A new study reveals that patients with breast cancer who received more aggressive treatments were more likely to experience disruptions in employment.

Among the surveyed women, 62 percent underwent lumpectomy to remove their tumors, 16 percent had unilateral mastectomy (8 percent with reconstruction), and 23 percent had bilateral mastectomy (19 percent with reconstruction). One-third of women received chemotherapy. Most (84 percent) worked full time before diagnosis.

The study’s findings also revealed that women who underwent bilateral mastectomy with reconstruction had nearly eight times the risk of missing over a month of work, as compared with those who underwent lumpectomy. Also, women who missed more than a month of work often lost substantial income; 29 percent of these women lost more than $5000.

“Prior studies have shown that most of the women who had bilateral mastectomy could have chosen lumpectomy but chose the more aggressive surgery, often out of a desire to improve peace of mind. This study helps to quantify the impact of this decision on the employment and financial experiences of those women soon after diagnosis,” said Dr. Jagsi. “The impact of treatment on employment and finances is a consideration that women may wish to take into account when weighing the pros and cons of various surgical options they are considering.”

**Additional Information**

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