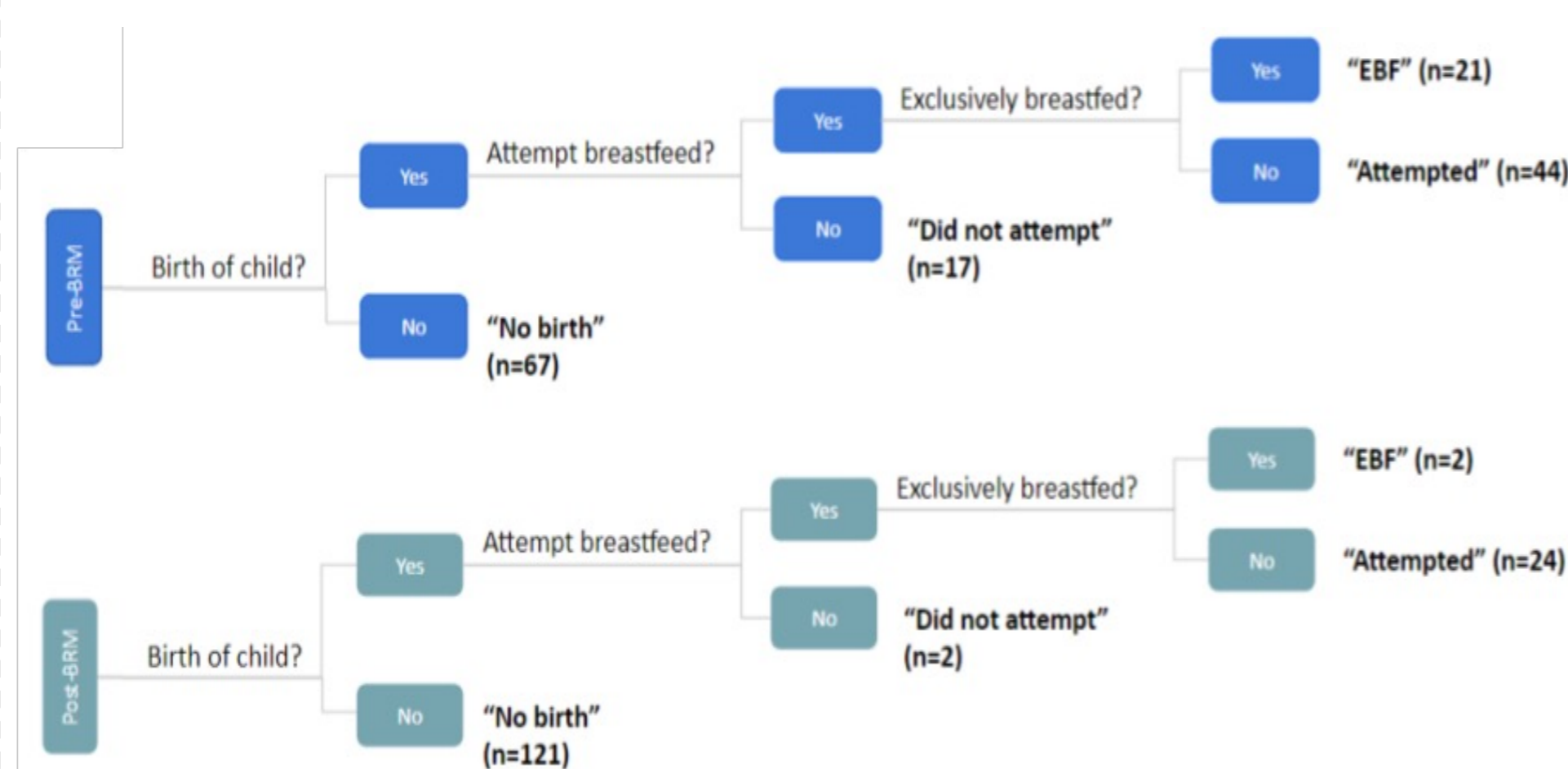
Reduction mammoplasty is one of the most common plastic surgery procedures. However, there is no consensus regarding the impact that reduction mammoplasty has on subsequent breastfeeding. Furthermore, several social and economic factors influence an individual's ability to exclusively breastfeed. Given the well known benefits of breastfeeding, the authors sought to characterize the effect of breast reduction on successful and exclusive breastfeeding.

Methods

A retrospective review of all patients that underwent reduction mammoplasty at a single institution from February 2016 through June 2019 (n=725) was conducted. Patients ages 18-45 years at the time of reduction mammoplasty were contacted and surveyed by phone for their ability to successfully breastfeed and/or exclusively breastfeed pre- and post-operatively, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) Criteria. Patients were also asked to provide their reasoning for insufficient breastfeeding or inability to breastfeed.

Charts were reviewed for operative characteristics including pedicle choice, resection weight, and complications.

