

# Educating Primary Care Providers on Early Introduction of Solid Foods and Food Allergy Prevention



Swetha Gogu<sup>1</sup>, DO, MPH; Amanda Stevens<sup>1</sup>, DO; Kaitlin Zorich<sup>1</sup>, DO; Yael Straus<sup>1</sup>, MD; Kayla Acre<sup>1</sup>, DO; Tonia Afshan<sup>3</sup>, MD; Jill Golden<sup>2</sup>, MD; Miranda Hillard<sup>2</sup>, MD

- 1. Pediatrics Residency—Corewell Health/Michigan State University
- 2. Department of Academic General Pediatrics
- 3. Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's

## Background

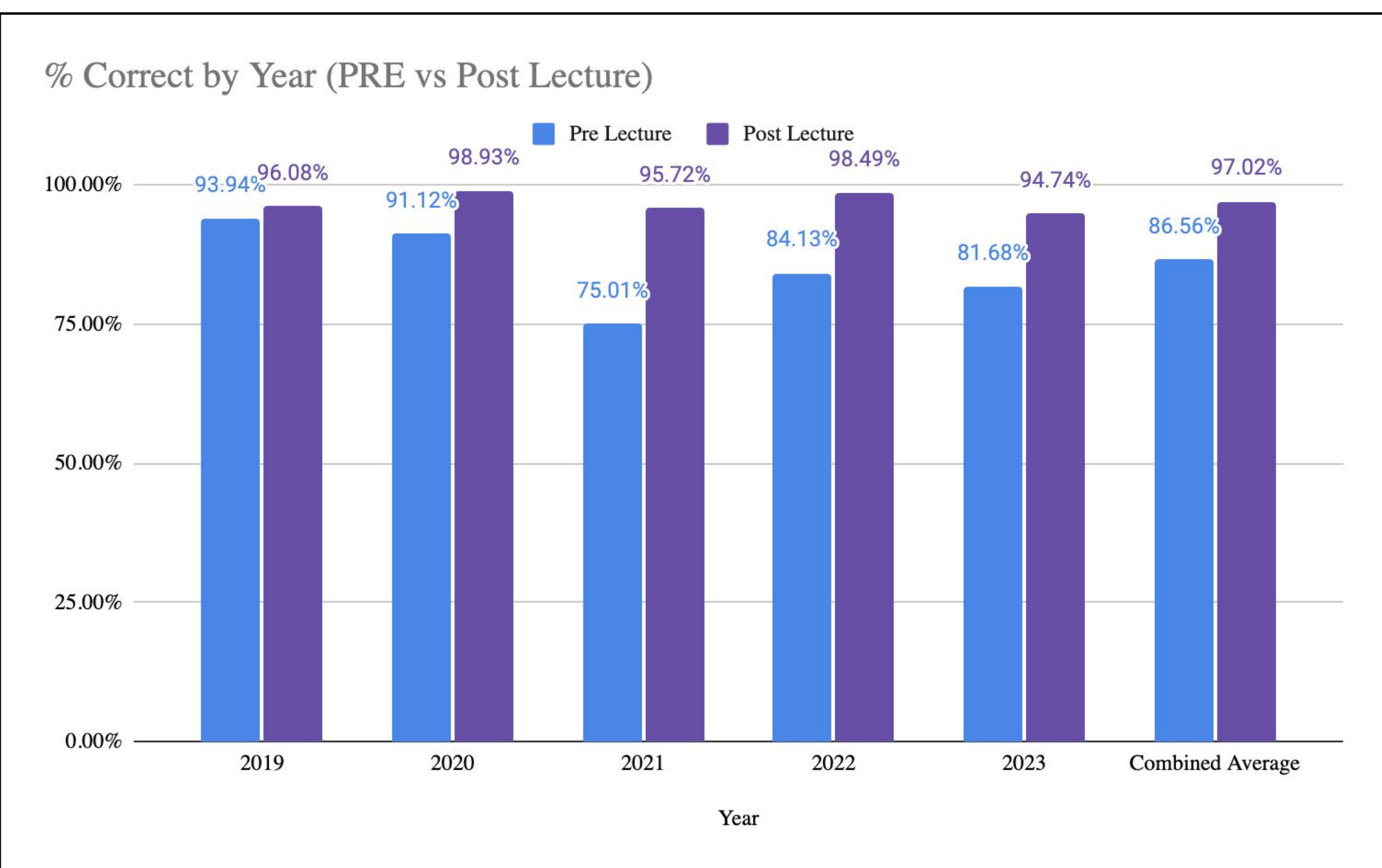
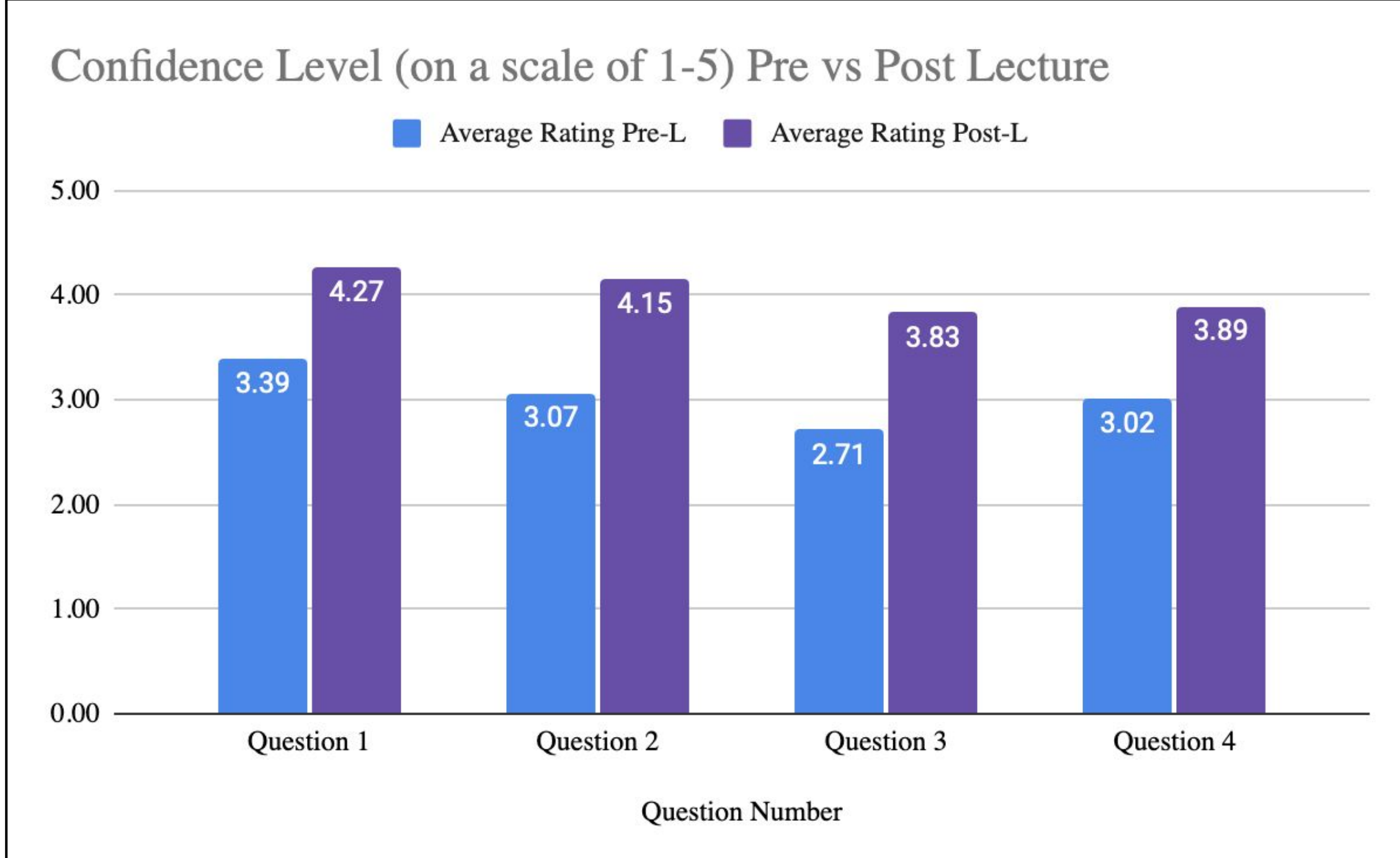
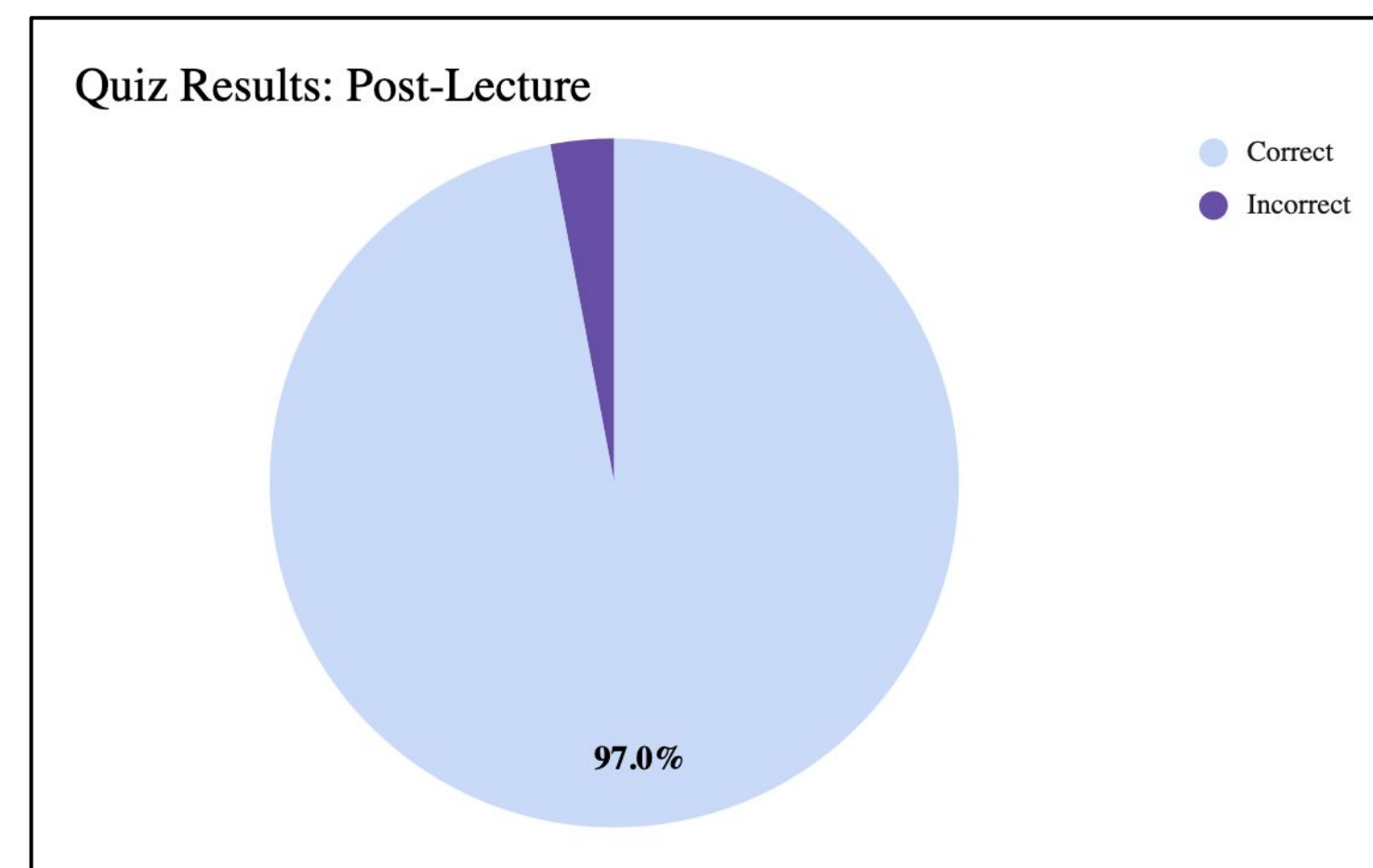
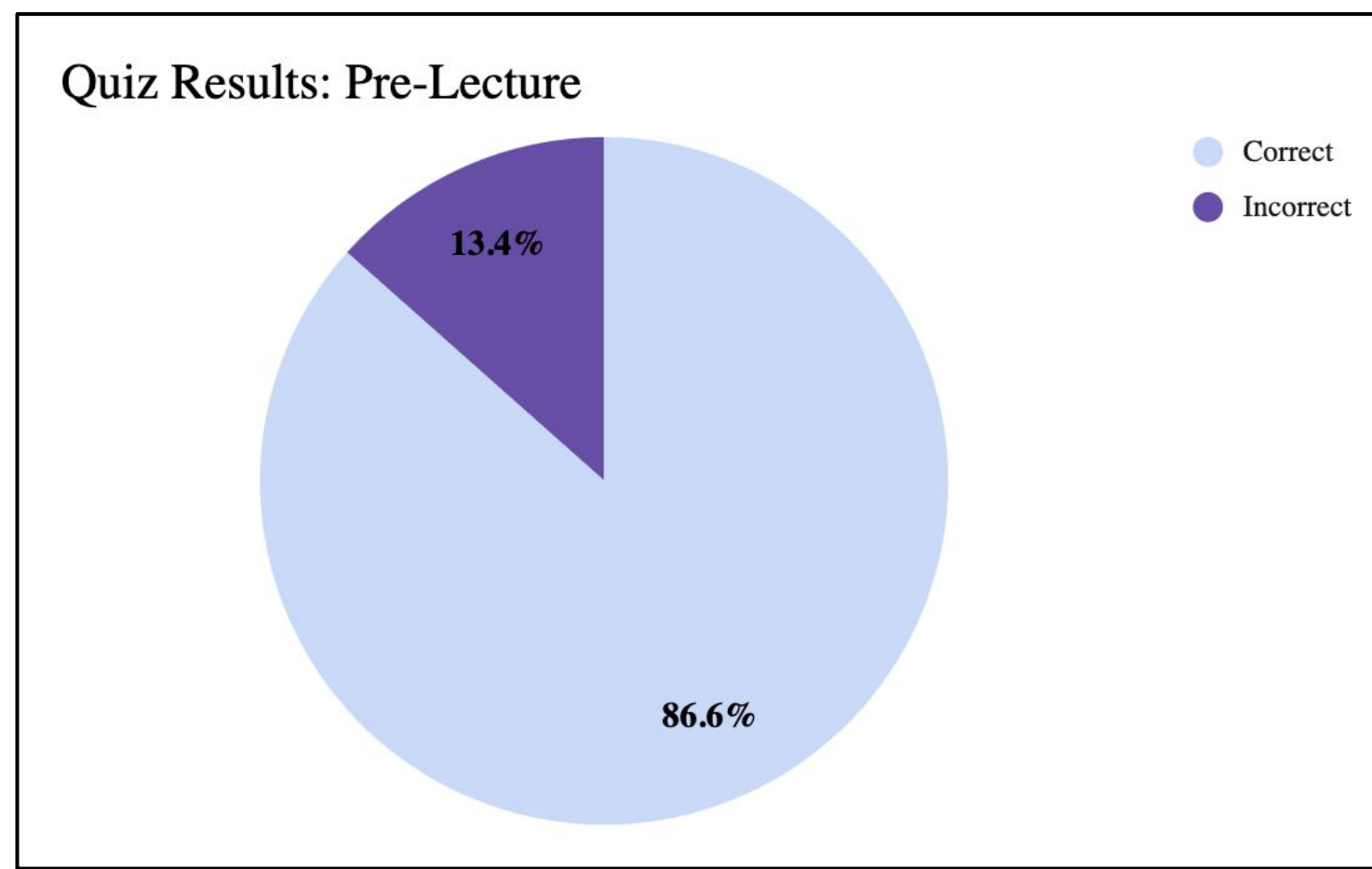
