

Challenges in the Management of Her2 Neu Positive Breast Cancer Patients: Real World Data from India

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Abstract : The invention of trastuzumab has changed the treatment of breast cancer and lives of many patients all over the world. Despite many patients getting benefitted from the drug, it is out of reach for most of the patients. There is very limited real world data regarding the epidemiology and clinical outcome of Her2neu positive breast cancer patients. Materials and Methods: This is a retrospective analysis of breast cancer patients presenting to a tertiary care cancer centre in Southern India from 2007 to2013. All early and locally advanced breast cancer patients, who were Her2neu 3+ on IHC are included in the study and evaluated in terms of epidemiology, 3-year disease free survival (DFS)and 5-year overall survival(OS). Chemotherapy regimens used were-FAC 6 cycles or AC 4 cycles followed by 12 cycles of weekly paclitaxel . Trastuzumab was given after 6 cycles of FAC or weekly with paclitaxel followed by 3weekly maintenance until 1 year. Results: Over the period of this study there were 885 newly diagnosed cases of carcinoma breast, of which 242 (27%) were Her2neu positive, 360(40%) were hormone receptor positive, and 212(24%) were triple negative. A total of 71(8%) were Her2neu equivocal of which only 10 patients got FISH test done. Of the 212 newly diagnosed patients, only 74 (29%) opted to have standard of care therapy with trastuzumab at our centre, out of which 52(24%), 8(3%), received under insurance, paying basis respectively. 14(9%) patients received the care as part of clinical trial program (ALTTO trial). 7 (9.72%) patients developed decrease of ejection fraction by greater than 10%, requiring stoppage of trastuzumab out of which 5 were restarted in 2 months. Patients receiving trastuzumab along with chemotherapy had longer 3year DFS 92% vs. 60% (p value<0.0001) when compared to chemotherapy alone. 5 year OS was 87% vs 44% (p-value <0.0001) compared to chemotherapy alone. Conclusion: Trastuzumab with chemotherapy improves the DFS and OS in Her2neu positive patients. The biggest constraint is the cost of the treatment and absence of universal health security net to treat all patients with this diagnosis.

Keywords : breast cancer, Her 2 neu positive, real world data, Trastuzumab

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