



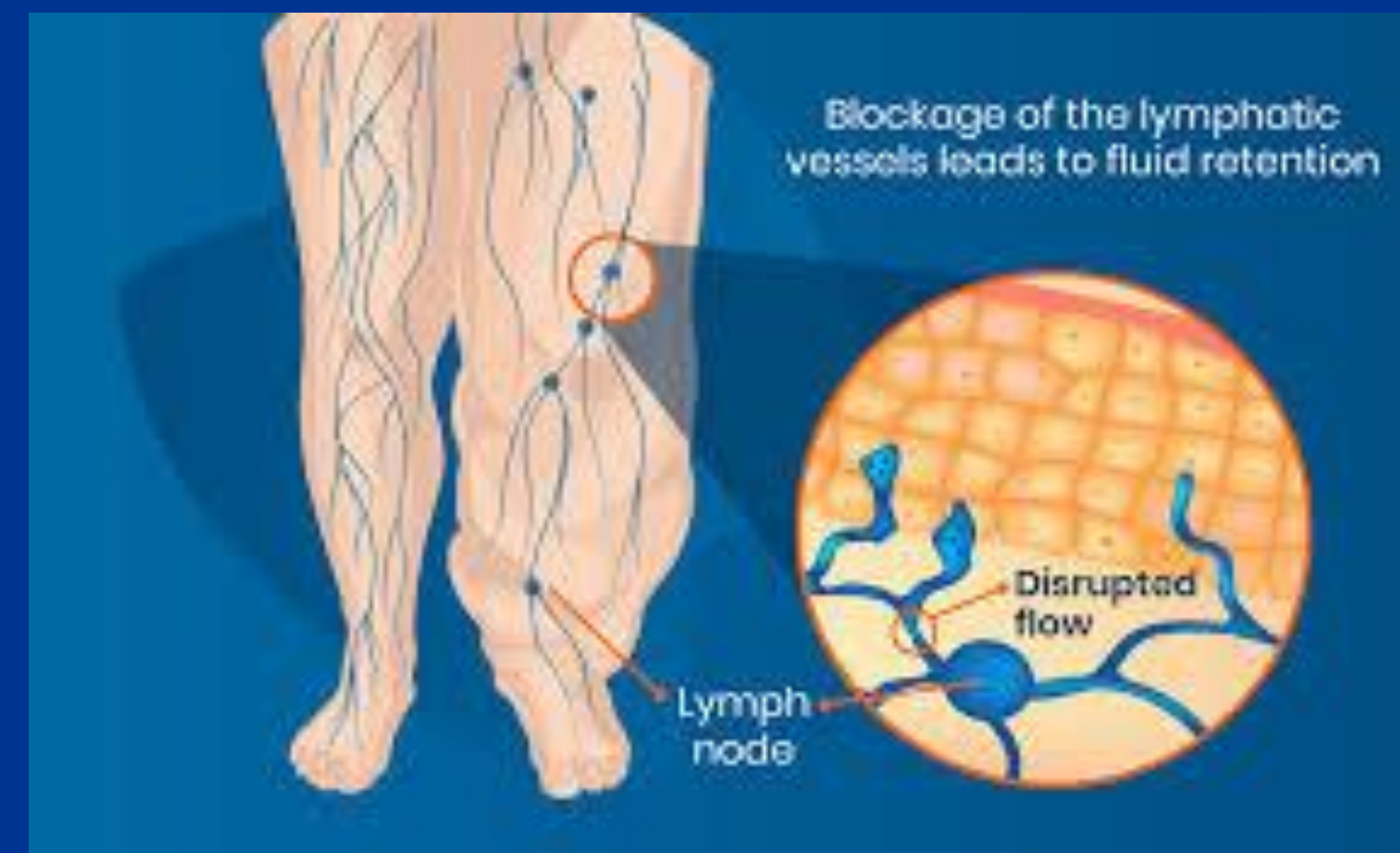
The Financial Burden of Lymphedema Treatment on the Patient

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Background

Breast Cancer Related Lymphedema

- Post surgical lymphedema affects approximately **33%** of patients receiving ALND and radiation



Cost of Lymphedema Per Patient

- Over a 2-year period, lymphedema management accrues an average of **\$140,000 in treatment costs**
- Financial burden on the patient is dependent on **insurance coverage and comorbidities**

Conservative Management

- Compression pumps, lymphatic garments **are primary treatments**
- Poor compliance → **disease progression**
- Account for most out-of-pocket costs**

Surgical Management

- Preventative treatment** or if symptoms are severe
- Procedures updated constantly → **insurance coverage is inconsistent**
- Preventative surgery considered experimental → **not covered**



Aims

Identify the economic impact of lymphedema management from the **patient's perspective**, with a focus on **treatment costs**.

