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# Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the incidence of hospitalizations due to puerperal mastitis and breast abscess in Brazil: an ecological study

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**Objective:** This study aimed to evaluate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on hospitalization patterns for puerperal mastitis and breast abscess within the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS). **Methods:** An ecological study was conducted using data from the Hospital Information System of the SUS (SIH/DATASUS). Hospitalizations due to postpartum breast-related issues across Brazil's five regions were analyzed monthly, with March 2020 set as the interruption point. Data normality was assessed using a normalized Q-Q plot and a standardized residual histogram in R software, with a significance level of 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ). **Results:** A total of 11,279 hospitalizations were analyzed, with incidence rates ranging from 6 to 10 cases per 10,000 live births between 2018 and 2022. The Central-West region had the highest hospitalization rates both pre- and post-pandemic, while the Northeast reported the lowest. A 3.35% decline in expected hospitalization levels was observed after the pandemic in Brazil and in most regions. **Conclusion:** Hospitalization incidence for postpartum breast conditions varied by period and region. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a reduction in incidence across most Brazilian regions.

**Keywords:** mastitis; puerperium; hospitalization; COVID-19.