

A SURVEY ON THE DISCLOSURE OF CANCER DIAGNOSES TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND COLLEAGUES AMONG PATIENTS WITH BREAST CANCER

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Introduction

- Breast cancer generally has a higher cure and survival rate compared to other cancers and often affects younger individuals.
- As a result, many patients live long lives as survivors and remain actively engaged in society.
- Consequently, patients often struggle with when and how to disclose their diagnosis to others.

Purpose

This study aimed to investigate the status and content of cancer disclosure among patients treated for breast cancer.

Methods

- Eligibility criteria: female breast cancer patients, aged 20–79, diagnosed 1–5 years ago
- Participants were recruited through a web-based research company.
- A screening survey was used to identify individuals who met the eligibility criteria.
- An online questionnaire survey was conducted in May 2021 in Japan,

Survey contents

Disclosure status, timing, concerns, intentions, content, impressions

- The above questions were asked for each of the following individuals:

Spouse/partner, parents, children, parents-in-law, siblings, relatives, close friends, acquaintances, supervisors, colleagues

Results

- 309 patients answered the question.
- The median age was 52 years (range 27–77).

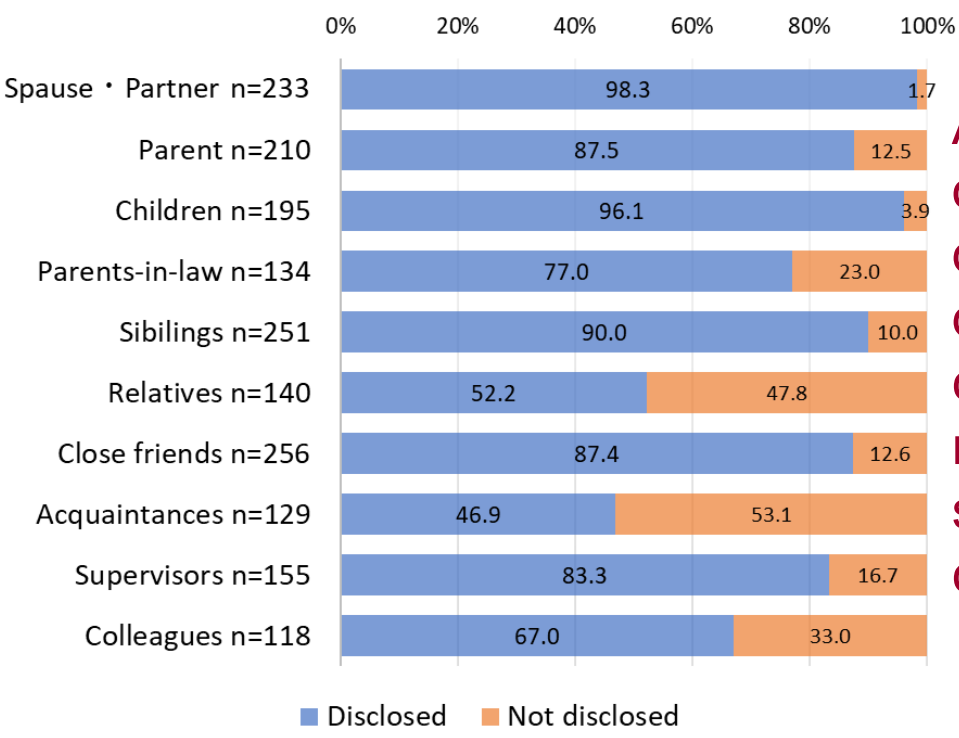
Table 1. Patient characteristics

	n=309	%
Age, years		
20-29	1	0.3
30-39	13	4.2
40-49	105	34.0
50-59	120	38.8
60-69	50	16.2
70-79	20	6.5
Cancer stage		
Stage 0	46	14.9
Stage I	122	39.5
Stage II	90	29.1
Stage III	31	10.0
Stage IV	9	2.9
Unknown (not Stage IV;)	11	3.6
Surgery		
Mastectomy	143	46.3
Lumpectomy	154	49.8
No	12	3.9
Radiotherapy		
Yes	163	52.8
No	146	47.2
Chemotherapy		
Yes	117	37.9
No	192	62.1

