ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Tamoxifen metabolism predicts drug concentrations and outcome in premenopausal patients with early breast cancer

P Saludores1,2,14, T Mürdter1,2,14, D Eccles3,4,14, B Chowbay5,6,7,14, NK Zgebi8,14, S Winter1,2, B Ganchev1,2, B Eccles3,4, S Gerty3,4, A Tefayil9, JSL Lim3, YS Yap10, RCH Ng10, NS Wong10, R Dent10, MZ Habbal11, E Schaeffeler1-2, M Eichelbaum1,2, W Schroth1-2,15, M Schwab1,12,13,15 and H Brauch1,2,13,15

Tamoxifen is the standard-of-care treatment for estrogen receptor-positive premenopausal breast cancer. We examined tamoxifen metabolism via blood metabolite concentrations and germline variations of CYP3A5, CYP2C9, CYP2C19 and CYP2D6 in 587 premenopausal patients (Asians, Middle Eastern Arabs, Caucasian-UK; median age 39 years) and clinical outcome in 306 patients. N-desmethyltamoxifen (DM-Tam)/(Z)-endoxifen and CYP2D6 phenotype significantly correlated across ethnicities (R²: 53%, P < 10⁻⁷), CYP2C19 and CYP2C9 correlated with norendoxifen and (Z)-4-hydroxytamoxifen concentrations, respectively (P < 0.001). DM-Tam was influenced by body mass index (P < 0.001). Improved distant relapse-free survival (DRFS) was associated with decreasing DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen (P = 0.036) and increasing CYP2D6 activity score (hazard ratio (HR) = 0.62; 95% confidence interval (CI): 0.43–0.91; P = 0.013). Low (≤14 nM) compared with high (>35 nM) endoxifen concentrations were associated with shorter DRFS (univariate P = 0.03; multivariate HR = 1.94; 95% CI, 1.04–4.14; P = 0.064). Our data indicate that endoxifen formation in premenopausal women depends on CYP2D6 irrespective of ethnicity. Low endoxifen concentration/formation and decreased CYP2D6 activity predict shorter DRFS.

The Pharmacogenomics Journal (2015) 15, 84–94; doi:10.1038/tpj.2014.34; published online 5 August 2014

INTRODUCTION

The standard-of-care for estrogen receptor (ER)-positive breast cancer patients who are functionally premenopausal is a 5-year treatment with the selective ER modulator tamoxifen¹ as aromatase inhibitors are of limited use due to the strong hypothalamic–pituitary control of estrogen levels.² Tamoxifen for 5 years substantially lowers the yearly relapse rates and mortality in primary breast cancer.³ Data from the Adjuvant Tamoxifen, Longer Against Shorter trial and the Adjuvant Tamoxifen Treatment offers more trial indicate further benefit by maintaining tamoxifen treatment for 10 years with 25% mortality reduction relative to 5 years.⁴ Despite this success, about 50% of patients do not benefit from tamoxifen and frequent adverse drug reactions (ADR) including hot flashes, vasomotor and gynecologic symptoms as well as depression and diminished sexual functioning prevent particularly young women from staying on the drug.⁵ Toward a personalized strategy of premenopausal breast cancer treatment, the possible association between serum concentration of the active tamoxifen metabolite endoxifen and the occurrence of side effects has been addressed;⁶ yet, the potential of such an approach regarding treatment outcome in young women is unclear.

