

Many suffer chronic pain after breast cancer surgery, study finds

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Researchers call for better pain management.

(HealthDay)—About one-quarter of women who've had breast cancer surgery have significant and persistent breast pain six months after the procedure, a new study finds.

Women with breast pain before surgery were most likely to have long-term breast pain after the operation, according to the study recently published in the *Journal of Pain*.

Researchers followed 400 women after [breast cancer surgery](#) and found that about 12 reported severe breast pain, 13 percent had [moderate pain](#) and 43 percent had mild pain that lasted for six months. Just under 32 percent had no breast pain.

Four patient characteristics were associated with severe pain: younger age, less education, lower income and being non-white. Younger age was

also associated with having moderate or mild pain, the University of California, San Francisco researchers said.

The major clinical factors associated with severe pain were: breast pain before surgery, changes in breast sensation, severity of pain after surgery, number of lymph nodes removed and undergoing additional lymph node removal.

The findings suggest that improvements in pain management after [breast cancer](#) surgery are needed to reduce the risk of persistent [breast pain](#), the researchers said, according to a journal news release.

More information: The American Cancer Society has more about [breast cancer surgery](#).

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