Conclusions

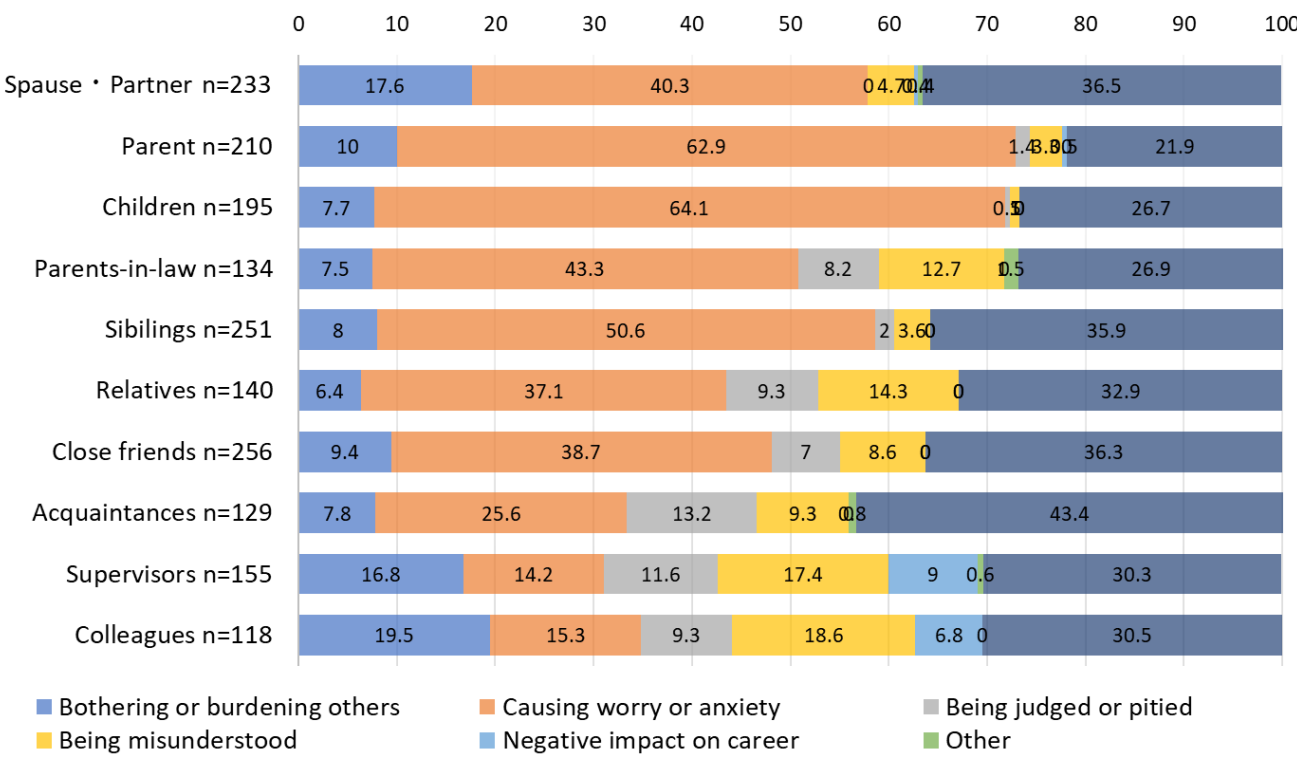
- Around 90% disclosed their diagnosis to close family member.
- Two-thirds had concerns at the time of disclosure.
- Participants who disclosed were more satisfied and felt it was the right decision.