Tamoxifen, which acts at the ER, requires conversion into active metabolites (Z)-4-hydroxytamoxifen and (Z)-endoxifen that have up to 100-fold higher ER affinity than the parent drug.⁹-¹¹ The cytochrome P450 enzyme CYP2D6 has a major role in the formation of endoxifen¹² in postmenopausal women.¹³-¹⁵ CYP2D6 is highly polymorphic with more than 100 genetic variants (http://www.imm.ki.se/cypalleles/cyp2d6.htm) contributing to the high interindividual variability of enzyme activity. Impaired metabolism by CYP2D6 can be accurately predicted by loss- and reduced-function alleles resulting in the poor metabolizer (PM) and intermediate metabolizer (IM) phenotypes. Likewise, functional and duplicated CYP2D6 alleles correlate with extensive (EM) and ultra rapid (UM) metabolizer phenotypes, respectively.¹⁶ There are significant interethnic differences of CYP2D6 allele frequencies across geographic regions and populations leading to a shift of metabolizer phenotype prevalence with higher frequencies of IMs in Asians and UMs in Arabic/North African countries as compared with populations of European descent.¹⁷ Clinical outcome of adjuvant tamoxifen in postmenopausal patients is influenced by their CYP2D6 metabolizer phenotype which can be predicted by genetic testing¹⁸-²⁰ using germline

¹Dr Margarete Fischer-Bosch-Institute of Clinical Pharmacology, Stuttgart, Germany; ²University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany; ³Faculty of Medicine, Cancer Sciences Academic Unit and University of Southampton Clinical Trials Unit, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK; ⁴University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, Southampton, UK; ⁵Clinical Pharmacology Laboratory, Division of Medical Sciences, Humphrey Oei Institute of Cancer Research, National Cancer Centre Singapore, Singapore, Singapore; ⁶Academic Medicine Research Institute, Office of Clinical Sciences, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School Singapore, Singapore, Singapore; ⁷SingHealth Clinical Pharmacology Core, Academia, Singapore Health Services, Singapore, Singapore; ⁸Faculty of Medicine, Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon; ⁹Hematology-Oncology Division, Department of Internal Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon; ¹⁰Department of Medical Oncology, Humphrey Oei Institute of Cancer Research, National Cancer Centre Singapore, Singapore, Singapore; ¹¹Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon; ¹²Department of Clinical Pharmacology, University Hospital Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany and ¹³German Cancer Consortium (DKTK) and German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ), Heidelberg, Germany. Correspondence: Dr M Schwab or Dr H Brauch, Dr Margarete Fischer-Bosch-Institute of Clinical Pharmacology, Auerbachstrasse 112, 70376 Stuttgart, Germany. E-mail: matthias.schwab@ikp-stuttgart.de or hiltrud.brauch@ikp-stuttgart.de
¹⁴These authors contributed equally to this work.
¹⁵These authors made equal contributions as senior authors.
Received 4 February 2014; revised 30 April 2014; accepted 4 June 2014; published online 5 August 2014
rather than tumor DNA\textsuperscript{21,22} However, the current debate on the validity of the postmenopausal data and the lack of CYP2D6 association with clinical outcome in some of these studies\textsuperscript{21–28} point to the need of combined pharmacokinetic and pharmacogenetic analyses particularly in the case of testing the hypothesis in another patient group, i.e. premenopausal patients. Recently, lower endoxifen concentrations were shown to be associated with poor clinical outcome in a mixed cohort of pre- and postmenopausal patients.\textsuperscript{26} Notably, the \textit{in vitro} pharmacological modeling of endoxifen concentrations for the treatment of ER positive breast cancer showed the essential requirement of endoxifen to block breast cancer cell growth in the presence of high estrogen concentrations equivalent to premenopausal patients.\textsuperscript{29,30} Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that variable endoxifen formation contributes to tamoxifen efficacy in premenopausal patients. Here, we present combined pharmacokinetic and pharmacogenetic analyses in purely premenopausal breast cancer patient cohorts of different ethnic origin to evaluate (i) the factors that influence active tamoxifen metabolite concentrations with a particular emphasis on CYP2D6 and (ii) whether tamoxifen metabolite concentrations and/or genetic variants of drug-metabolizing enzymes (DME) are suitable biomarkers for the prediction of clinical outcome.

