



Needlephobia in Patients Pursuing IVF: How Big of an Issue is it?

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Background and Objectives

- The IVF process involves daily self injections for women who often never administered a self injection
- Anxiety is a common comorbidity in patients undergoing IVF and anxiety surrounding needles has not previously been quantified
- We aimed to assess the prevalence of needle anxiety among patients pursuing IVF as well as compare this to other sources of anxiety involved in IVF process

Methods and Materials

- 102 patients at a single center completed a de-identified survey from April-May 2024
- The survey consisted of the Injection Phobia Scale-Anxiety (IPS-Anx) short form, which is a validated 8-item instrument that quantifies injection fear on a Likert scale (0- no anxiety to 4- maximum anxiety) as well as several other questions
- Linear regression was used to evaluate associations between patient characteristics and IPS-Anx scores

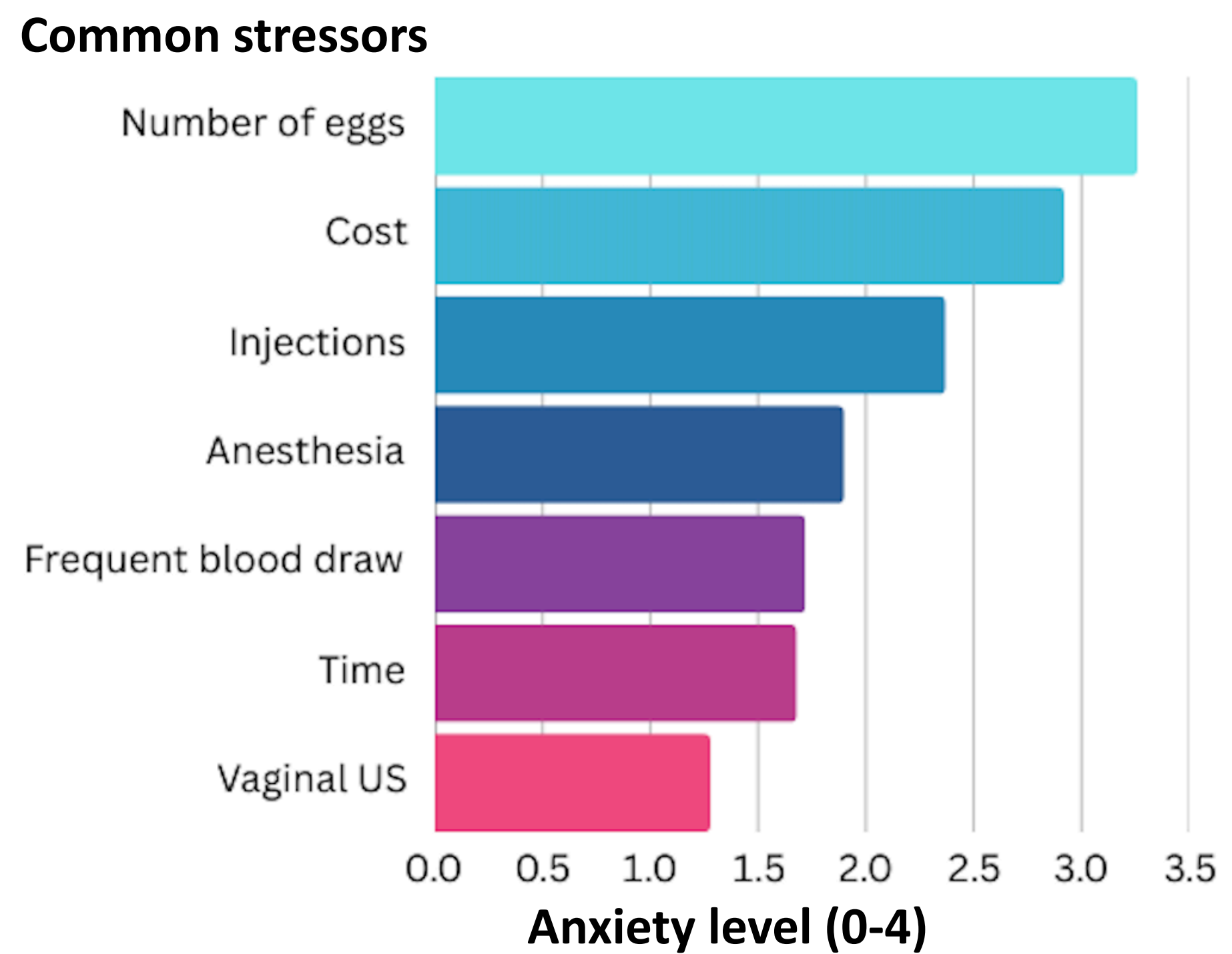
Conclusions

-Self-injection factored into decision making over a third of patients' decision considering pursuing IVF, with treatment delays in nearly 20% of all patients with needle anxiety

Needles and injections are a commonly overlooked but significant source of anxiety for IVF patients that can cause treatment delays and contribute to treatment dropout.

