



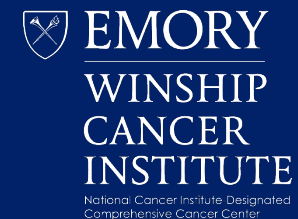
# IS THERE STILL A ROLE FOR ANTHRACYCLINES IN EARLY STAGE BREAST CANCER?

## PRO:

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Assistant Professor  
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Emory University

## CON:

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Assistant Professor  
Breast Medical Oncology  
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# CURRENT GUIDELINES



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## NCCN Guidelines Version 3.2024 Invasive Breast Cancer

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### PREOPERATIVE/ADJUVANT THERAPY REGIMENS<sup>a</sup>

The regimens listed in the table for HER2-negative disease are all category 1 (except where indicated) when used in the adjuvant setting.

HER2-Negative	
<b>Preferred Regimens:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dose-dense AC (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide) followed or preceded by paclitaxel every 2 weeks<sup>b</sup></li><li>• Dose-dense AC (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide) followed or preceded by weekly paclitaxel<sup>b</sup></li><li>• TC (docetaxel and cyclophosphamide)</li><li>• Olaparib, if germline <i>BRCA1/2</i> mutations<sup>c,d</sup></li><li>• High-risk<sup>e</sup> TNBC: Preoperative pembrolizumab + carboplatin + paclitaxel, followed by preoperative pembrolizumab + cyclophosphamide + doxorubicin or epirubicin, followed by adjuvant pembrolizumab</li><li>• TNBC and residual disease after preoperative therapy with taxane-, alkylator-, and anthracycline-based chemotherapy<sup>d</sup>: Capecitabine</li></ul>	
<b>Useful in Certain Circumstances:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dose-dense AC (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide)</li><li>• AC (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide) every 3 weeks (category 2B)</li><li>• CMF (cyclophosphamide/methotrexate/fluorouracil)</li><li>• AC followed by weekly paclitaxel<sup>b</sup></li><li>• Capecitabine (maintenance therapy for TNBC after adjuvant chemotherapy)</li></ul>	<b>Other Recommended Regimens:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AC followed by docetaxel every 3 weeks<sup>b</sup></li><li>• EC (epirubicin/cyclophosphamide)</li><li>• TAC (docetaxel/doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide)</li><li>• For TNBC:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Paclitaxel + carboplatin (various schedules) (category 2A)</li><li>▶ Docetaxel + carboplatin (category 2A)</li></ul></li></ul>

[Additional Considerations for Those Receiving Preoperative/Adjuvant Therapy \(BINV-L, 3\)](#)

HER2 Negative: Preferred

### HER2 Positive: Useful in Certain Circumstances



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### PREOPERATIVE/ADJUVANT THERAPY REGIMENS<sup>a</sup>

HER2-Positive	
<b>Preferred Regimens:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paclitaxel + trastuzumab<sup>f</sup></li><li>• TCH (docetaxel/carboplatin/trastuzumab)</li><li>• TCHP (docetaxel/carboplatin/trastuzumab/pertuzumab)</li><li>• If no residual disease after preoperative therapy or no preoperative therapy: Complete up to one year of HER2-targeted therapy with trastuzumab<sup>i</sup> (category 1) ± pertuzumab.</li><li>• If residual disease after preoperative therapy: Ado-trastuzumab emtansine (category 1) alone. If ado-trastuzumab emtansine discontinued for toxicity, then trastuzumab (category 1) ± pertuzumab to complete one year of therapy.<sup>g,h</sup> If node positive at initial staging, trastuzumab + pertuzumab (category 1)<sup>i</sup></li></ul>	
<b>Useful in Certain Circumstances:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Docetaxel + cyclophosphamide + trastuzumab</li><li>• AC followed by T<sup>b</sup> + trastuzumab<sup>h</sup> (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide followed by paclitaxel plus trastuzumab, various schedules)</li><li>• AC followed by T<sup>b</sup> + trastuzumab + pertuzumab<sup>h</sup> (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide followed by paclitaxel plus trastuzumab plus pertuzumab, various schedules)</li><li>• Neratinib<sup>g</sup> (adjuvant setting only)</li><li>• Paclitaxel + trastuzumab + pertuzumab<sup>h</sup></li><li>• Ado-trastuzumab emtansine (TDM-1) (adjuvant setting only)</li></ul>	<b>Other Recommended Regimens:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AC followed by docetaxel<sup>b</sup> + trastuzumab<sup>h</sup> (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide followed by docetaxel + trastuzumab)</li><li>• AC followed by docetaxel<sup>b</sup> + trastuzumab + pertuzumab<sup>h</sup> (doxorubicin/cyclophosphamide followed by docetaxel + trastuzumab + pertuzumab)</li><li>• Paclitaxel/carboplatin + trastuzumab + pertuzumab</li></ul>

[Additional Considerations for Those Receiving Preoperative/Adjuvant Therapy \(BINV-L, 3\)](#)

## PRO-ANTHRACYCLINE

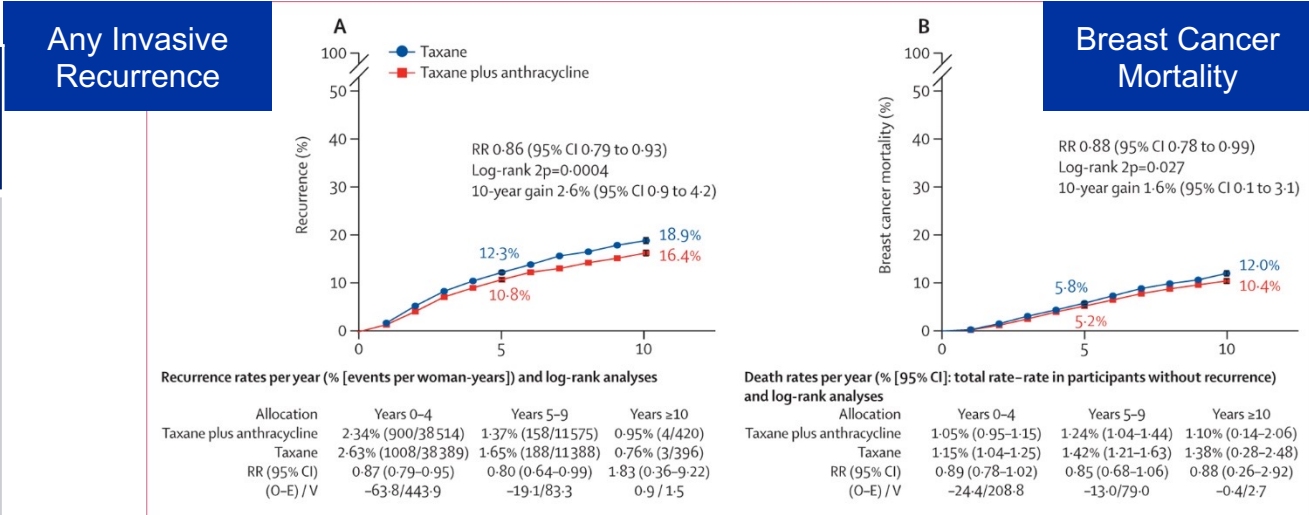
1. Widely available, affordable, & effective drugs against breast cancer on a global level
2. HER2 Negative: Trials designed to demonstrate noninferiority of non-anthracycline regimens have failed in HER2 negative
3. HER2 Positive: No trials designed or statistically powered to show non-inferiority of non-anthracycline regimens
3. Reduce breast cancer recurrence and death
4. Improved management and monitoring of cardiotoxicity



# EBCTCG [EARLY BREAST CANCER TRIALISTS' COLLABORATIVE GROUP] META-ANALYSIS

## 10 year cumulative risk of outcomes with Taxane plus Anthracycline vs Taxane without Anthracycline

Cardiotoxicity	Leukemia
<p>-Non-breast cancer deaths not increased including CV causes between anthracycline vs non-anthracycline</p> <p>*Pts with elevated cardio risk often excluded and median f/u ~5 yrs</p>	<p>-Trials with data: 12/6768 (0.18%) AML after anthracycline vs 2/6783 (0.03%) who did not receive anthracycline (p=0.013)</p> <p>-Equating to ~1 additional case AML per 700 women treated</p>

