Adherence to Adjuvant Chemotherapy Among Early Stage Breast Cancer Patients in Single Referral Medical Center

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**Background:** Breast cancer has become the most frequently diagnosed cancer and also a leading cause of malignancy death in females worldwide. Having been more widely provided and accessible breast cancer screening program, early stage breast cancers are more frequently diagnosed and managed. Postoperative chemotherapy is one of the major parts of adjuvant treatment that seems to have strong influence on the decision of cancer treatment. This study sought to measure adherence to postoperative chemotherapy session in women with early stage breast cancer.

**Method:** Database from Chemotherapy and Blood Transfusion Unit, Siriraj hospital was used to identify patients who were diagnosed early stage breast cancer and commenced postoperative chemotherapy between January 2009 and December 2011. The rate of completion of adjuvant chemotherapy session was calculated as percentage and factors contributed to non-adherence to treatment were explored.

**Results:** Of the total 649 patients visited Chemotherapy and Blood Transfusion Unit to receive postoperative chemotherapy for early stage breast cancer, only 22 patients (3.4%) could not complete their chemotherapy sessions with the majority of them were diagnosed stage II and III breast cancers. The main reason of incomplete treatment was intolerable side effects of chemotherapy.

**Conclusion:** The rate of non-adherence to postoperative chemotherapy in the referral center was not as much as expected, even though vast disparate sociodemographic backgrounds and notions among patients were recognised.