**PATIENTS AND METHODS**

**Patients and study design**

Three ethnic groups of prospectively recruited hormone receptor-positive premenopausal breast cancer patients with adjuvant tamoxifen treatment were investigated (Figure 1). Of these, 164 Asian patients in part previously described\textsuperscript{31} (136 Chinese, 14 Malays and 14 Indians) have been provided by the Division of Medical Sciences, Humphrey Oei Institute of Cancer Research, Singapore. Another 78 consecutively recruited patients (2009–2011) in part previously described\textsuperscript{32} have been provided by the Hematology-Oncology Division, Internal Medicine, American University of Beirut, Lebanon (Leb). Furthermore, 345 patients were selected from the Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer (POSH) cohort, an observational cohort study comprised mainly of Caucasian patients (2956 patients recruited between 2001 and 2007) by the Cancer Sciences Academic Unit and University of Southampton Clinical Trials Unit, University of Southampton, UK.\textsuperscript{33,34} Selection of patients for our current study was based on the availability of tamoxifen steady-state serum and germline DNA. Patients taking CYP2D6 inhibitors were excluded from the Singapore cohort and comprised only seven patients who received weak CYP2D6 inhibitors, venlafaxine, escitalopram or clomipramine in the Lebanon cohort. For the POSH cohort, data on co-medication was not available. In total, 587 premenopausal patients were investigated for the quantitation of tamoxifen metabolites and genotyping. Figure 1 shows the patient inclusion scheme to explain the underlying rationale for the survival analyses, which was performed in the POSH cohort but not in the Singapore and Lebanon cohorts due to incomplete follow-up and delayed study entry of their patients, respectively (Figure 1).

Steady-state blood samples of patients treated with tamoxifen (20 mg per day) were collected on-site within the first year of treatment and immediately stored at $-20\,{}^\circ\text{C}$. Study approvals were obtained from the National Cancer Centre Ethics Review Committee (Singapore), American University of Beirut Institutional Review Board (Lebanon) and South and West MultiCentre Research Ethics Committee (MREC 00/6/69; POSH). All patients provided informed consent.

**Measurement of tamoxifen and metabolites**

Tamoxifen and its metabolites DM-Tam, (Z)-4-hydroxytamoxifen ((Z)-4-OH-Tam), (Z)-endoxifen, N-desmethyltamoxifen (DM-Tam), N,N-Didesmethyltamoxifen

---

**Figure 1.** Study flow diagram of premenopausal study. co-med, co-medication; HR, hormone receptor; Leb, Lebanon; POSH, Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer; Sing, Singapore; Tam, tamoxifen.
Tamoxifen metabolism and premenopausal breast cancer outcome

P Saladores et al

RESULTS

Patient characteristics and cytochrome P450 genotypes

The median age of diagnosis was 39.1 years (range 22–59 years) (Table 1). Follow-up, age, body mass index (BMI), ethnicity, tumor size and proportion of patients treated with chemotherapy differed among cohorts. Genotypes were successfully obtained from 583 patients for CYP2D6 (99%) and in 97–99% for CYP3A5, CYP2C9 and CYP2C19. Genotypes met Hardy–Weinberg Equilibrium with few exceptions of minor deviations (Table 2). Notably, UM frequency in the POSH cohort was lower than expected likely due to sample size.

Tamoxifen metabolite profiling, compliance and CYP2D6 activity

There was a strong interindividual variability for tamoxifen and the five metabolites in each ethnic group (Figure 2). According to two tamoxifen concentration splits, we defined non-compliant (≤40 nm), poorly compliant (40–150 nm) and compliant (>150 nm) patients (Figure 2, dashed lines). Twenty-four POSH patients were non-compliant (7%) in their first-year serum sample, 17 patients were poorly compliant (2.9%). Of the other two cohorts, two patients were below 40 nm, whereas three patients were below 150 nm. There were no differences in CYP2D6 phenotype frequencies between poorly/non-compliant patients and the remaining patients, therefore subsequent genotype-phenotype correlations were not biased by excluding poorly/non-compliant patients (data not shown).

