BACKGROUND: Ta and Xel are synergistic in vitro. Compared to a continuous weekly Taxol regimen, a combination of Taxol (3/4 weeks) and Xeloda (weekly Taxol 3/4 weeks and Xeloda concomitant with Taxol administration) was found to have a more favorable benefit/risk ratio than the standard taxane schedule (weekly Taxol and d1-14 Xeloda): a better tolerance (less dose reduction rate of about 75%). On the basis of a predicted attrition rate of 15%, risk = 0.05 (type I error) and β risk = 0.20 (type II error), the study was designed to determine the proportion of patients who needed a dose reduction in the first 6 months of treatment to a grade 3-4 toxicity.

PATIENTS AND METHODS

STUDY DESIGN

This is a phase II, open label, multicentre, prospective, randomised study. All patients provided written informed consent. The study was conducted in compliance with Good Clinical Practice Guidelines.

METHODS: Patients (pts) in 1° or 2° line of MBC, previously treated with anthracyclines or taxanes were randomised either to A) Taxol (80 mg/m²/w) + Xel (2000 mg/m²/d x 5 d/wk) 3wk out of 4 or to B) Tax (65 mg/m²) + Xel (825 mg/m²/d x 5 d/wk) 4 wk out of 4.

RESULTS: From 01/2006 to 01/2008, 130 pts were accrued (66 in Arm A, 64 in Arm B). Patient characteristics were well balanced between the two arms, including in the triple negative subset.

DOSE REDUCTIONS AND TREATMENT DELAYS

Delayed cycles rates were similarly reported in arm A (58%) compared to arm B (67%), p=0.15

Efficacy

Overall survival.

SAFETY

Treatment discontinuations due to toxicity were significantly more frequent in arm A (29%) than in arm B (8%) (p=0.02). The difference between the 2 arms is mainly due to non-haematological toxicity frequent in arm A (29%) than in arm B (8%) (p=0.02). Response rate was 50% (95% CI 44% to 44%), A progression-free survival advantage was seen for B over A (366 vs 272 days, p=0.07).

CONCLUSION: Intermittent Taxol (weekly Taxol 3/4 weeks and Xeloda) in HER2 negative metastatic breast cancer (MBC): a multicentre GINECO randomised phase II study comparing two Taxel schedules supported by Roche France.