

A possible association between hydatidiform mole and the COVID-19 pandemic: a retrospective cohort study

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OBJECTIVE

To confirm an increase in the number of women with molar pregnancy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

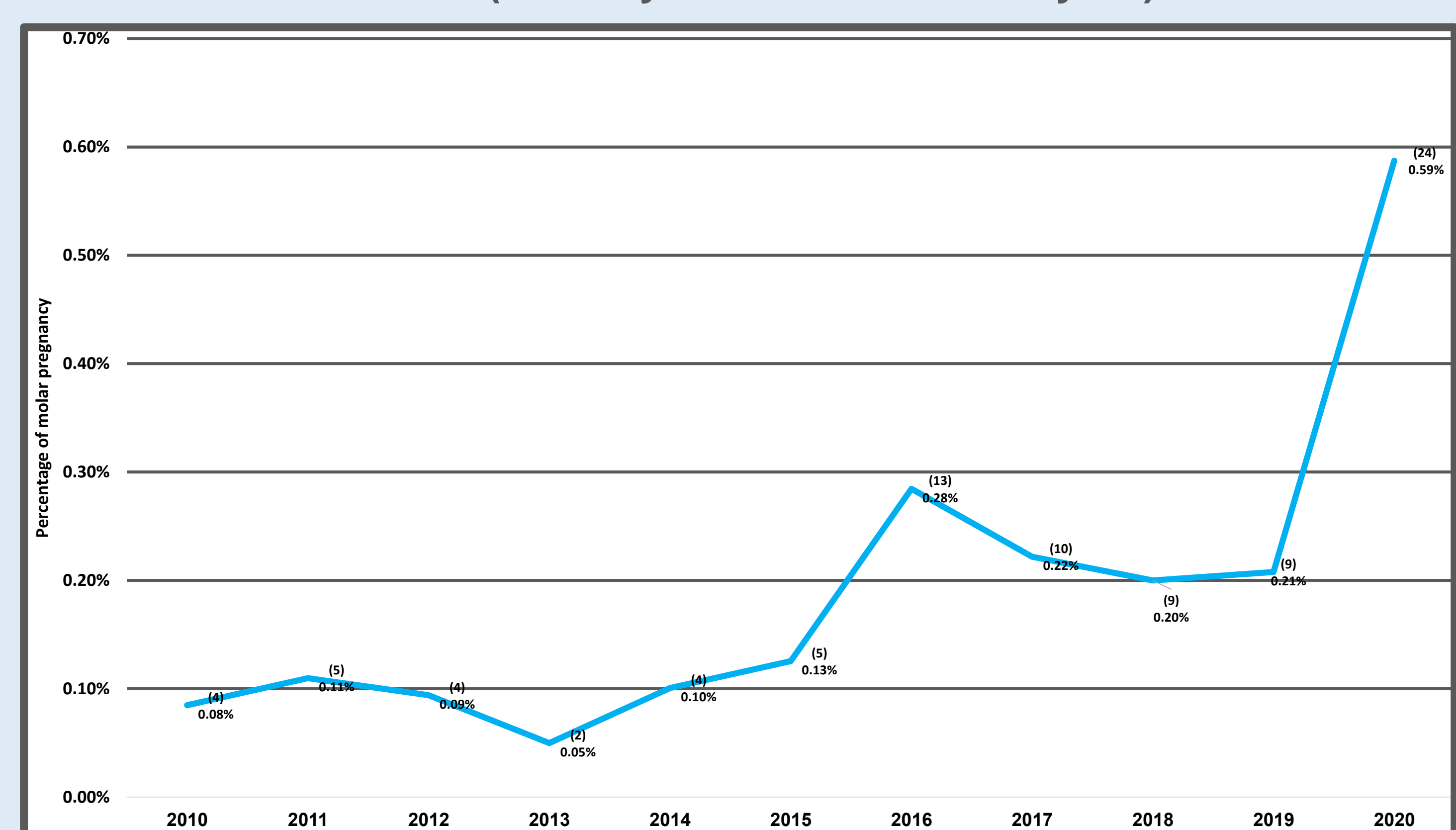
METHODS

In this retrospective cohort study, all patients with complete or partial mole diagnosed at the Gynecology department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Galilee Medical Center, Israel between January 1, 2010 and October 31, 2020, were included. To verify whether there was an increase in the incidence of hydatidiform mole (HM) and deliveries in 2020, the incidences for each year from January 2010 to October 2020 were recorded. In addition, we identified all women who were diagnosed with HM from January 2020 to November 2020, and compared them with a control group of women who underwent uterine evacuation for missed abortion of a singleton pregnancy during the same period. We also documented the time taken to diagnose missed abortion or molar pregnancy, to check if a delay in diagnosis can explain the increase in the incidence of HM.