- Food allergies can be lifelong and have potentially life-threatening complications. Unfortunately, there has been an increase in the prevalence of food allergies over the past twenty years.
- In 2000, the AAP recommended delaying the introduction of peanuts until 3 years old, leading to the misconception that delaying allergenic foods will reduce the risk of food allergies.
- More recent studies (The LEAP Trial, 2015) showed that early introduction of allergenic foods can reduce the prevalence of developing food allergies.
- This project aims to educate providers and to increase confidence in counseling families on the recommendations of early introduction of allergenic solid foods at 4-6 months of age.

## Hypothesis

- Educating pediatric primary care providers on the basics of food allergies and benefits of early introduction of allergenic foods will help improve providers' knowledge and confidence regarding counseling families on the early introduction of allergenic foods.

## Methods

- A 1 hour presentation was offered twice per year to over 100 pediatric residents from 2019-2023.
- Lecture material included the basics of food allergies, how to introduce solids and allergenic foods to infants, the benefits of early introduction of allergenic foods, and how to discuss the above topics with families.
- Residents were given a pre and post-presentation survey to assess knowledge and level of confidence on the topics reviewed.



## Results

- Increase in correct responses to questions testing general knowledge of allergies and allergenic foods before (86.6%) versus after the presentation (97%).
- Increase in the average confidence level before (3.05) versus after the presentation (4.04).

## Conclusion

- A presentation directed at pediatric providers teaching the basics of allergies, allergenic foods, and solid food introduction can increase the confidence level and basic knowledge of providers. Additionally, this could lead to increased education of patient's families, earlier introduction of allergenic foods, and ultimately a decrease in the prevalence of food allergies in the pediatric population. Further studies would need to be performed to assess this.

## References

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