DISCLOSURE STATUS



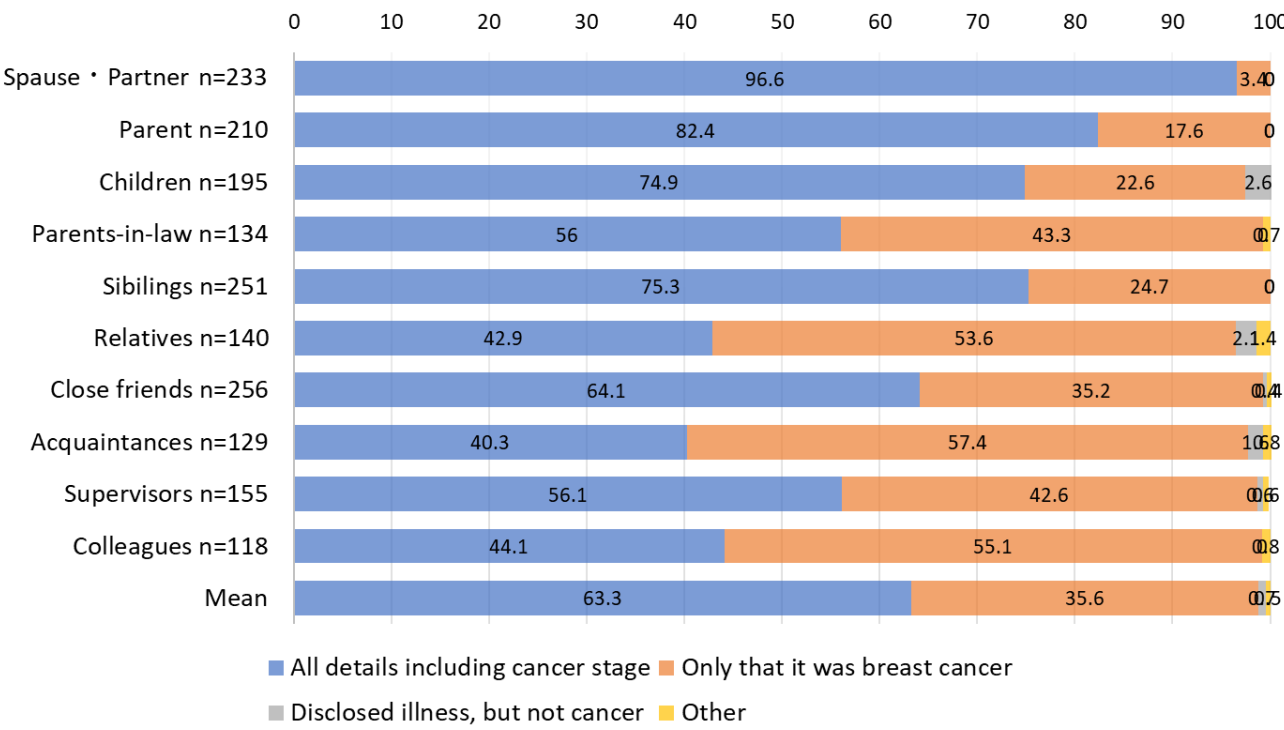
A high proportion of participants disclosed their diagnosis to close family members, supervisors, and close friends.

