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YouTube as a Source for Patient Education Regarding Percutaneous Mitraclip

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INTRODUCTION

With the ease of Internet access and vast variety of health care information available on the Internet, patients are utilizing this resource to aid in health care decision making. YouTube, a free, open-access site where users can upload video content for others to easily view may have an influential role on the public's understanding of health-related information. This study was designed to review and analyze the information available to patients on YouTube pertaining to the percutaneous mitraclip procedure. The mitraclip is a new minimally-invasive treatment option for patients diagnosed with symptomatic mitral regurgitation (MR). Prior to this procedure, symptomatic MR was management symptomatically with medications or surgically through open heart valve replacement.

METHODS

Two separate researchers queried YouTube for the term "percutaneous mitraclip". The videos were reviewed and categorized according to content, number of views, "likes" or "dislikes" and length in time of video (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Methods for data collection. This process was repeated by two separate researchers.

RESULTS

Of the first 72 videos reviewed, 8 of the videos were categorized as "patient education". These clips were created by health care professionals, hospitals or government agencies for intent to educate patients on the device (Figure 2). On average these videos were viewed 765 times (Figure 3). "Advertisement" comprised 5 of 72 videos which were videos produced by the company describing their device (Figure 2). Three videos were "patient experiences" and served as mini-documentaries from preoperative experience to postoperative life.

The "health care education or conference" category included 17 clips that discussed the research behind mitraclip and the pros and cons of its use. Most were physicians expressing their opinion on the most recent research papers. Three clips were "public awareness" which were clips from local news channels.

Twelve were intraoperative videos. These were videos recorded in the cardiac catheterization lab during an actual patient procedure as well as animations of the procedure. These videos were by far the most viewed video type with a total of 123,801 views (Figure 3). Lastly, there were 17 videos unrelated to the mitraclip procedure and 6 not depicted in the English language.

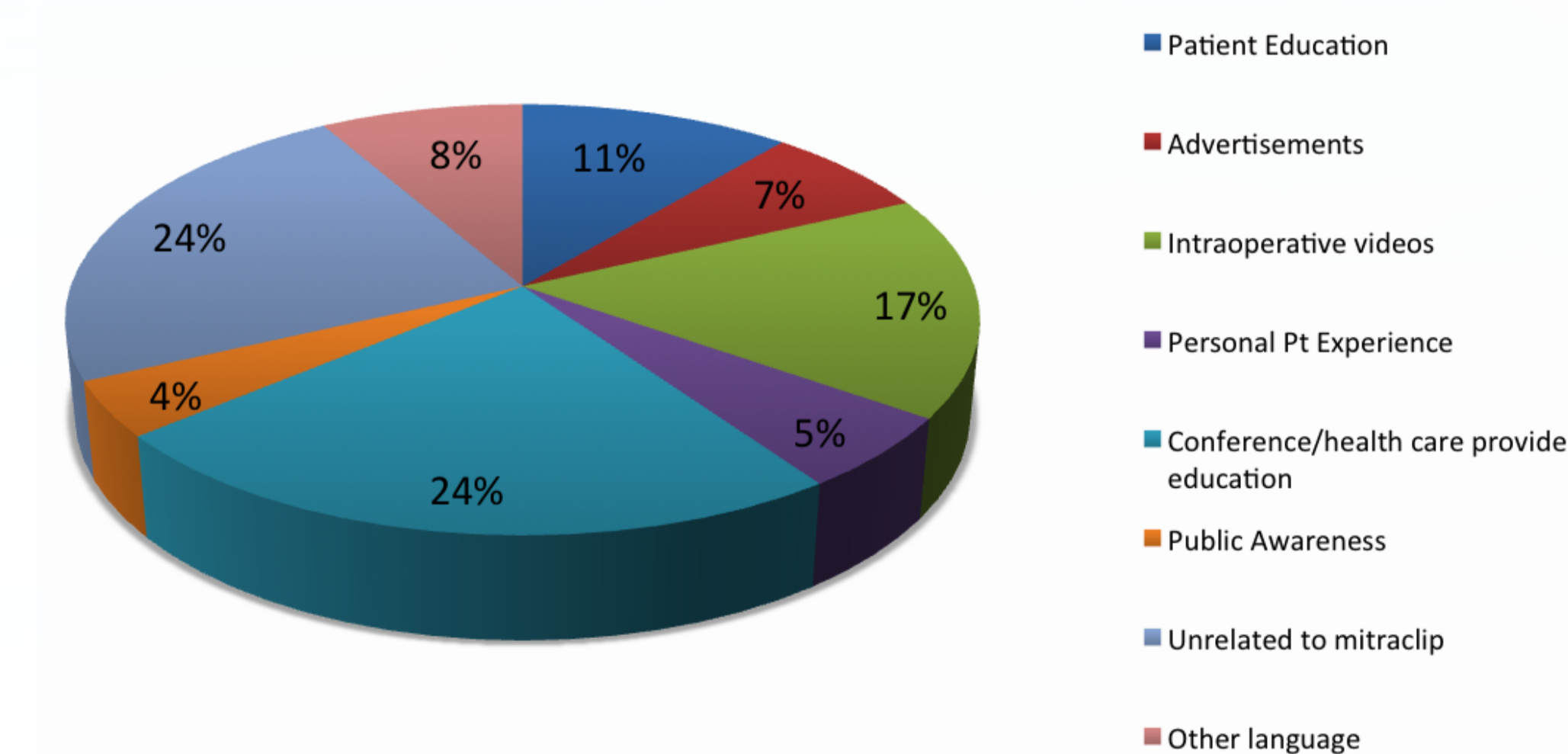


Figure 2: The first 72 YouTube clips after searching the term "percutaneous mitraclip" grouped into category based on content of video.