The compliant patients from each cohort are shown according to genotype-predicted CYP2D6 activity scores (Table 3). There was a strong gene-dose effect for an association between the CYP2D6 activity score and endoxifen concentrations (P < 0.04) in all ethnic cohorts (Figure 3a). The contribution of CYP2D6 to the interindividual variability of endoxifen formation via DM-Tam, as deduced from MR DM-Tam/endoxifen, was 46% (Singapore, P < 0.001), 55% (Lebanon, P < 0.001) and 55% (POSH, P < 0.04), respectively (Figure 3b). Altogether, 53% of the interindividual variability of endoxifen formation from DM-Tam was attributed to CYP2D6 (Figure 3c; R² = 0.53; P < 0.017).

Other factors influencing tamoxifen metabolism

The formation of norendoxifen from DDM-Tam precursor and (Z)-4-OH-Tam converted from tamoxifen was decreased in patients carriers of CYP2C19*2 and/or *3 (Figure 4a, P < 0.001) and CYP2C9*2 and/or*3 alleles (Figure 4b), P < 0.001, respectively. Lower levels of DM-Tam were observed in patients with a BMI higher than 30, both in Caucasians and non-Caucasians (Figure 4c, P < 0.001). Notably, DM-Tam formation did not depend on the CYP3A5*3 reduced-function allele. Multivariate regression analyses across all cohorts showed that the combined genetic (CYP2C9, CYP2C19, CYP3A5) and non-genetic factors (age, BMI) contributed to only 2.8% of DM-Tam/endoxifen ratio as compared with 53% by CYP2D6.

Tamoxifen metabolites and clinical outcome

POSH outcome analysis (N = 306) was performed excluding hormone receptor-negative and poorly/non-compliant patients. There was no association between endoxifen concentrations and DRF given the lack of a significant trend (Table 4, Figure 5a). However, following Madlensky et al.,14 when we classified patients into percentiles, we observed that patients with low endoxifen concentrations (<14.15 nm) had higher risk for distant relapse or death compared with those with high concentrations (>35 nm, P = 0.03, Figure 5a), and showed a trend by multivariate Cox regression analysis of an increased hazard ratio (HR) of 1.94; 95% confidence interval (CI) 0.96–3.93; P = 0.064 (Table 4). We next explored the MR DM-Tam/endoxifen and observed an increased HR with increasing MR (decreasing endoxifen formation rate).
Table 1. Clinical characteristics of premenopausal patients