Branched Survey Design



Outcome Measures

- Extent of patients' ability to breastfeed before and after reduction mammoplasty
- Characterize the reasons for difficulties in patients' ability to breastfeed postoperatively

Results

- 419 patients met the inclusion criteria, and 149 patients participated in the survey (35.5% response rate)
- Mean age of patients was 29.9 ± 7.94 years
- Mean BMI was 31.9 ± 4.64 kg/m²
- Mean combined resected tissue weight was 1501.46 ± 793.9 g

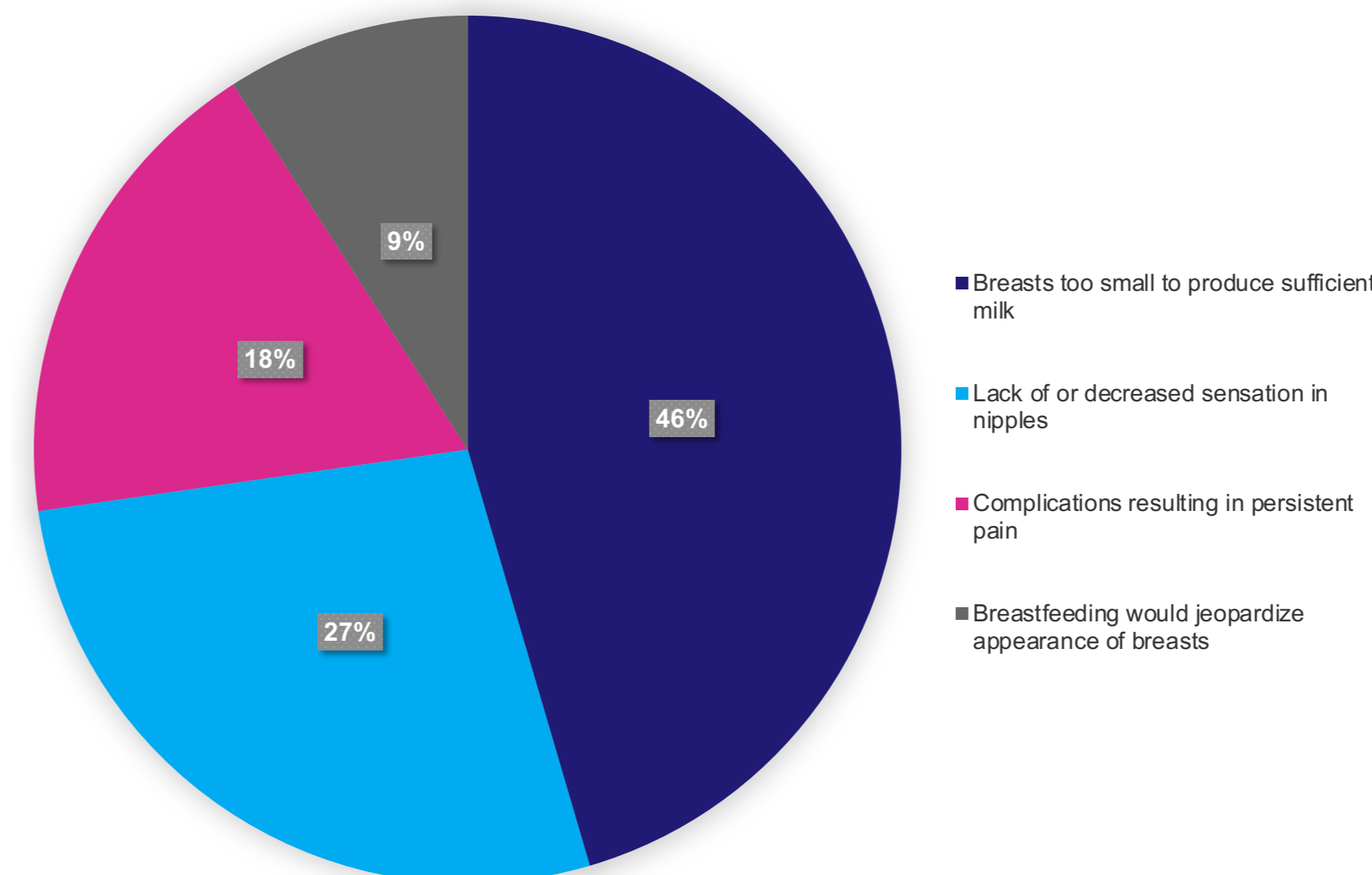
Cohort Groups Based on Breastfeeding Status Pre- and Post-Operatively

	Pre-BRM	Post-BRM
EBF*	21 (14%)	2 (1.5%)
Attempted**	44 (30%)	24 (16%)
Did not attempt	17 (11%)	2 (1.5%)
No birth	67 (45%)	121 (81%)

*EBF: exclusively breastfed, defined as exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months
 **Attempted: breastfeeding attempted but did not meet the criteria for exclusive breastfeeding

- 92% of patients were able to breastfeed in some capacity after reduction mammoplasty
- Only two women were able to exclusively breastfeed postoperatively (7.8%), compared to 21 preoperatively (32.8%) (OR 5.73, 95% CI 1.24-26.56, $p=0.0257$)

Reasons for Difficulty Breastfeeding After Reduction Mammoplasty*



*45.8% of patients who breastfed after reduction mammoplasty reported these difficulties

51% of patients reported remembering being given information regarding postoperative breastfeeding during their consultation

Average Resection Weights Between Cohorts

	Exclusive	Did not Attempt	p-value
Resection Weight (g)	891.5	1636.6	0.10

	Attempted	Did not attempt	p-value
Resection Weight (g)	1574.4	1202	0.416

Discussion

- While a majority of patients attempted breastfeeding in some capacity after reduction mammoplasty, only a few were able to exclusively breastfeed
- Most patients who experienced difficulty breastfeeding felt their breasts were too small to produce significant milk despite no significant difference in resection weights
- The rate of patients able to breastfeed in any capacity was significantly higher than the reported rates in previous literature
- Many social and environmental factors impact a woman's decision to breastfeed. This may have also impacted patients in this study
- There is a need for standardized, high-quality research in order to provide evidence-based patient counseling