Study Design

- Retrospective review of patients' treatment costs between **2019-2023**
- Stratified based on treatment (**surgical vs conservative**)

Cost Variables

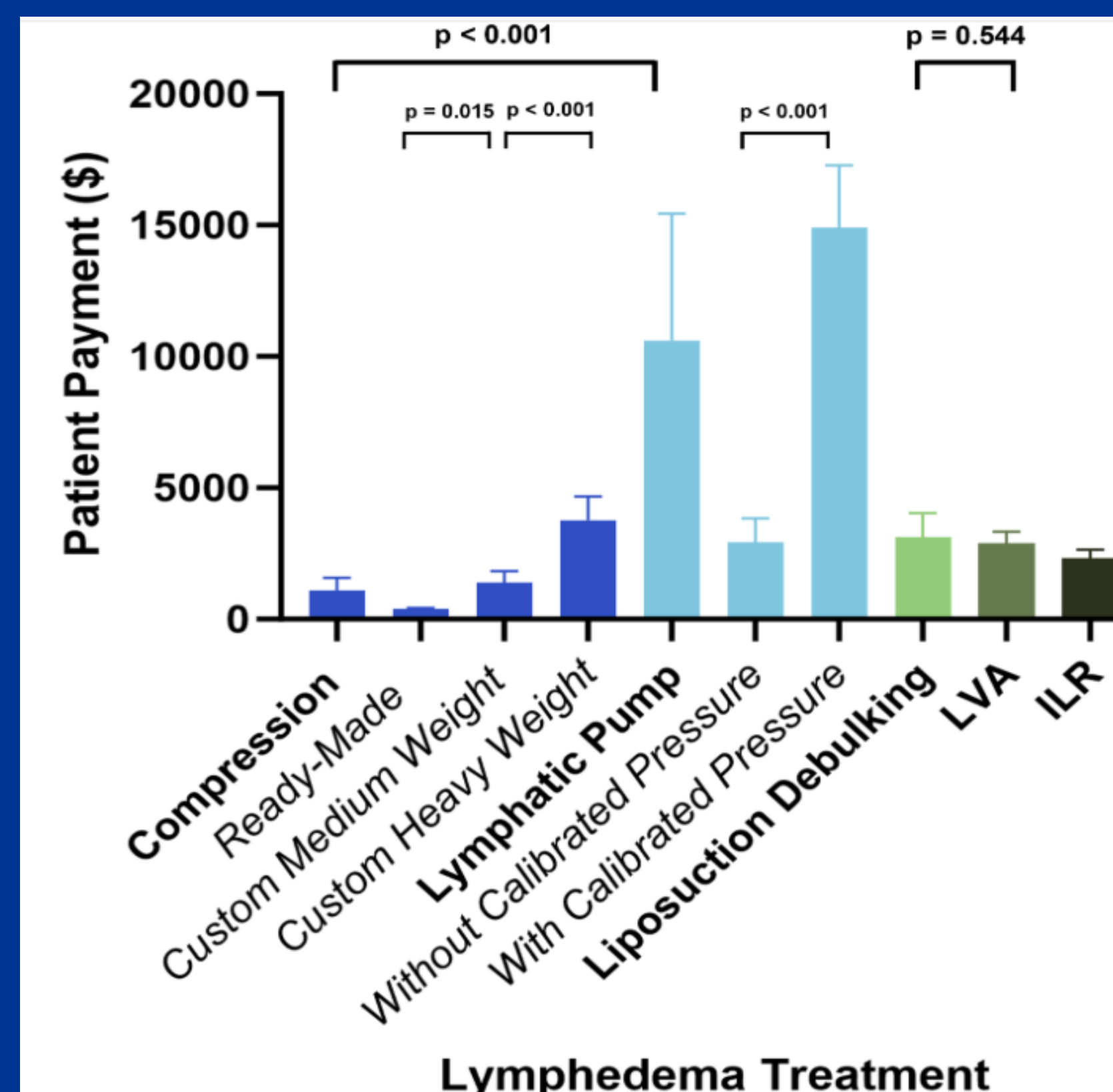
- Total paid** per patient (treatments, copays, deductibles)
- Payment to charge ratio** (P-to-C): percent cost paid out of pocket; reflective of insurance coverage