CONCERNS



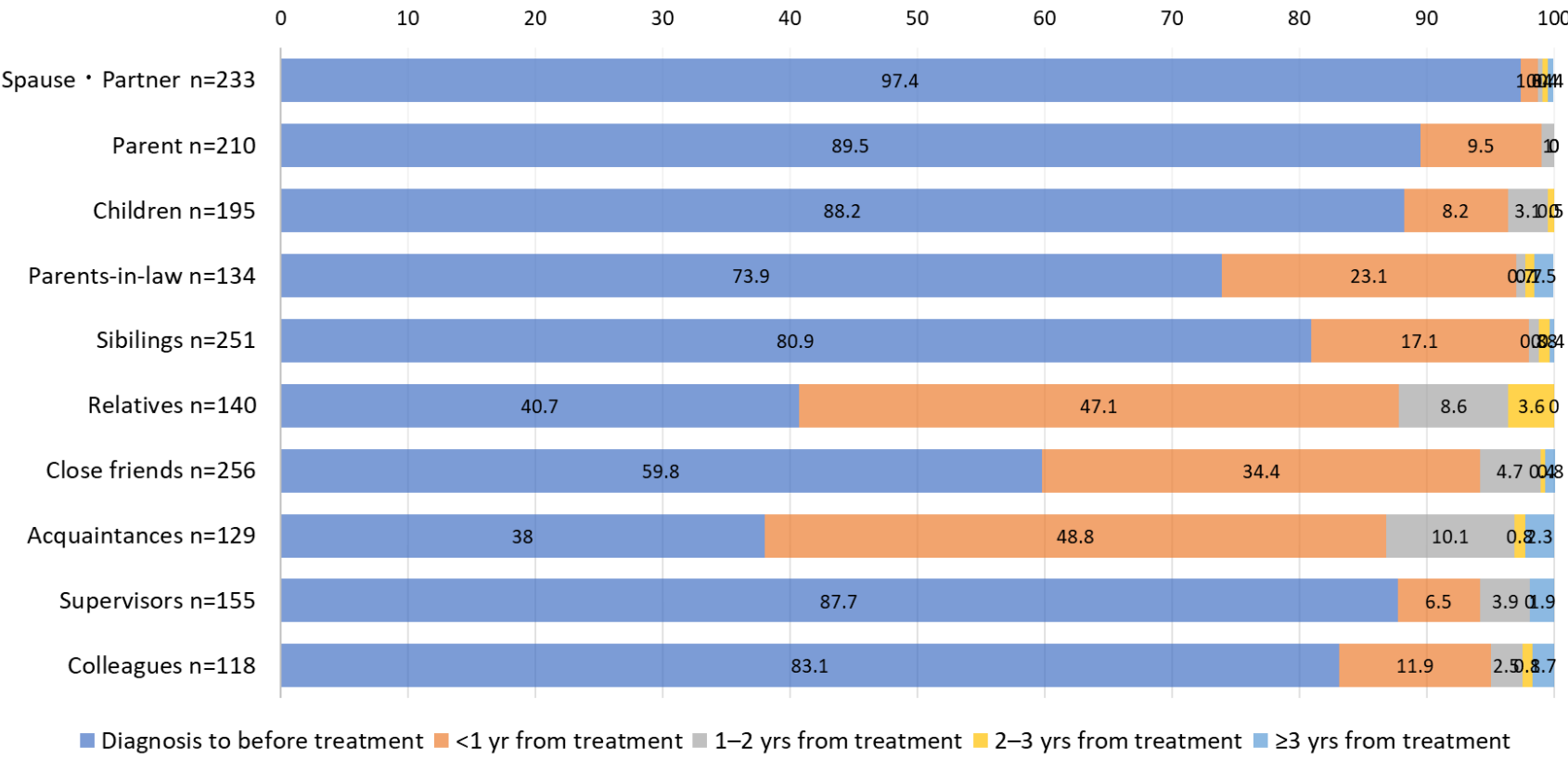
About two-third of participants reported feeling anxious at the time of disclosure, regardless of the person informed.