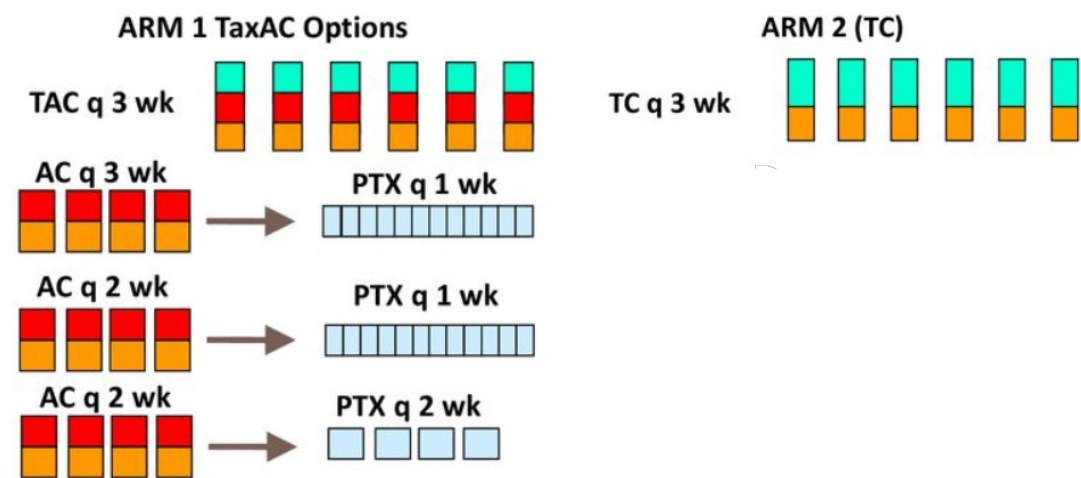


Demographics [N=18,103]	
Median Age	53 yrs (IQR 46-60)
LN involvement	9,731 (53%)
ER+	12,244 (67%)
HER2+	2,577 (14%)

Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group (EBCTCG). Anthracycline-containing and taxane-containing chemotherapy for early-stage operable breast cancer: a patient-level meta-analysis of 100 000 women from 86 randomised trials. Lancet. 2023 Apr 15;401(10384):1277-1292. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(23)00285-4. PMID: 37061269; PMCID: PMC11023015.

# HER2 NEGATIVE: ABC [ANTHRACYCLINES IN EARLY BREAST CANCER] TRIALS

- 3 sequential adjuvant trials
  - LN+ or high risk LN-; HER2-
  - Randomized to TC6 or TaxAC (docetaxel or paclitaxel)
- AIM: TC x 6 cycles noninferior to TaxAC
  - HR for IDFS >1.18 for TC6 vs TaxAC defined as prespecified margin of inferiority for TCx6
- N=4181



**TABLE 1.** Patient and Tumor Characteristics by Parent ABC Protocol Data as of September 30, 2020

Patient or Tumor Characteristic	USOR 06-090 (n = 1,287)	B-46-I/07132 (n = 1,051)	B-49 (n = 1,843)	Total (N = 4,181)	P <sup>a</sup>
Follow-up, years, median	9.4	6.5	6.7	6.9	NA
Age, years, %					
≤49	37	38	32	35	
50-59	38	35	35	36	<.0001
≥60	26	27	34	30	
Race, %					
White	88	83	84	85	
Black or African American	10	12	11	11	
Asian	2	2	2	2	<.0001
Other/unknown	1	3	3	2	
Ethnicity, %					
Hispanic or Latino	11	11	8	10	
Not Hispanic or Latino	89	85	90	88	<.0001
Unknown	0	4	2	2	
Hormonal receptor status, %					
ER- or PgR-positive	71	67	69	69	
ER- and PgR-negative	29	33	31	31	.15
No. of positive nodes, %					
0	35	38	46	40	
1-3	51	43	40	44	
4-9	11	14	11	11	<.0001
≥10	3	5	4	4	
Histologic grade, %					
Low	12	10	9	10	
Intermediate	38	37	36	37	
High	45	52	55	51	<.0001
Unknown	5	1	<0.5	2	

Charles E. Geyer et al. Long-Term Follow-Up of the Anthracyclines in Early Breast Cancer Trials (USOR 06-090, NSABP B-46-I/USOR 07132, and NSABP B-49 [NRG Oncology]). *JCO* 42, 1344-1349(2024).DOI:10.1200/JCO.23.01428

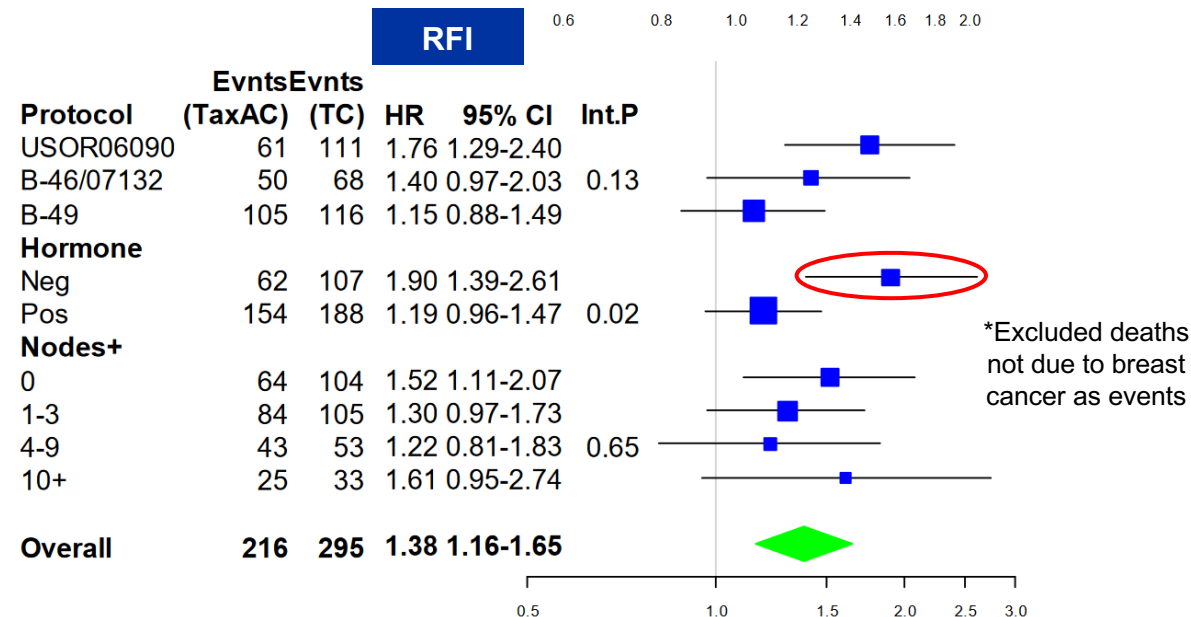
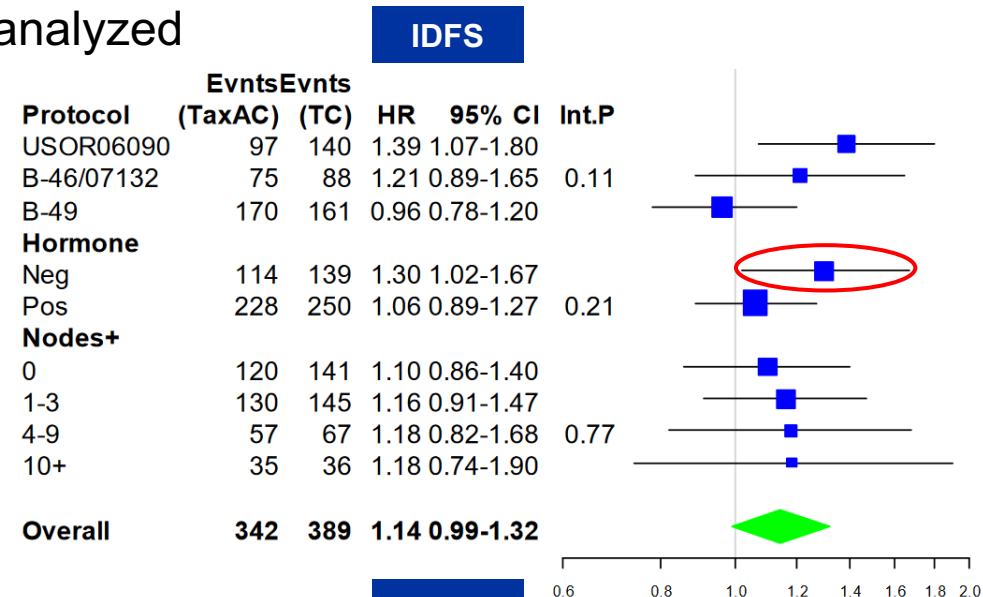
- **2017:** Median f/u 3.3 yrs demonstrated HR 1.23 – TCx6 inferior to TaxAC b/c >1.18
- **April 2024:** Median f/u 6.9 yrs; 4243 enrolled and 4181 analyzed

