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Intercostal neuroma as a source of pain after aesthetic and reconstructive breast implant surgery.

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Abstract

The development of persistent post-operative pain after implant placement for aesthetic or reconstructive breast surgery can lead to significant patient morbidity. Although there are many etiologies for post-operative pain, the diagnosis of an intercostal neuroma is important as this can be treated surgically. We describe three cases of an intercostal neuroma in patients with breast implants. A Tinel's sign can be elicited along the lateral chest wall and a local anesthetic block temporarily alleviates this pain. Surgical management with identification and clipping of the intercostal neuroma and burying into the underlying muscle significantly decreases post-operative pain long term. In patients with persistent pain after breast implant placement, plastic surgeons must be aware of this treatable cause of pain.

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