CONTENT



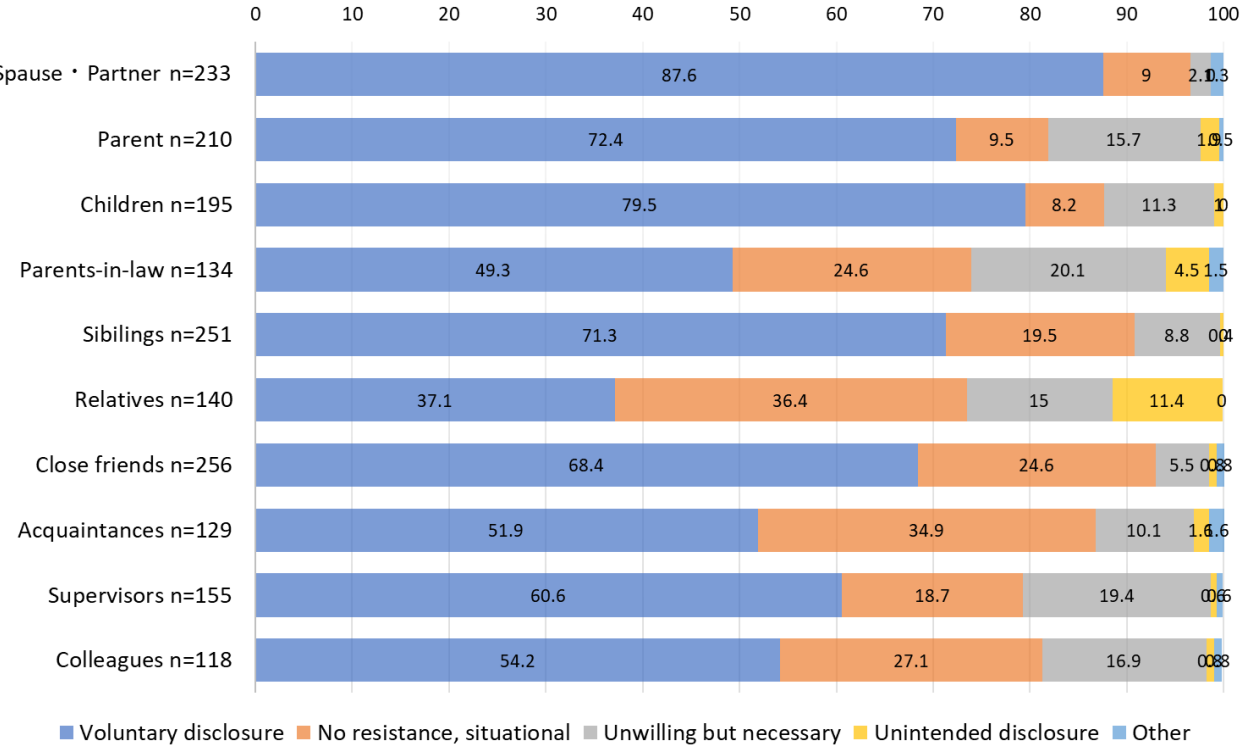
Results

DISCLOSURE TIMING



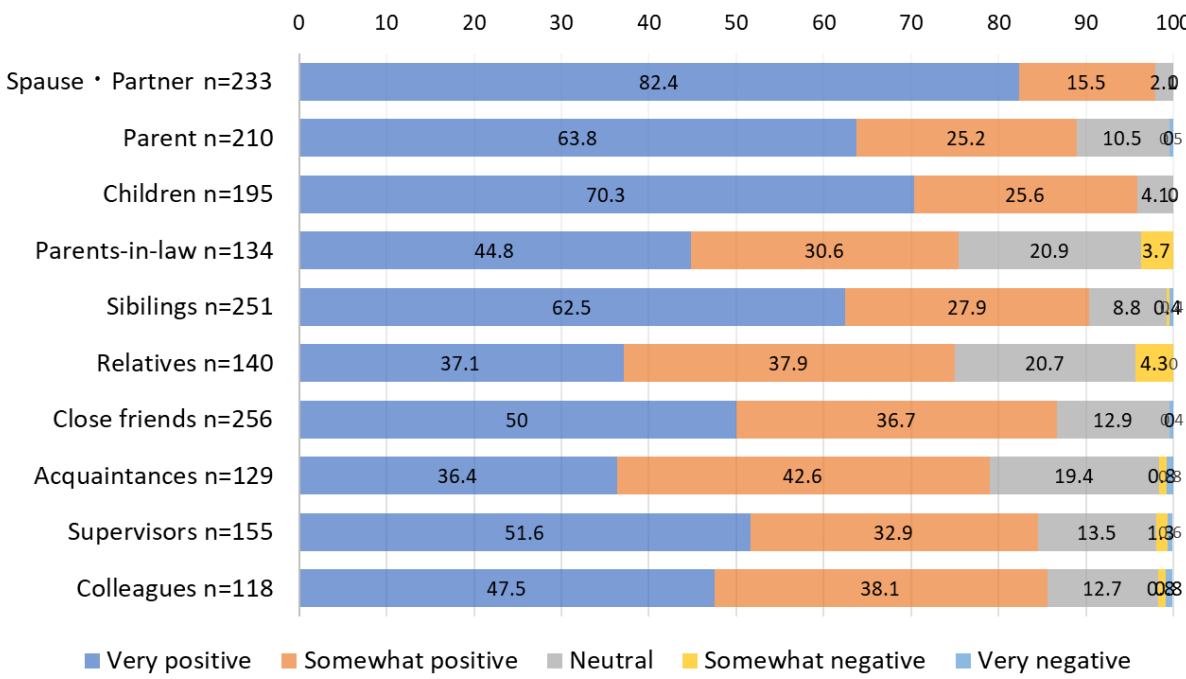
Most participants disclosed before treatment, but timing differed by the person informed.