Cardiotoxicity	Leukemia
<p>-TaxAC vs TC6 increased non-breast cancer deaths (62 vs 34; p=0.003)</p> <p>-Deaths numerically higher for cardiac (8 vs 3; p=0.13) in TaxAC</p>	<p>-TaxAC vs TC6 increased leukemias (7 vs 1; p=0.03);</p>

Confidence interval includes the upper boundary of the prespecified inferiority threshold of 1.18

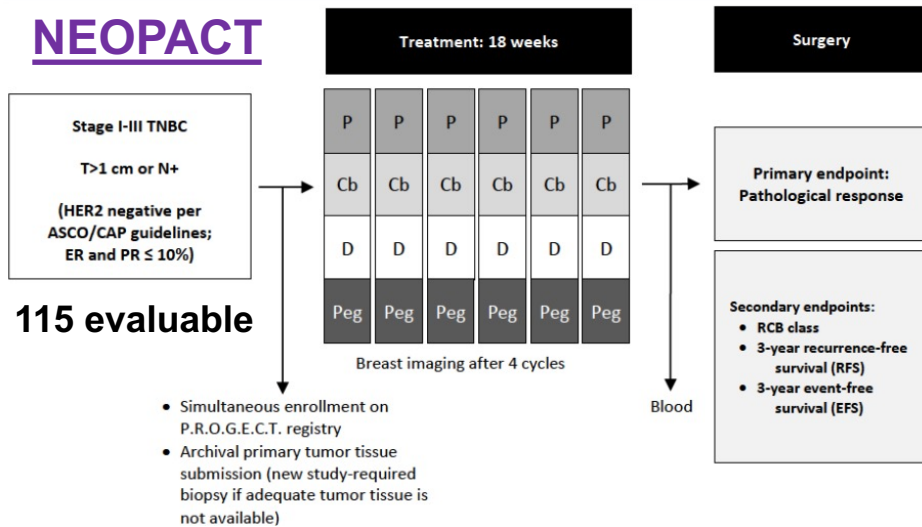
Noninferiority of TC6 not demonstrated in ITT population

Additional 332 events in this analysis



# HER2 NEGATIVE:

## NEOPACT

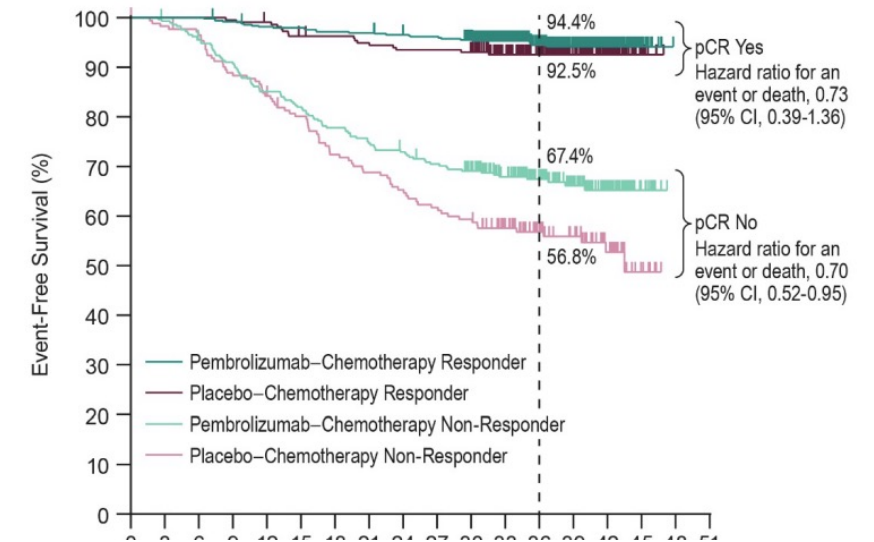


14% Stage I  
Sensitivity analysis after  
excluding Stage I - pCR 56%

81% with residual disease  
received adjuvant chemo;  
majority anthracycline-based  
regimens

## KEYNOTE-522

**Overall:**  
pCR 64.8% (95% CI 59.9-69.5%)  
EFS 84.5%



## SCARLET [ONGOING]

**Shorter Chemo-Immunotherapy Without Anthracycline Drugs for Early-Stage Triple Negative Breast Cancer**

ClinicalTrials.gov ID ⓘ NCT05929768

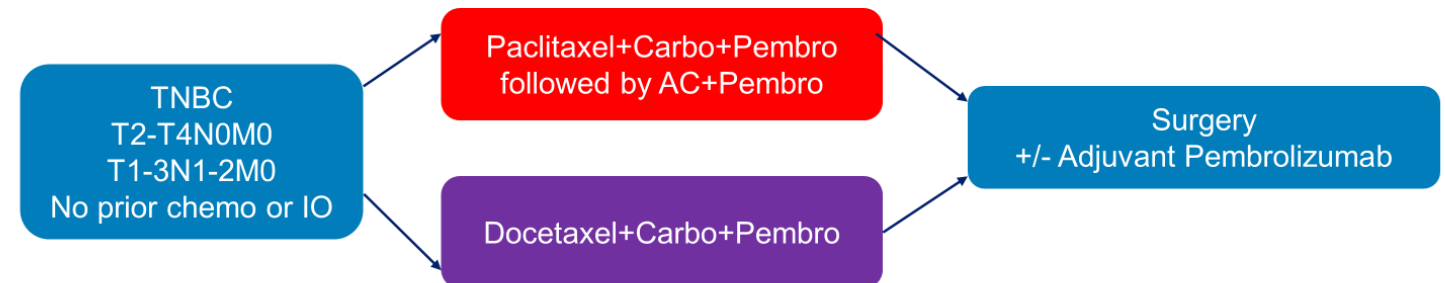
Sponsor ⓘ SWOG Cancer Research Network

Information provided by ⓘ SWOG Cancer Research Network (Responsible Party)

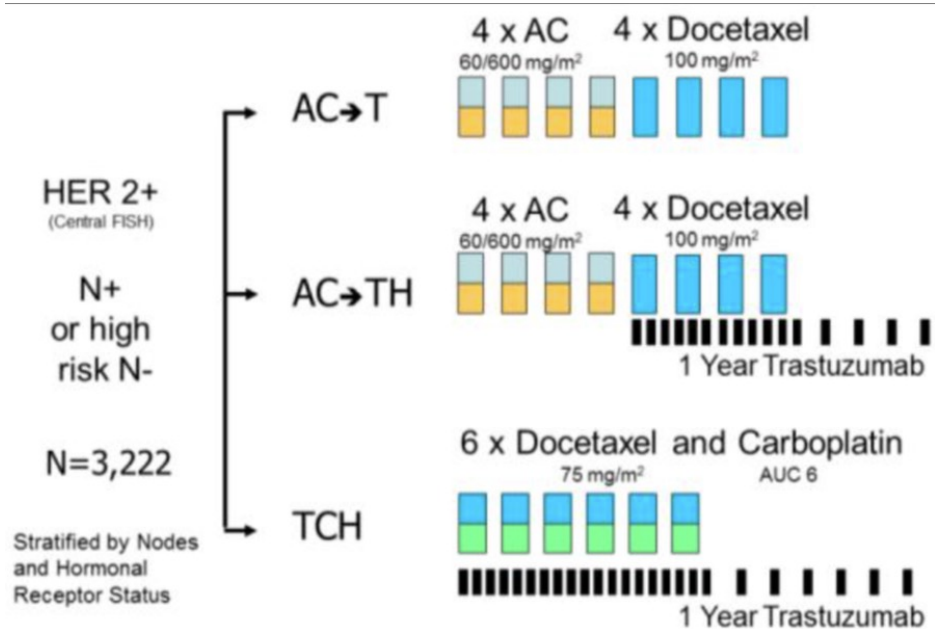
Last Update Posted ⓘ 2023-10-25

**Planned Enrollment: 2400**

**Primary Endpoint:** Breast Cancer EFS  
**Secondary Endpoint:** pCR, OS, etc.



# HER2 POSITIVE: BCIRG006 [BREAST CANCER INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUP 006]



	AC-T (n=1073)	AC-TH (n=1074)	TCH (n=1075)
10 yr DFS	67.9%	74.6% HR 0.72 (0.61-0.85; p<0.001)	73% HR 0.77 (0.65-0.90; p=0.0011)
10 yr OS	78.7%	85.9% HR 0.63 (0.51-0.79; p<0.0001)	83.3% HR 0.76 (0.62-0.93; p=0.0075)
10 yr DFS in N+	62.2%	69.6% HR 0.72 (0.61-0.87; p<0.001)	68.4% HR 0.75 (0.63-0.90; p=0.0018)

