

Table 1. Characteristics of the studies included

First author, year (reference)	Trial name	Study location	Treatment protocol	Treatment interval, days	Number of patients	Median follow-up, months	Median age (range)	Stage		ER positive, %	PR positive, %	pCR events (%)
								Tumor size, %	Nodal status, %			
Baldini E, 2003 (11)	PisaGenoa	Italy	*CEF × 3 - surgery radiation -	14	77	60	52 (30–70)	IIIA: 22.7, IIIB: 49.3, IBC: 24		43	34	3 (4.1)
			CMF and CEF intercalated × 6	21	73					50 (30–70)	38.4	26
Therasse P, 2003 (15)	EORTC-NCIC-SAKK	Europe	*EC × 6	14	224	66	49 (16–72)	T0-2: 4, T3: 9, T4: 86	N0-1: 58, N2-3: 40	42	NR	31 (14.0)
von Minckwitz G, 2005 (13)	GeparDuo	Germany	CEF × 6	28	224	60	52 (24–77)	T0-2: 4, T3: 9, T4: 86	N0-1: 54, N2-3: 44	38	NR	22 (10.0)
			*A DOC × 4	14	455			T1: 6; T2: 85.4; T3: 8.7	Positive 37.6	65.3	61.9	31 (7.0)
Untch M, 2011 (2, 19)	PREPARE	Germany	AC × 4 - DOC × 4	21	458	62.4	51 (24–74)	T1: 8; T2: 84.4; T3: 7.7	Positive 49.9	69.5	55.1	63 (14.3)
			*ddE × 3 - ddP × 3 - CMF × 3	14	363			T1–3: 86.2, T4: 8.5	Positive 37.2	ER and/or PR positive 41.6	76 (20.9)	
Vriens BE, 2013 (14)	BOOG	Netherlands	EC × 4 - P × 4	21	370	NR	49 (26–65)	T1–3: 90.8, T4: 7.3	Positive 38.4	ER and/or PR positive 43	53 (14.3)	
			*TAC × 6	21	101			T1: 5, T2: 45, T3: 30, T4: 20	Positive 74	ER and/or PR positive 65	16 (16.0)	
Miller KD, 1999 (12)	Hoosier	America	AC × 3 - T × 3	21	100	NR	49 (27–70)	T1: 2, T2: 49, T3: 34, T4: 15	Positive 76	ER and/or PR positive 66	21 (21.0)	
			*A × 3 - DOC × 3	14	19			47 (31–60)	stage II or noninflammatory stage III: 100	NR	3 (15.7)	
Untch M, 2009 (16)	AGO-1	Germany	A DOC × 4	21	21	54	46 (28–63)	T2: 55, T3: 27, T4: 18	Positive 54	Hormone receptor positive: 66	40 (12.0)	
			*E × 3 - P × 3	14	333			T2: 51, T3: 31, T4: 18	Positive 54	Hormone receptor positive: 69	20 (6.0)	
Arun BK, 2011 (18)	Houston	America	EP × 4	21	335	91.5	NR	T0: 1, T1: 4, T2: 23, T3: 22, T4: 50	Positive 88.2	39.5	39.5	13 (13.1)
			*FAC × 4	18	99			T0: 2, T1: 7.8, T2: 18.6, T3: 22.5, T4: 4	Positive 90	47.1	55.3	9 (9.0)
Ellis GK, 2011 (17)	SWOG-0012	America	FAC × 4	21	100	60	NR	T0: 2, T1: 7.8, T2: 18.6, T3: 22.5, T4: 4	Positive 90	47.1	55.3	9 (9.0)
			*wAC × 12-wP × 12	7	186			52 (27–76)	IIB: 12, IIIA 31, IIIB 52	Hormone receptor positive: 55	43 (24.3)	
			AC × 4 - wP × 12	21	186		51 (22–77)	IIB: 19, IIIA 31, IIIB 48		Hormone receptor positive: 46	37 (20.7)	

\* Dose-dense arm.

Abbreviations: A = doxorubicin; C = cyclophosphamide; DOC = docetaxel; E = epirubicin; ER = estrogen receptor; F = fluorouracil; M = methotrexate; NR = not reported; P = paclitaxel; pCR = pathological complete response; PR = progesterone