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Quality of life in Brazilian women with early breast cancer on adjuvant endocrine therapy

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Objective: This study aimed to evaluate the quality of life (QOL) in women with early breast cancer treated with adjuvant endocrine therapy and to explore its relationships with patients' clinical and social characteristics, type and time on endocrine therapy, and site of treatment (public vs. private health service). **Methodology:** Women with a past history of early-stage estrogen-receptor-positive invasive carcinoma of the breast on adjuvant endocrine therapy for at least 6 months were invited to participate in this study. To assess QOL while on therapy, patients were assessed with EORTC QLQ-C30 and QLQ-BR23 questionnaires. Demographic and clinical information was reviewed from medical records. Data collection was performed using the RedCap software, and statistical analyses were performed using the R software (R Core Team (2022)). **Results:** From June 2021 to March 2023, a total of 212 patients from 6 institutions (2 public and 4 private) were evaluated. The median age was 56.7 years. A total of 51 (24.1%) patients were premenopausal, 138 (65.1%) received (neo)adjuvant chemotherapy, and the mean time on endocrine therapy was 3.7 years. A total of 115 (54.2%) patients were on aromatase inhibitors, 31 (14.6%) were on ovarian suppression, and 66 (31.1%) were on tamoxifen. Domains of emotional functioning 64.9 (standard deviation – SD 28.4), cognitive function 65.4 (31.9), future perspective 56.8 (35.3), sexual functioning 19.9 (21.9), and sexual enjoyment 47.2 (28.0) were affected in this cohort. Premenopausal women presented with significantly lower scores for emotional functioning (54.6 vs. 68.2, $p=0.003$) and cognitive functioning (56.5 vs. 68.2, $p=0.022$) than postmenopausal women. Among premenopausal patients, ovarian suppression contributed to lower scores in cognitive and social functioning domains. **Conclusion:** This study showed significant impairment of QOL of women on adjuvant endocrine therapy, especially in premenopausal women.

Keywords: breast cancer; quality of life.