- AC-TH vs TCH: 1-2% difference in 10 yr DFS and 2-3% difference in 10 yr OS
- Suggests minimal benefit of anthracyclines
- TRIAL NOT POWERED for a formal comparison

**Table 1: BCIRG-006: Therapeutic Index, Final Analysis at 10 Years**

	AC-TH	TCH
Disease-free survival events	269	279
Grade 3/4 congestive heart failure	21 (2%)	4 (0.4%)
Total disease-free survival events	290	283
Treatment-related leukemia	7	0
Sustained LVEF loss > 10%	200	97

AC-TH = doxorubicin and cyclophosphamide followed by docetaxel and trastuzumab; TCH = docetaxel, carboplatin, and trastuzumab; LVEF = left ventricular ejection fraction.

Ishikawa, Takashi et al. "The role of HER-2 in Breast Cancer." Journal of surgery and science 2 1 (2014): 4-9.

Slamon DJ, Eiermann W, Robert NJ, et al. 2015 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium. Abstract S5-04. Presented December 11, 2015.



# HER2 POSITIVE

- Adjuvant trials: APHINITY and KATHERINE
  - ~77% of patients in both trials received anthracycline-based chemotherapy
  - Similar benefit if anthracyclines were omitted?
- TRAIN-2 and TRYPHAENA
  - Investigate whether omission of anthracycline from neoadjuvant dual HER2 blockade could provide a more favorable risk/benefit ratio
  - Does not impact likelihood of pCR
  - Not statistically powered to establish non-inferiority of omitting anthracycline

Trial	Cardiotoxicity	Leukemia
APHINITY	-CHF or significant LVEF decline: Highest in Anthracycline+HP (0.8%) compared to other groups (0.2-0.4%) -Cardiac death: Only occurred in Anthracycline group [Anthracycline+HP 2 (0.1%) vs Anthracycline+H 2 (0.1%)]	-Not reported
KATHERINE	-No separation anthracycline vs non-anthracycline -Cardiac events (death or CHF): Trastuzumab 4 (0.6%) vs T-DM1 1 (0.1%)	-Not reported
TRAIN-2	-LVEF decline $\geq 10\%$ from baseline and LVEF $< 50\%$ reported more in anthracycline (17 of 220 [7.7%]) vs non-anthracycline group (7 of 218 [3.2%]; $P = .04$ )	-2 pts anthracyclines vs 0 pts non-anthracycline
TRYPHAENA	-Neoadjuvant HP given concurrently or sequentially with anthracycline-based or concurrent with carboplatin-based result in low incidence of overall LVSD	-Not reported

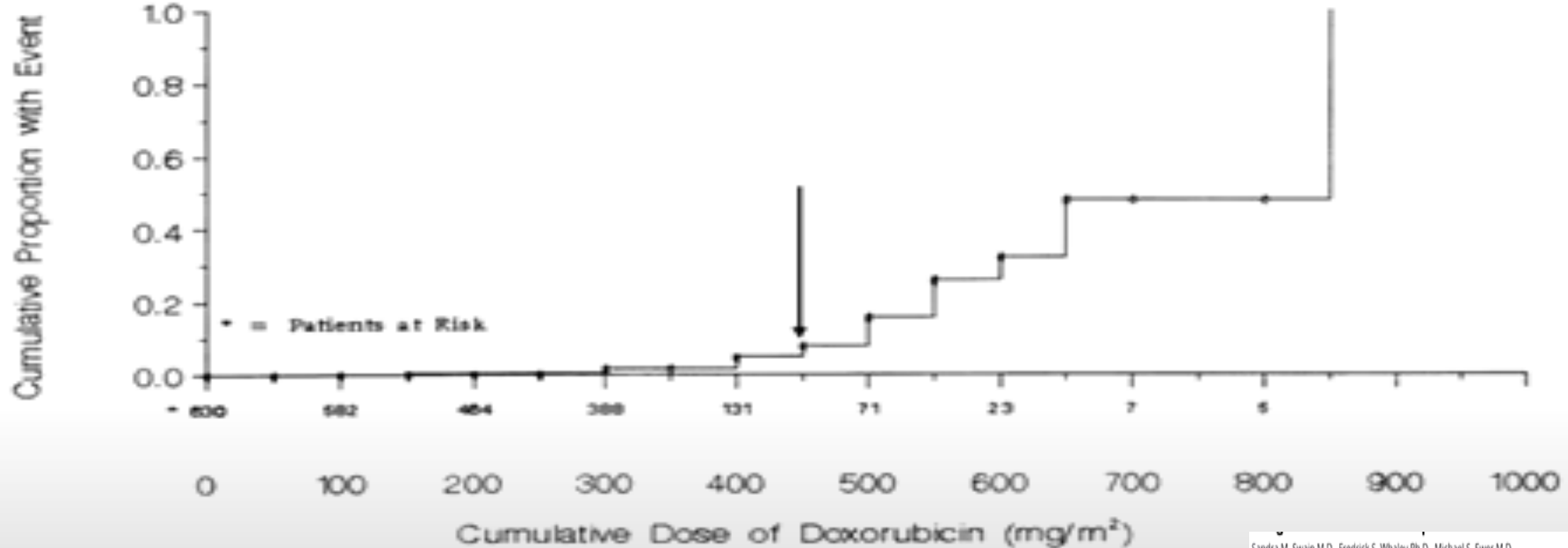
von Minckwitz G, et al. *N Engl J Med*. 2017. PMID: 28581356  
 von Minckwitz G, et al. *N Engl J Med*. 2019;380(7):617-628. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa1814017  
 Schneeweiss A, et al. *Ann Oncol*. 2013;24(9):2278-2284. doi:10.1093/annonc/mdt182

van der Voort A, et al. Three-Year Follow-up of Neoadjuvant Chemotherapy With or Without Anthracyclines in the Presence of Dual ERBB2 Blockade in Patients With ERBB2-Positive Breast Cancer: A Secondary Analysis of the TRAIN-2 Randomized, Phase 3 Trial. *JAMA Oncol*. 2021 Jul 1;7(7):978-984. doi: 10.1001/jamaoncol.2021.1371. PMID: 34014249; PMCID: PMC8138752.

