FACTS ABOUT COMPLIANCE WITH HORMONAL THERAPIES IN THE TREATMENT OF BREAST CANCER

What is compliance?
According to the World Health Organization, compliance is “the extent to which a person’s behavior—taking medication, following a diet, and/or executing lifestyle changes—corresponds with agreed recommendations from a healthcare provider.” In other words, taking needed medication as prescribed.

Why is compliance important?
- The use of oral cancer therapies to manage disease is likely to increase dramatically in the coming years
- Five percent of all hospital visits are due to drug non-compliance, costing an estimated $100 billion a year
- According to one study, 69% of hospital visits for adverse drug reactions are caused by not taking medication as prescribed

Why should you care about compliance and breast cancer?
Studies have shown patients may reduce their risk of breast cancer recurrence:
- 12 percent by taking their hormonal therapy for one year
- 29 percent by taking their hormonal therapy for two years
- 47 percent by taking their hormonal therapy for up to five years

Many individuals struggle to take their medications...
- One in three U.S. adults who were prescribed medications to take regularly report they often did not take them as directed—according to a recent Harris Poll.
- An estimated 30% of oral cancer medications are taken correctly (right dose, at the right time, on the right day, in the right way)

Facts & Figures: Non-Compliance with Breast Cancer Hormonal Therapies
- A study of hormonal therapies for breast cancer found that after four years of therapy, compliance rates among patients decreased to 50 percent.
- A study of tamoxifen adherence among breast cancer patients who were prescribed the therapy found that 17 percent stopped taking the drug during the two-year follow-up period. Of these, 68 percent stopped after less than one year of treatment.
- A breast cancer study found that 55 percent of women reported non-adherence with their hormonal therapy either occasionally or frequently, often intentionally.
- The reasons for both intentional and non-intentional non-adherence are complicated and may vary substantially by individual.

COMPLIANCE STRATEGIC INITIATIVE
Led by: American Cancer Society, CancerCare, National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP), Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization
Factors that may contribute to non-compliance in breast cancer patients:

- Inability to change behavior as required
- Inadequate supervision
- Complex treatment regimen
- Poor communication with healthcare providers
- Patient dissatisfaction with care
- Patient health beliefs weighing in favor of non-compliance
- Inadequate social support
- History of non-compliance
- History of mental illness
- Cost and insurance

The benefits of hormonal therapy treatment and the risk of breast cancer recurrence

- 2.3 million women in the United States are living with a breast cancer diagnosis.
  Clinical data indicate that approximately 80 percent of these survivors may be in the category of postmenopausal women with estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer. It is this sub-group, approximately 1.3 million women, that is most affected by compliance to oral therapy.
- For the two-thirds of women with early stage breast cancer whose disease is hormone receptor-positive, a five-year course of adjuvant hormonal therapy significantly reduces the rate of recurrence and increases the 10-year survival rate.

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