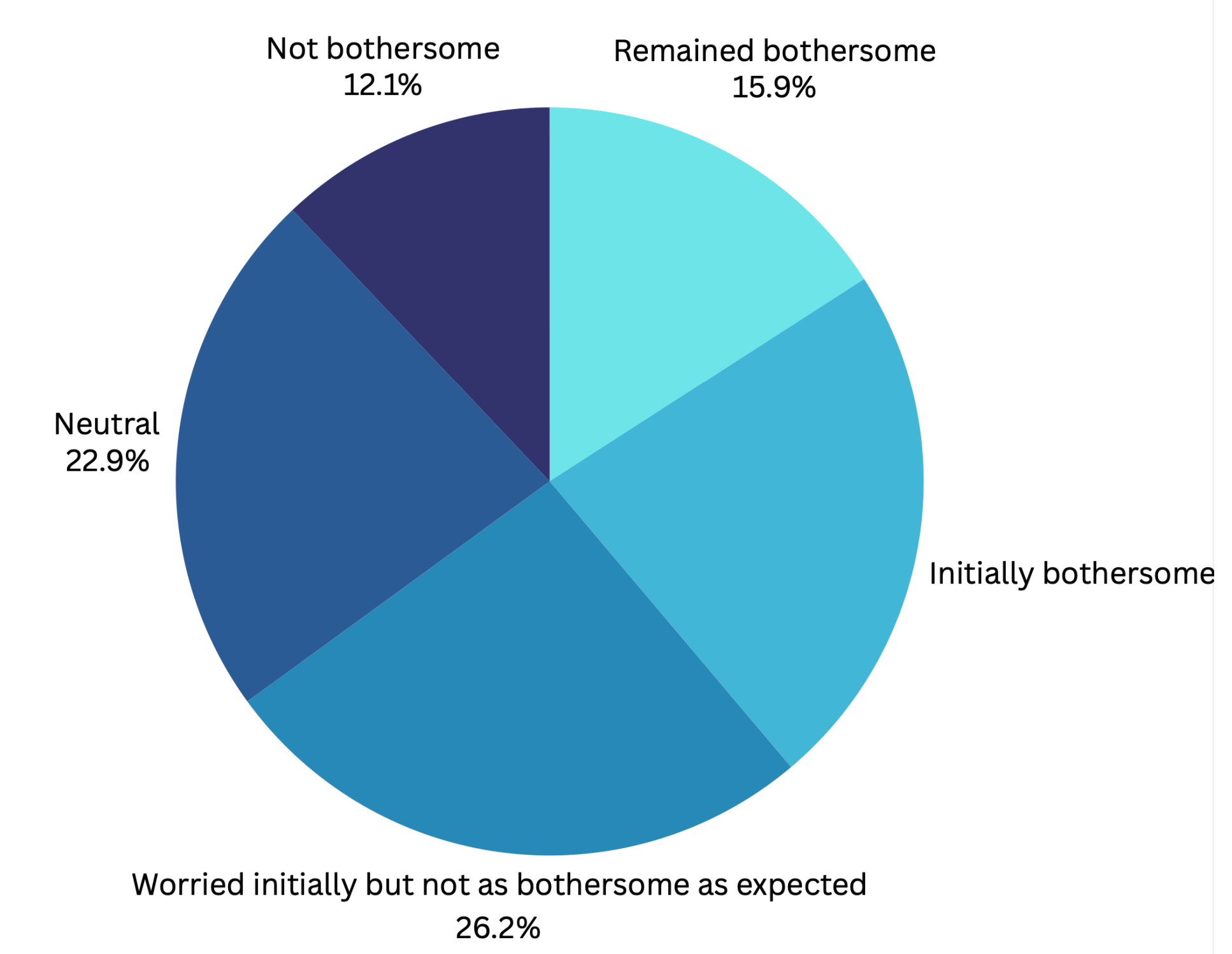
Results

- Injection-related anxiety was the third most significant IVF-related anxiety for patients (mean 2.37 (SD 1.25)) after number of eggs/embryos(mean 3.26 (SD 0.82)) and cost (mean 2.92 (SD 0.93))
- Injection related anxiety superseded anxieties regarding blood draws, anesthesia, vaginal ultrasounds, and time commitment.



Results (continued)

Views on needles for patients who previously underwent IVF



- Demographics: 64% of patients were 30-40 years of age, most were White (37.1%) or Asian (33.7%), and 83.5% had a Bachelor's degree or higher
- 57/102 patients had previously undergone IVF
- **34 (33.7%) patients reported that needles factored into their decision to undergo IVF, and 19 (18.6%) patients reported treatment delays due to fear of needles**
- 21 (20.6%) patients scored 20, indicating potential symptoms of a true phobia
- Medication errors and seeing blood were the two most common fears associated with injections.
- 23.6% reported that needles factored into their decision to undergo another cycle.