# CONS OF USING ANTHRACYCLINES IN EARLY STAGE BREAST CANCER

- ❑ RISK OF CARDIOTOXICITY
- ❑ RISK OF SECONDARY CANCER /LEUKEMIA
- ❑ HIGH RISK OF TOXICITY (PATIENT NICKNAME “RED DEVIL”) WITH SMALL CLINICAL BENEFIT IN CERTAIN POPULATIONS
  - INFERTILITY
  - COGNITIVE DYSFUNCTION
  - FATIGUE
  - DO NOT LEAD TO CURE IN ALL BREAST CANCERS

# RISK OF CARDIOTOXICITY WITH USE OF ANTHRACYCLINES



Sandra M. Swain M.D., Fredrick S. Whaley Ph.D., Michael S. Ewer M.D.,  
Cancer, Volume 97, Issue 11, Pages 2869-2879, First published: 19 May 2003, DOI: (10.1002/onc.11407)

## ❑ Cardiac Toxicity Occurs During Exposure and Evolves Over Time

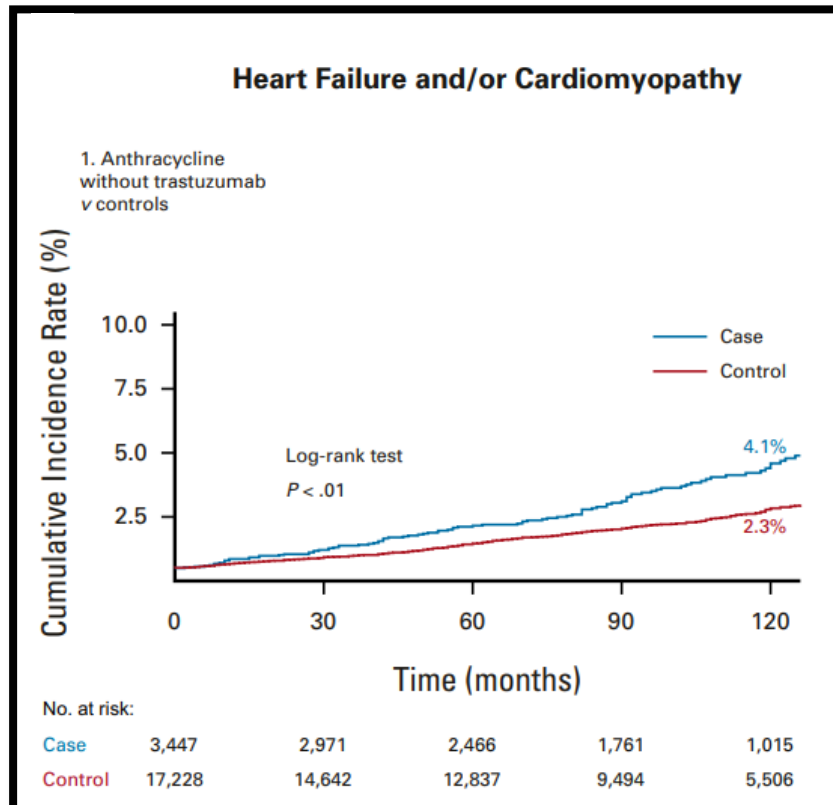
- Dose dependent and can be irreversible
- Most patients present 2-4 years after anthracycline exposure. Rarely patients can develop symptoms acutely within weeks to months of exposure

# Risk of Cardiovascular Disease in Women With and Without Breast Cancer: The Pathways Heart Study

Heather Greenlee, ND, PhD<sup>1,2,3</sup>; Carlos Iribarren, MD, MPH, PhD<sup>4</sup>; Jamal S. Rana, MD, PhD<sup>4,5</sup>; Richard Cheng, MD, MSc<sup>2,3</sup>; Mai Nguyen-Huynh, MD, MAS<sup>4,6</sup>; Eileen Rillamas-Sun, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Zaixing Shi, PhD<sup>1,7</sup>; Cecile A. Laurent, MS<sup>4</sup>; Valerie S. Lee, MHS<sup>4</sup>; Janise M. Roh, MSW, MPH<sup>4</sup>; Margarita Santiago-Torres, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Hanjie Shen, MS<sup>1</sup>; Dawn L. Hershman, MD, MS<sup>8</sup>; Lawrence H. Kushi, ScD<sup>4</sup>; Romain Neugebauer, PhD<sup>4</sup>; and Marilyn L. Kwan, PhD<sup>4</sup>

❑ **POPULATION** : A total of 13,642 women with Breast Cancer were matched to 68,202 controls without Breast Cancer

❑ **RESULTS:**



**Adjusted HR for Heart Failure : 1.84 (1.21 to 2.80)**

**Adjusted HR for Cardiac Related Death: 2.91 (1.96 to 4.33)**

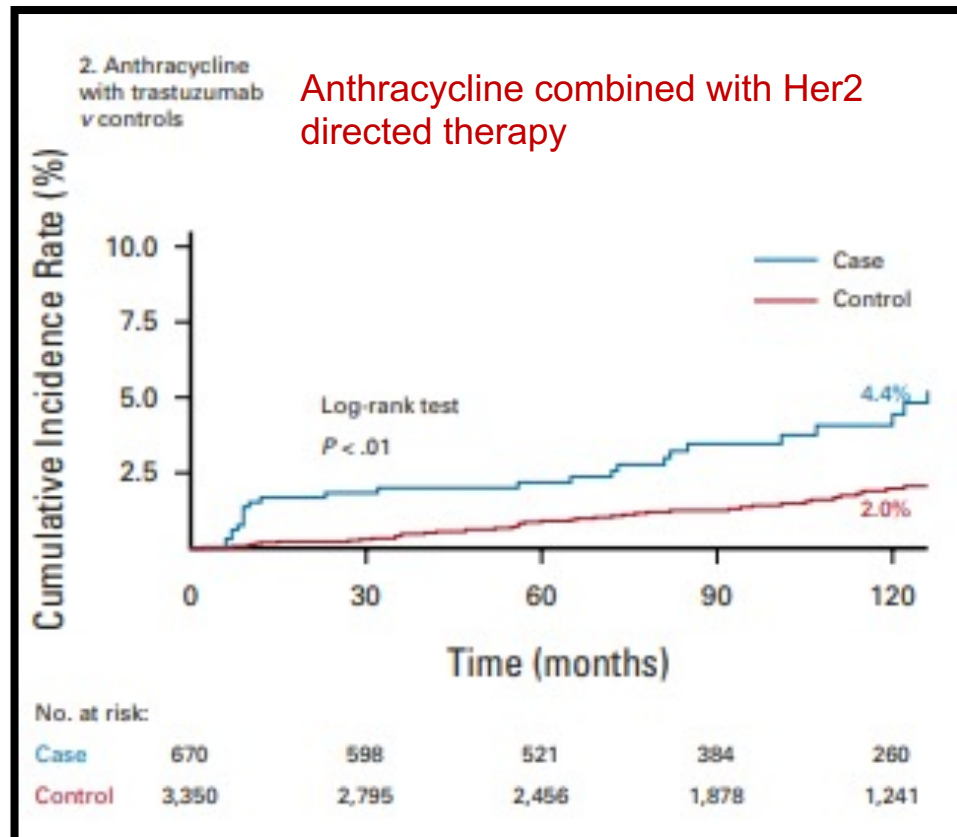


# Risk of Cardiovascular Disease in Women With and Without Breast Cancer: The Pathways Heart Study

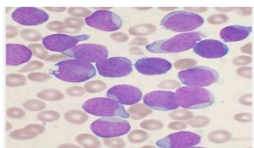
Heather Greenlee, ND, PhD<sup>1,2,3</sup>; Carlos Iribarren, MD, MPH, PhD<sup>4</sup>; Jamal S. Rana, MD, PhD<sup>4,5</sup>; Richard Cheng, MD, MSc<sup>2,3</sup>; Mai Nguyen-Huynh, MD, MAS<sup>4,6</sup>; Eileen Rillamas-Sun, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Zaixing Shi, PhD<sup>1,7</sup>; Cecile A. Laurent, MS<sup>4</sup>; Valerie S. Lee, MHS<sup>4</sup>; Janise M. Roh, MSW, MPH<sup>4</sup>; Margarita Santiago-Torres, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Hanjie Shen, MS<sup>1</sup>; Dawn L. Hershman, MD, MS<sup>8</sup>; Lawrence H. Kushi, ScD<sup>4</sup>; Romain Neugebauer, PhD<sup>4</sup>; and Marilyn L. Kwan, PhD<sup>4</sup>