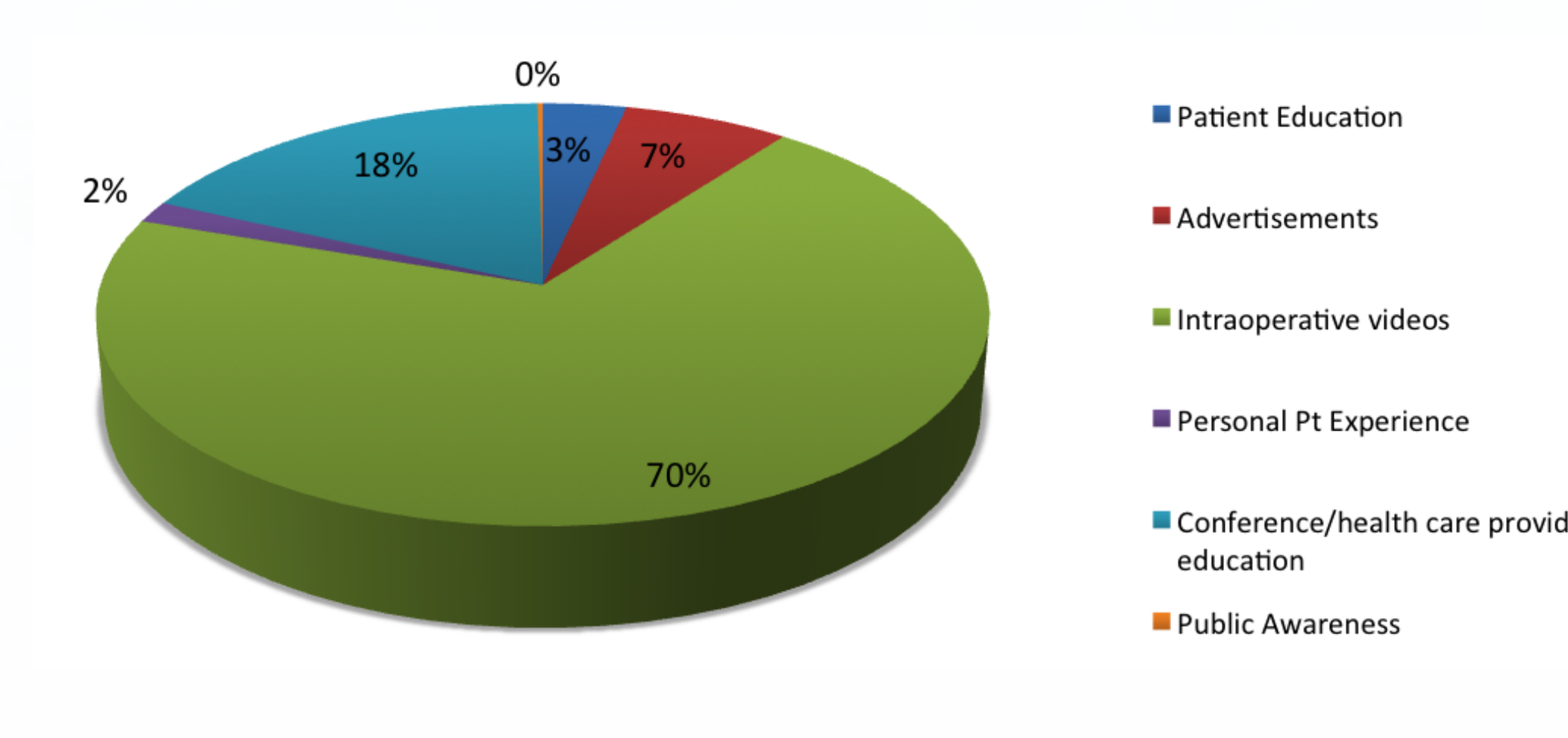


Figure 3: The percentage of viewed YouTube clips based on category for the first 72 videos after searching the term "percutaneous mitraclip."

CONCLUSION

Patients have become more involved in their own health care decisions in years past. Since most lack the medical training needed to guide decisions on the treatment options they are offered, most turn to the Internet for means of educational information. YouTube, the third most visited website, provides a wide range of health-related information with easy accessibility for patients and a potentially excellent source for patient education. Unfortunately the information posted is not regulated. Our data show that of the first 72 videos available, 24% were unrelated the mitraclip procedure including other types of minimally-invasive valvular procedures. Not only could this confuse patients due to similar-sounding-procedure names, but this could also give them false information, which could alter their decisions. This study shows that available information for the percutaneous mitraclip procedure could be improved if authorities in the field congregated and standardized education for patients.

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