INTENTIONS

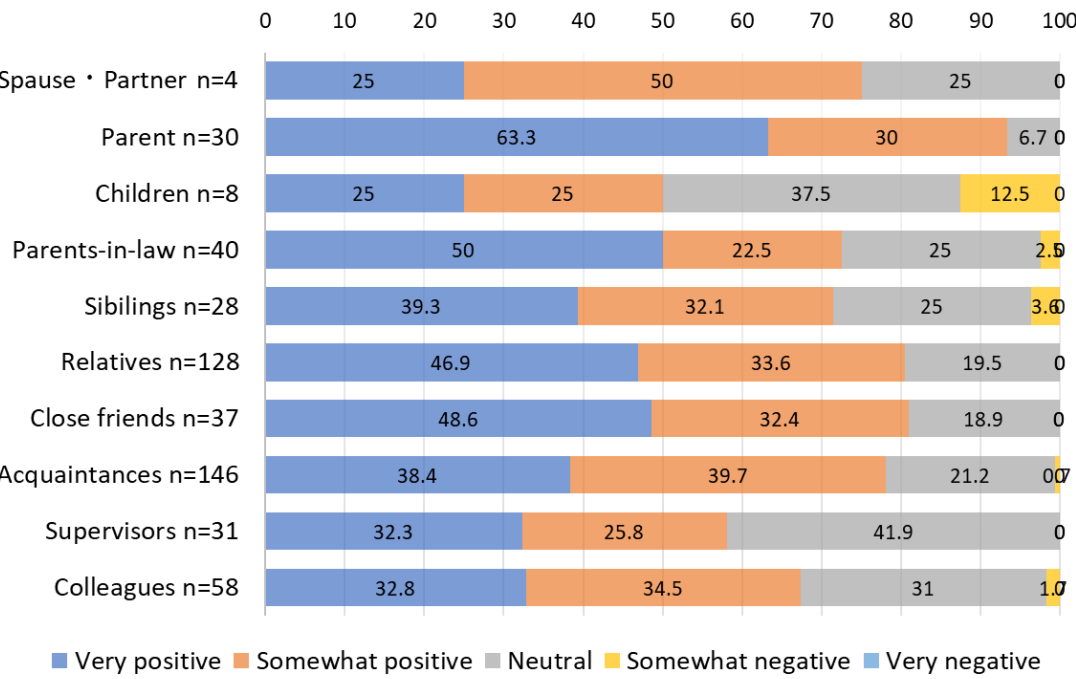


Over half of the participants chose to disclose on their own, and about 70% did not hesitate to disclose. However, some disclosed against their will.

IMPRESSION - DISCLOSED



IMPRESSION - NOT DISCLOSED



Participants who informed their spouse/partner ($P=0.004^*$), children ($P<0.001^*$), siblings ($P=0.01^*$), supervisors ($P<0.001^*$), or colleagues ($P=0.001^*$) were significantly more likely to feel the disclosure positively than those who did not.

*chi-square test

Figure 1. Results of disclosure-related questions