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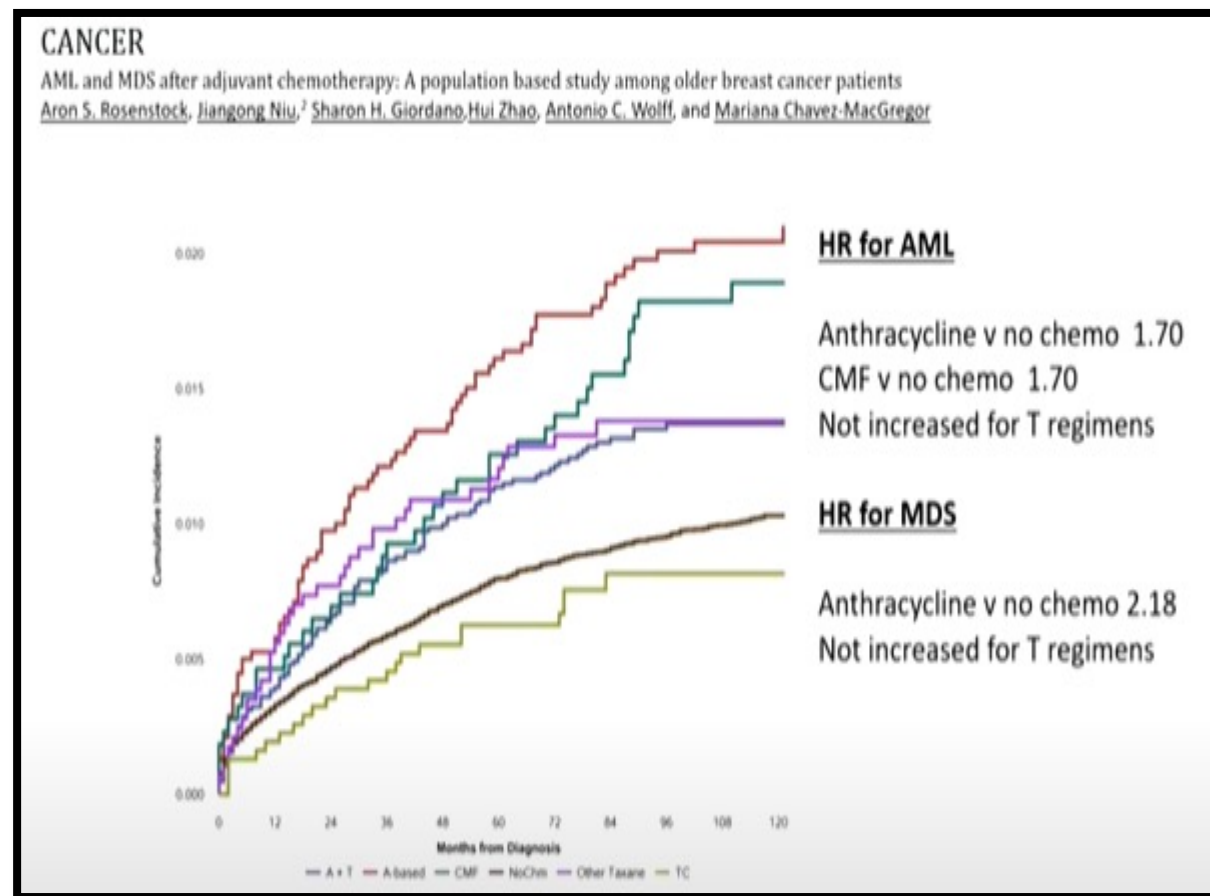


Adjusted HR: 3.68 (1.79 to 7.59)



# RISK OF LEUKEMIA WITH USE OF ANTHRACYCLINES

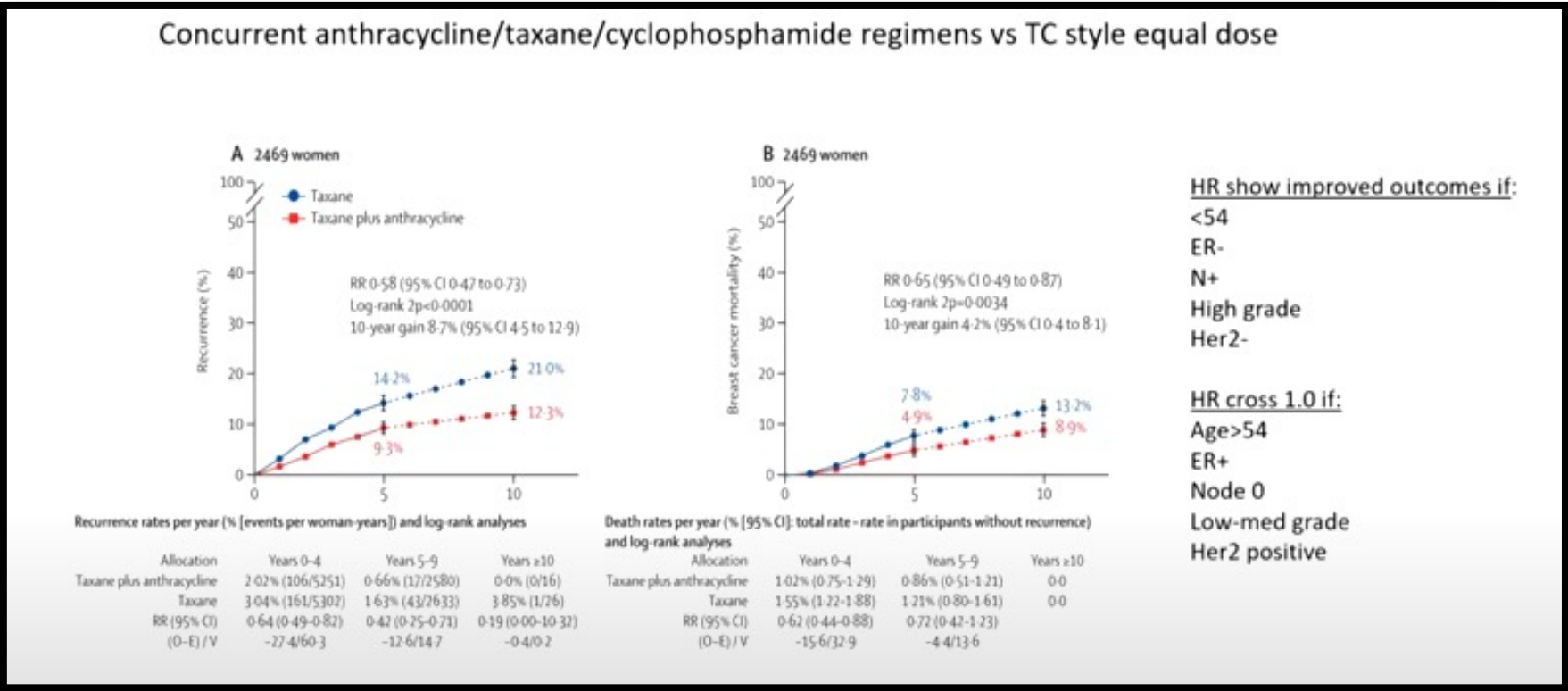
- ❑ Dose dependent
- ❑ Increase risk when combined with alkylating agents (ie cyclophosphamide)
- ❑ Most commonly associated with Acute Myeloid Leukemia and Myelodysplastic Syndrome and tend to be more aggressive in nature than leukemias not associated with exposure to anthracycline
- ❑ Often occur 5-10 years after exposure to drug



**DOES THE BENEFIT OUTWEIGH THE RISK**

# Anthracycline-containing and taxane-containing chemotherapy for early-stage operable breast cancer: a patient-level meta-analysis of 100 000 women from 86 randomised trials

Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group (EBCTCG)\*



Lancet. 2023 Apr doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(23)00285-4.



