

### **Media Resource Review- Lizzy Shaughnessy**

“Only 1 in 7 OB/GYNs Do Abortions, Survey Finds”

---

This study was a random survey of practicing ob/gyns in the United States. The researchers sent national probability surveys to 1,800 practitioners across the U.S. The final sample included 1,031 doctors. The surveys reported that 14% of those who responded said they perform abortions. This percent is lower than another recent survey that found 22% of practitioners perform the same procedure. Researchers acknowledge that this may or may not represent a true decline in the number of abortions performed. This decline may be due to different sampling and surveying techniques.

The survey also found that 97% of the doctors reported that they had encountered patients who were interested in having an abortion. 18.6% of women were willing to perform the procedure, compared to 10.6% of men. The youngest age group of doctors was the most likely to perform abortions, at 22%. The doctors age 56 to 65 were the second most likely to perform abortions but the percentage for this age group was not given. The least likely age group to give abortions was doctors between ages 35 to 45.

There were also trends in the geographic location of the doctors. Of the doctors surveyed, those located in the Northeast and West were more likely to perform the procedure than those in the South and Midwest. Researchers also found that doctors located in highly urban postal codes were more willing to perform abortions than those rural areas. The researchers did note that doctors in rural areas, especially those in the south and Midwest, may not have given the procedure because of the beliefs of the community, not necessarily their own beliefs. These

doctors likely wanted to avoid antiabortion activists. This survey also asked questions about the doctor's religious beliefs. Doctors who identified being Jewish were more likely to perform abortions while Catholic, Evangelical Protestants, and those reporting a high religious motivation were less likely to offer abortions to their patients.

This study was limited in that it was based on volunteer response. The researchers did get decent response rate, nearly 57%. Although this study addressed if doctors performed abortions, it did not consider if the doctors were willing to refer patients to other doctors who would perform abortions. Additionally, the responses were not anonymous so this may have affected the doctor's honesty in response. The report did not address this variable but I would be interested to see if type of parents the doctor's (i.e. two parents married, two parents divorced, single mom, single father, etc.) had would relate to this decision to perform abortions. The doctor's own marital status and if they have kids could also affect their opinions.

One way this article could be used in a high school statistics class would be to have the students create their own additional questions that they would have included in the survey. The survey was on a volunteer basis and was not anonymous so they could also come up with ways to improve these issues by making it random and anonymous.