

CLINICAL IMPACT OF TIME INTERVALS UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF TREATMENT IN THE PROGNOSIS OF WOMEN WITH BREAST CANCER

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INTRODUCTION

In last decades the elapsed time until the treatment of breast cancer has been largely studied. However, there are inconsistencies about the true impact of more longer times (delay) for the beginning of treatment in the prognosis.

OBJECTIVES

To analyze the impact of time intervals (interval between the first signal or symptom and the first appointment; between the first appointment and the diagnosis; and between the diagnosis and the beginning of treatment) in the prognosis of women with breast cancer.

METHODS AND METHODS

A longitudinal study will be carried out to estimate the disease-free, specific and overall survival for the different groups of exposition in a cohort of women diagnosed with breast cancer, without previous oncological treatment, enrolled at Hospital do Câncer III (HCIII), Instituto Nacional de Câncer (INCA), between october 2014 and april 2015.

Women aged less than 18 years and older than 80 years, without clinical or psychological conditions to answer the questionnaire applied at the time of screening and who died before starting the first cancer treatment were excluded.

Socio-demographic, clinical and related to the first oncological treatment variables were collected. A descriptive analysis of the data will be performed by means of measures of central tendency and dispersion for the continuous variables and absolute and relative frequencies for the categorical ones.

Analyze of survival will be performed using the Kaplan-Meier method and log-rank test for comparison between groups. For control of possible confounding variables between the delay and survival, a simple and multiple Cox regression will be performed. For the analyzes, the SPSS statistical package (20.0) will be used.

This project was submitted and approved by INCA Research Ethics Committee on 01/10/2014 (CAAE 12107913.3.0000.5274).

RESULTS

A total of 662 women were interviewed, of whom 157 were excluded and 505 completed the follow-up.

Regarding the sociodemographic variables, the median age was 56 years (21-80 years), with a predominance of not caucasian (66.3%), living with a partner (50.1%), ≥ 8 years of schooling (61.0%), with no current employment (53.9%) and per capita income <1 minimum wage (52.1%). About life habits, 29.1% of the women reported consumption of alcoholic beverages in the last 30 days and 13.1% were current smoking (table 1).

Most of the women found the breast alteration by signal or symptom (73.9%); nodule was the most frequent symptom in 45.0% of the cases. The non-special type breast carcinoma was the most prevalent histological type (81.4%), as well as the intermediate histological grade (grade 2) (62.6%). Clinical staging was advanced ($\geq 2B$) at diagnosis in 50.7% of the cases. Chemotherapy was the first treatment performed by the majority of the patients (57.6%) (table 2).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of women with breast cancer, enrolled in Hospital do Câncer III (N = 505)

Variables	N*	%
Race/skin color		
Not-caucasian	335	66.3
Caucasian	170	33.7
Marital status		
Living with a partner	253	50.1
Living without a partner	252	49.9
Education (in years of study)		
< 8 years	197	39.0
≥ 8 years	308	61.0
Actual employment status		
Unemployed	272	53.9
Employed	233	46.1
Per capita income		
< 1 Minimum wage	263	52.1
≥ 1 Minimum wage	234	46.3
Family history of breast cancer		
No	370	73.5
Yes	134	26.5
Alcohol use in the last 30 days		
Yes	147	29.1
No	355	70.3
Current use of tobacco		
No	148	83.7
Yes	66	13.1

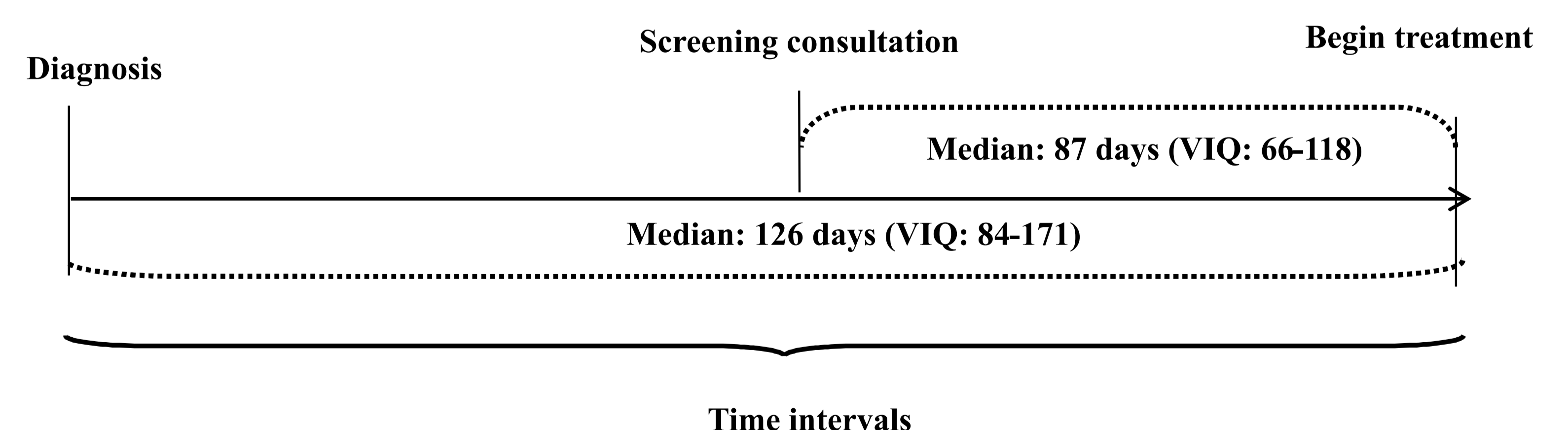
* Differences found correspond to the absence of information

Table 2: Clinical and treatment-related characteristics of women with breast cancer, enrolled in Hospital do Câncer III (N = 505)

Variables	N*	%
Previous benign breast disease		
Yes	181	35.8
No	323	64.0
How the breast cancer was discovered		
Symptom	373	73.9
Others	132	26.1
First sign or symptom noticed		
Lump	227	45.0
Others	277	54.9
Health services of the 1st appointment		
Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS)	258	51.1
Private + others	245	48.5
Health service which customarily uses		
Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS)	387	76.6
Private+ others	115	22.8
Clinical staging (TNM)		
Initial ($< 2A$)	241	47.7
Advanced ($\geq 2B$)	256	50.7
Histological type		
Non-special type breast carcinoma	411	81.4
Others	94	18.6
Histological grade		
Grade 1 (low)	20	9.9
Grade 2 (intermediate)	316	62.6
Grade 3 (high)	126	25.0
First treatment		
Chemotherapy	291	57.6
Surgery	200	39.6
Hormone therapy	13	2.6
Radiotherapy	1	0.2

* Differences found correspond to the absence of information

The median time interval between the biopsy result and the start of the first oncological treatment was 126 days (IQV: 84-171), and for only 11.3% this time interval was ≤ 60 days.



PERSPECTIVES

Currently, we are waiting the complete follow up of 5 years of the patients to collecting the survival data.