# APPROACH TO USE OF ANTHRACYCLINES

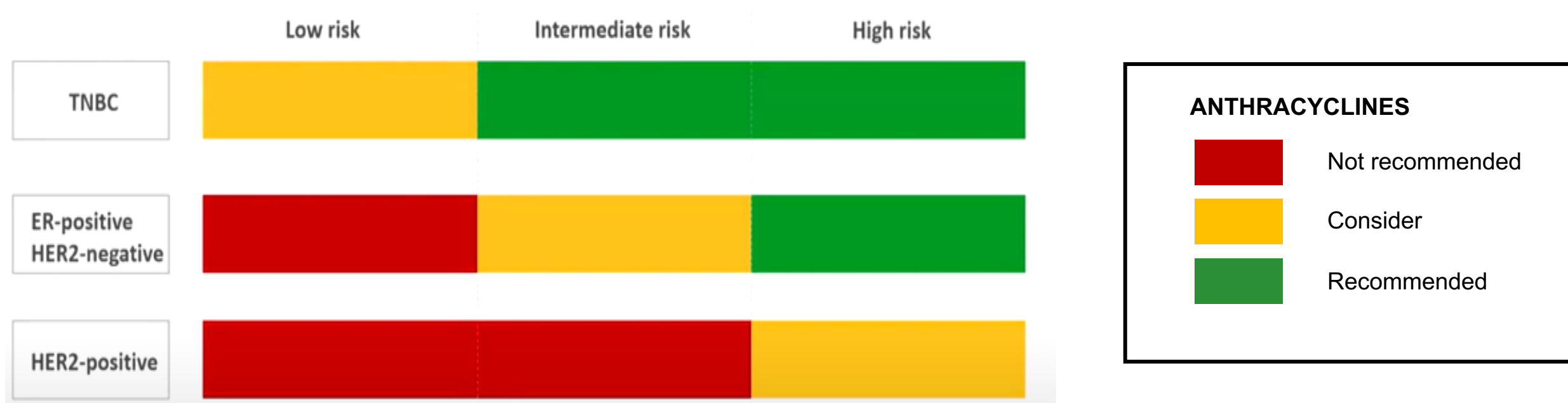
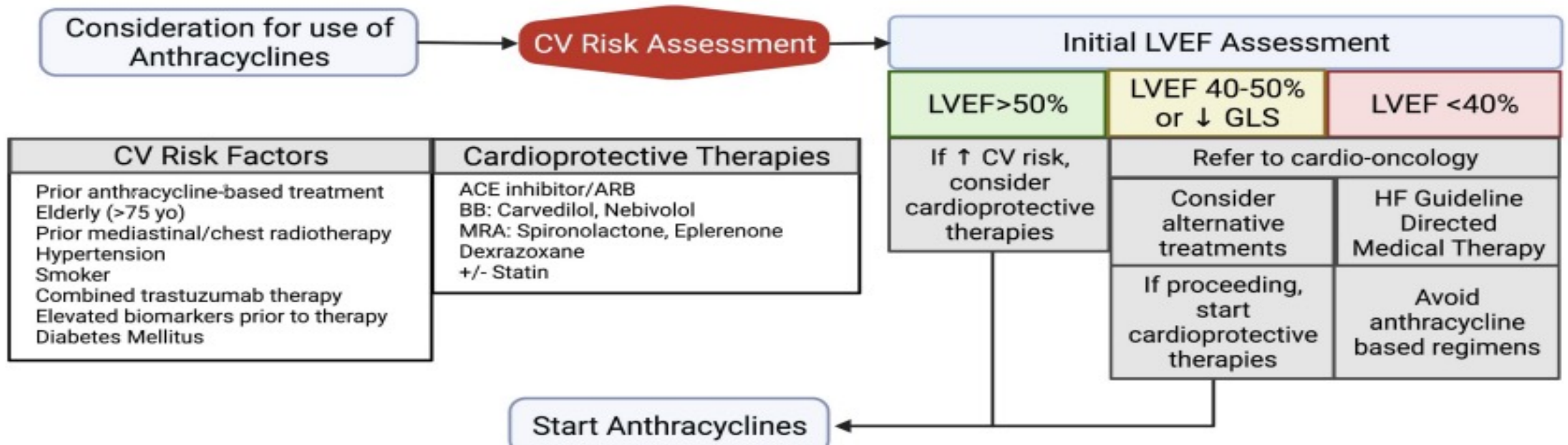


Figure 1: Presentation from Dr Martine Piccart SABCS 2023: Anthracyclines...to give or not to give? "For" argument.  
Figure 2: Front. Cardiovasc. Med., 21 April 2022 Sec. Cardio-Oncology. Volume 9 - 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcvm.2022.863314>

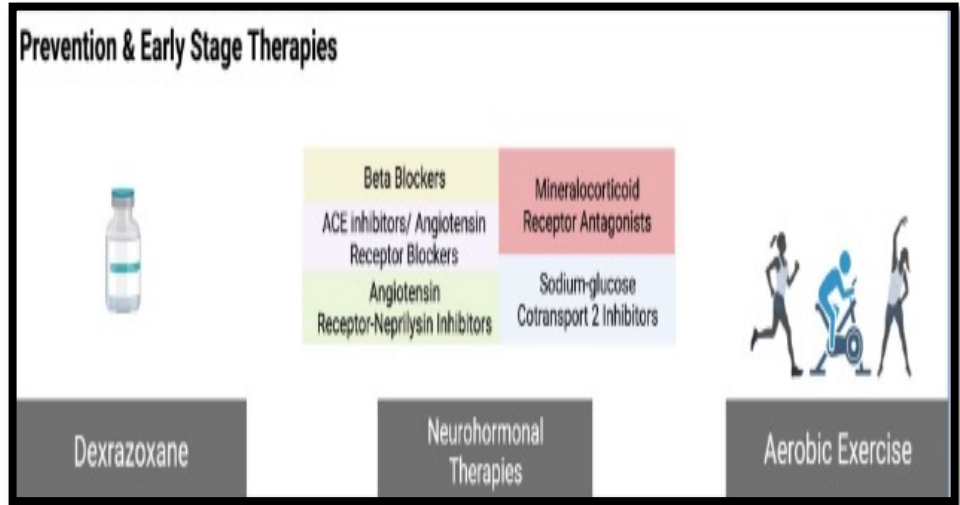
# CARDIAC CONSIDERATIONS WITH ANTHRACYCLINE USE



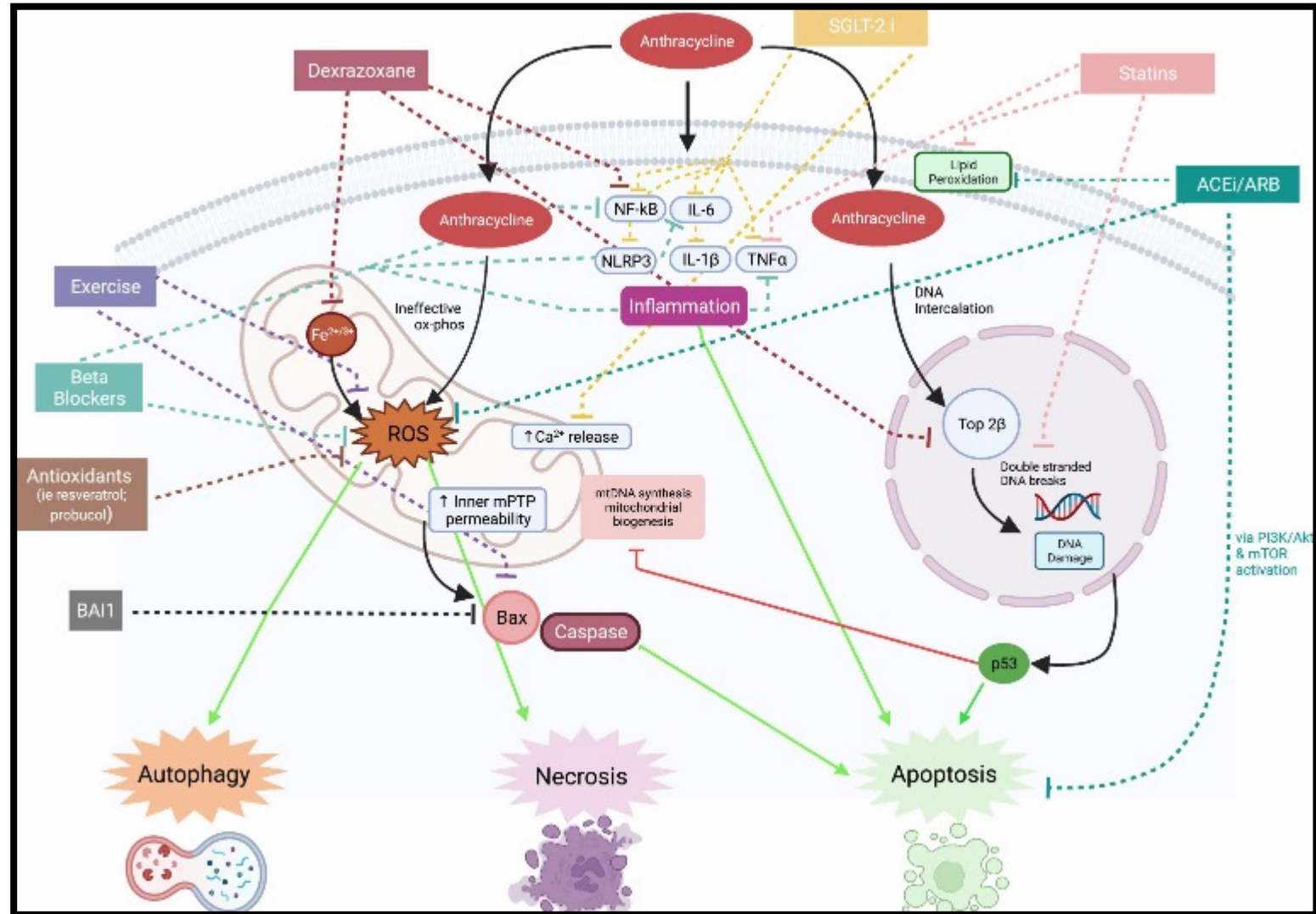
**Minimize risk by focusing on patient selection, cardiac monitoring, and preventative measures**