Results

- Average cost conservative management: **\$14,648/ patient**
 - Out-of-pocket: **\$9,765**
 - 99% patients received conservative care**
- Median cost **conservative + surgical care** (n=9): **\$8,990**

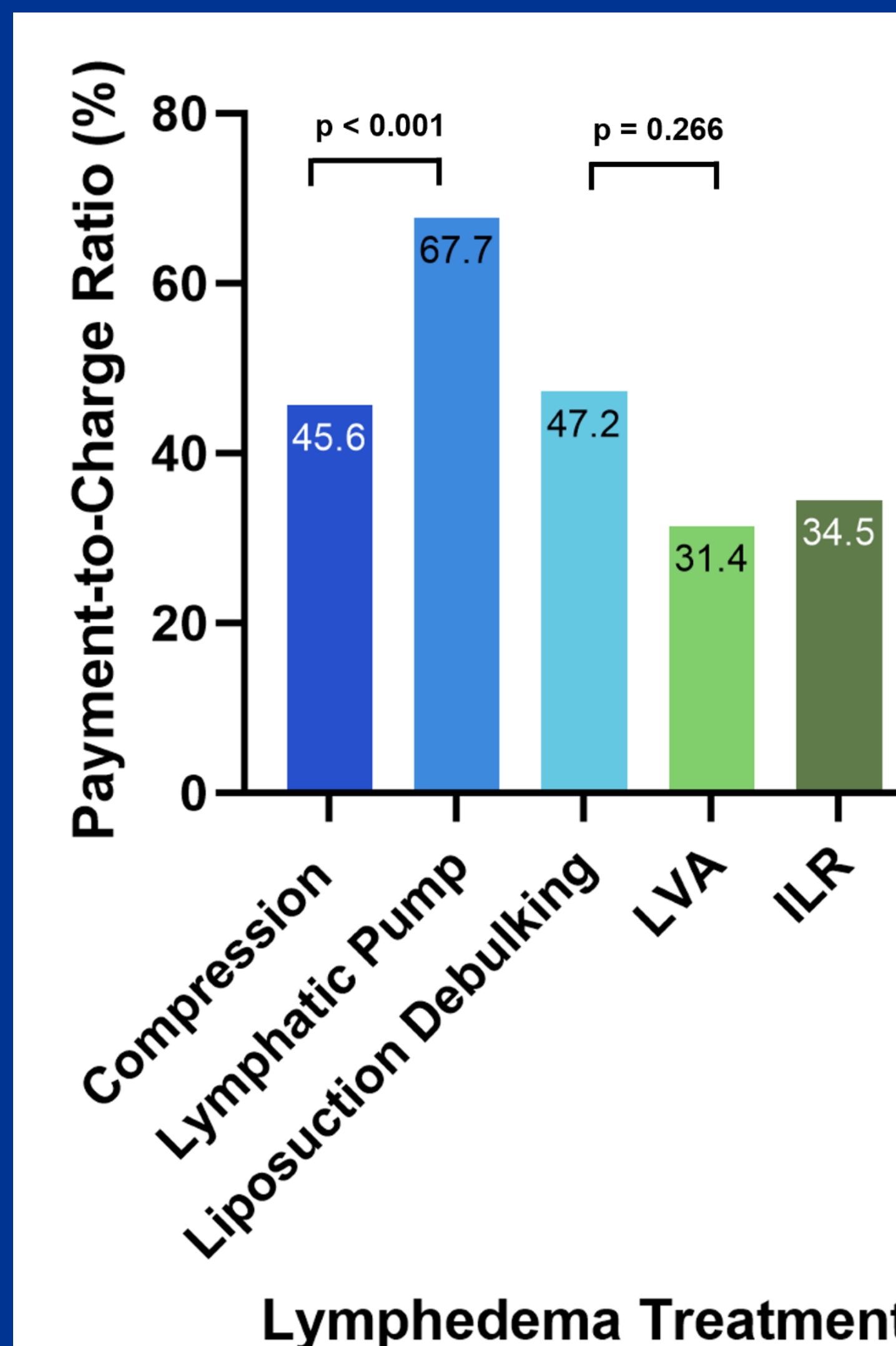
Out-of-Pocket Costs

Based on **median patient payment** per procedure/conservative approach



Results

Insurance Coverage



Higher percentages indicate **worse insurance coverage**



Conclusions

- Lymphedema management creates a **significant financial burden irrespective of treatment** strategy
- Conservative treatment → **high out-of-pocket costs** long term
- Surgical treatment is expensive, but **prevents disease progression** and **limits future costs**