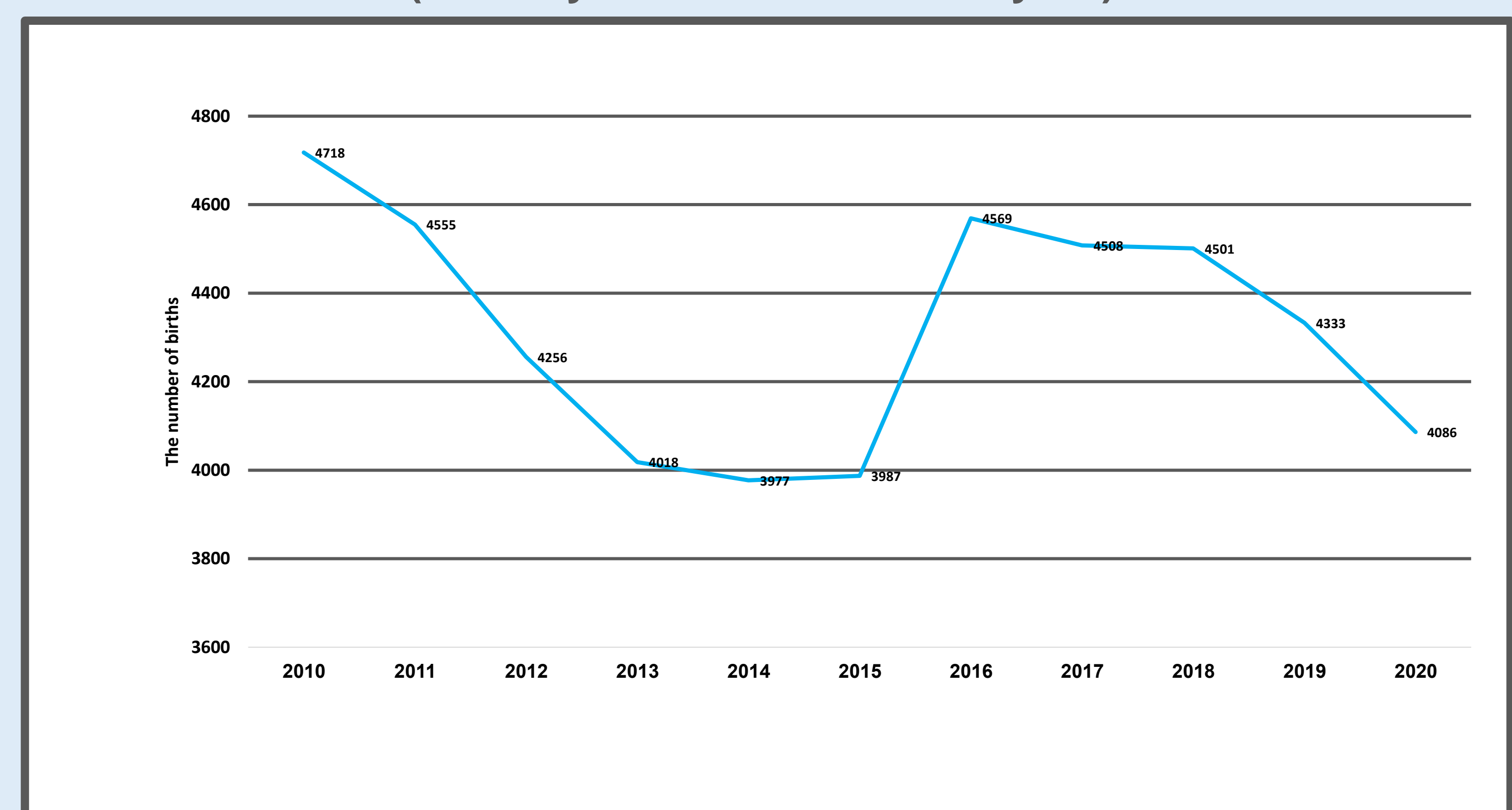
RESULTS

Between 2016 and 2019, there was a statistically significant increase in the incidence of molar pregnancy. A further increase occurred in 2020 (odds ratio=2.071). The mean gestational age of the embryo measured using the crown-rump length at the time of diagnosis was smaller in the HM group than in the missed abortion group (6.3 ± 1.67 - 7.4 ± 2.4 , one-sided $P=0.034$), meaning that it took more time (days) to diagnose molar pregnancy than missed abortion (22.38 ± 10.32 vs. 15.83 ± 7.83 days, $P=0.012$).

Graph 1- The incidence of molar pregnancies at Galilee medical center - (January-November of each year)



Graph 2 -The numbers of births per year at Galilee medical center - (January- November of each year).



CONCLUSION

There was a significant increase in the incidence of molar pregnancy during the COVID-19 pandemic, possibly because of the delay in receiving medical care. We recommend providing gynecological primary care services even in the time of a crisis such as pandemic.