- ☐ Screen for cardiac risk factors (age >60, DM, HTN, HLD, Smoking, Obesity, etc.)
- ☐ Echocardiogram (LVEF, GLS, etc.)
- ☐ Collaborate with cardio-oncologists
- ☐ Consider cardioprotective agents: ACE inhibitors and/or Beta Blockers

# PREVENTION OF CARDIOTOXICTY FROM USE OF ANTHRACYCLINES



Frontiers Cardiovascular Med  
 Novel Therapeutics for Anthracycline Induced Cardiotoxicity  
 Jacqueline T. Vuong, Ashley F. Stein-Merlob, Richard K. Cheng, Eric H. Yang  
 Volume 9 - 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcvm.2022.863314>



# CAN ANTHRACYCLINES BE ELIMINATED FROM USE IN EARLY STAGE BREAST CANCER IN THE FUTURE

## ❑ Tailored Decision Making

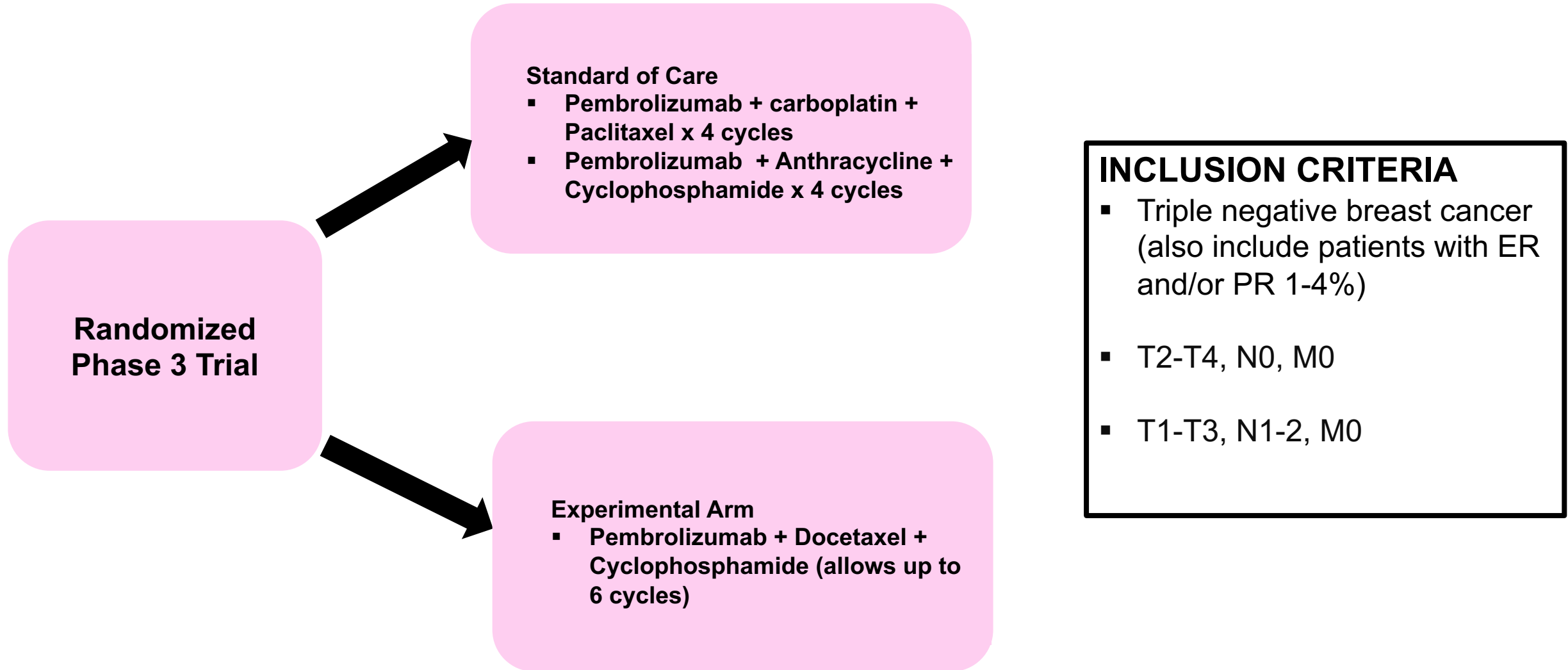
- Factoring in response to therapy
- Factoring unique targets
  - PARP inhibitors for BRCA gene driven cancers
- Factoring tumor types
  - CDK 4/6 inhibitors for luminal cancers
  - Immunotherapy in triple negative breast cancers

## ❑ Incorporation of Novel Drugs

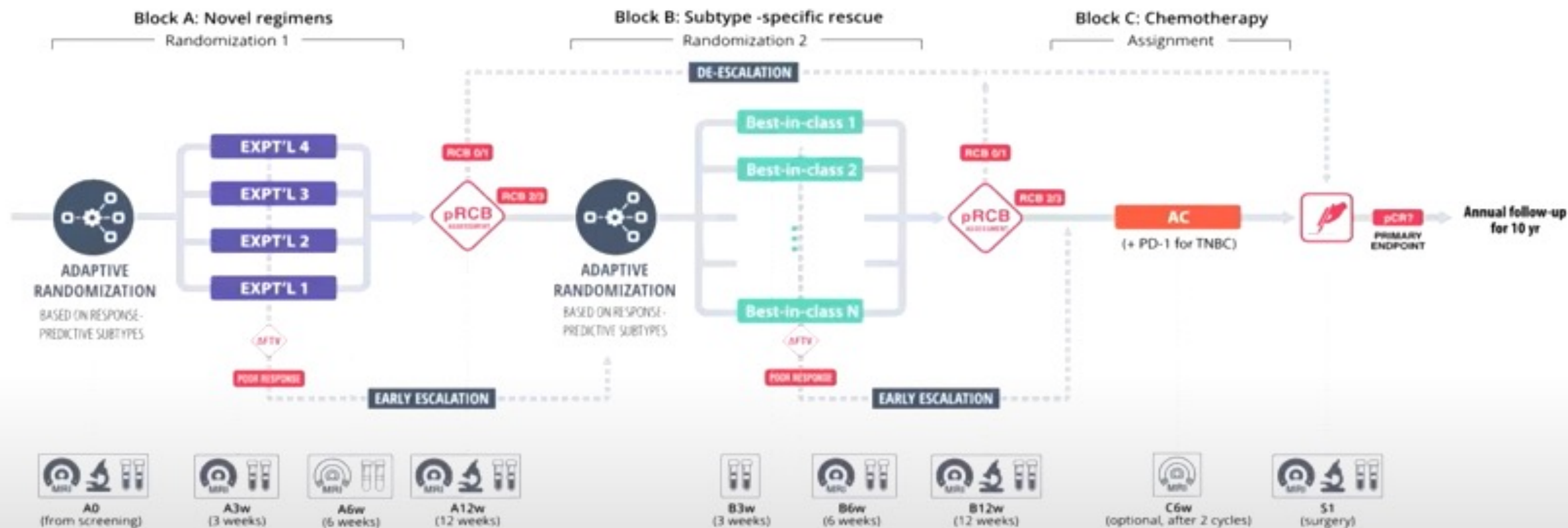
- Novel ER blockers for luminal cancers
- Vaccines
- Antibody Drug Conjugates
  - Sacituzumab–govitecan (TROP2)
  - Datopotamab-Deruxtecan (TROP2)
  - Trastuzumab-Deruxtecan (HER2 low)



# SWOG SCARLET TRIAL: TESTING SHORTER CHEMO-IMMUNOTHERAPY WITHOUT ANTHRACYCLINE DRUGS FOR EARLY-STAGE TRIPLE NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER



# I SPY 2.2 Schema



Status as of July 1, 2022

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# QUESTIONS