

Paclitaxel and epirubicin versus paclitaxel and carboplatin as first-line chemotherapy in patients with advanced breast cancer: a phase III study conducted by the Hellenic Cooperative Oncology Group.

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Source

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

To compare survival between patients with advanced breast cancer (ABC) treated with epirubicin/paclitaxel (Taxol) or paclitaxel/carboplatin (Cp) chemotherapy.

PATIENTS AND METHODS:

From January 1999 to April 2002, 327 eligible patients with ABC were randomized to receive either paclitaxel 175 mg/m² in a 3-h infusion followed by epirubicin (EPI) 80 mg/m² (group A) or paclitaxel, as in group A, followed by Cp at an AUC of 6 mg x min/ml (group B) every 3 weeks for six cycles.

RESULTS:

After a median follow-up of 23.5 months, median survival was not significantly different between the two groups (22.4 months versus 27.8 months, P=0.25), whereas median time to treatment failure was significantly longer in patients treated with paclitaxel/Cp (8.1 months in group A versus 10.8 months in group B, P=0.04). Both regimens were well tolerated. In total, 39 patients (24%) in group A and 46 (29%) in group B suffered at least one severe side-effect. Quality-of-life assessment and cost analysis did not reveal any significant differences between the two groups.

CONCLUSION:

Our study suggests that the paclitaxel/Cp combination is an effective therapeutic alternative for patients with ABC in which anthracycline administration has the potential of being harmful.