|                      | Singapore (n = 164) | Lebanon (n = 78) | POSH (n = 345) | Overall (n = 587) | P-value* |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------|
|                      | No. of patients %   | No. of patients % | No. of patients % | No. of patients % |         |
| Follow-up, years     |                     |                  |                |                  | <0.001   |
| Median               | 4.0                 | 4.1              | 6.4            | 5.5              |          |
| Range                | 1.3–14.2            | 1.9–8.5          | 1.2–11.6       | 1.2–14.2         |          |
| Age at diagnosis, years |                  |                  |                |                  | <0.001   |
| Median               | 47.0                | 43.0             | 37.5           | 39.1             |          |
| Range                | 30.0–59.0           | 24.0–51.0        | 22.0–41.0      | 22.0–59.0        |          |
| BMI                  |                     |                  |                |                  | <0.001   |
| ≤ 30                 | 153 93.3            | 62 79.5          | 272 78.8       | 487 82.9         |          |
| > 30                 | 10 6.1              | 16 20.5          | 63 18.8        | 91 15.5          |          |
| Unknown              | 1 0.6               | 8 2.3            | 8 1.5          | 9 1.5            |          |
| Ethnicity            |                     |                  |                |                  | <0.001   |
| Caucasian            | 164 100             | 320 92.8         | 320 54.5       | 54.5             |          |
| Asian                | 320 92.8            | 5 1.4            | 169 28.8       | 28.8             |          |
| African              | 169 28.8            | 15 2.6           | 15 2.6         | 2.6              |          |
| Middle Eastern       | 78 100              | 78 100           | 78 100         | 13.3             |          |
| Unknown              | 51 .4              | 50 .9            | 51 .4          | 50 .9            |          |
| Tumor size (cm)      |                     |                  |                |                  | 0.004    |
| ≤ 2                  | 95 57.9             | 30 38.5          | 174 50.4       | 299 50.9         |          |
| 2–5                  | 58 35.4             | 35 44.9          | 142 41.2       | 235 40.0         |          |
| 5                    | 11 6.7              | 13 16.7          | 20 5.8         | 44 7.5           |          |
| Unknown              | 9 2.6               | 2 2.6            | 9 1.5          | 1.5              |          |
| Nodal status         |                     |                  |                |                  | 0.08     |
| Negative             | 92 56.1             | 40 51.3          | 159 46.1       | 291 49.6         |          |
| Positive             | 69 42.1             | 38 48.7          | 184 53.3       | 291 49.6         |          |
| Unknown              | 3 1.8               | 2 0.6            | 5 0.9          | 0.9              |          |
| Grading              |                     |                  |                |                  | 0.21     |
| G1                   | 14 17.9             | 38 11.0          | 52 8.9         |             |          |
| G2                   | 35 44.9             | 178 51.6         | 213 36.3       |             |          |
| G3                   | 27 34.6             | 125 36.2         | 152 25.9       |             |          |
| Unknown              | 164 100             | 2 1.2            | 170 29.0       |             |          |
| Hormone receptor status (ER or PR) |                  |                  |                |                  | 0.472    |
| Positive             | 164 100             | 3 0.9            | 3 0.5          |             |          |
| Unknown              | 340 98.6            | 2 0.6            | 2 0.3          |             |          |
| HER2 status          |                     |                  |                |                  | 0.252    |
| Positive             | 43 26.2             | 18 23.1          | 66 19.1        | 127 21.6        |          |
| Negative             | 112 68.3            | 60 76.9          | 158 45.8       | 330 56.2        |          |
| Unknown              | 9 5.5               | 121 35.1         | 130 22.1       |             |          |
| Chemotherapy         |                     |                  |                |                  | 0.001    |
| Yes                  | 143 87.2            | 69 88.5          | 261 75.7       | 473 80.6        |          |
| No                   | 21 12.8             | 9 11.5           | 84 24.3        | 114 19.4        |          |
| CYP2D6 phenotypes    |                     |                  |                |                  | <0.001   |
| PM/PM                | 33 20.1             | 37 47.4          | 110 31.9       | 180 30.7        |          |
| hetEM/IM             | 129 78.7            | 37 59.4          | 371 63.2       |             |          |
| EM/UM                | 186 100             | 37 47.4          | 371 63.2       |             |          |
| Unknown              | 2 1.2               | 2 3.0            | 2 0.3          |             |          |

Abbreviations: BMI, body mass index; EM, extensive metabolizer; ER, estrogen receptor; HER2, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2; het, heterozygous; PM, poor metabolizer; POSH, Prospective Study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer; PR, progesterone receptor; IM, intermediate metabolizer; UM, ultra rapid metabolizer. *Refers to test for differences between the three cohorts.
Table 2. Observed frequencies of DME gene variants

| Allele | Variant | rs number | Function | Genotypes | Sing (n = 164) | Leb (n = 78) | POSH (n = 345) | Total (n = 587) | Minor allele frequency |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
|        |         |           |          | Genotypes | Sing | Leb | POSH | Total | Sing | Leb | POSH | Total |
| CYP2D6 | *3      | 2549delA  | rs35742686 | Abrogated | A/A | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 0.02<sup>1</sup> | 0.01 |
|        |         |           |          |          | del/del | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.03 | 0.02 |
|        | *4      | g1846 G>A  | rs3892097  | Abrogated | G/G | 0.99 | 0.76 | 0.63 | 0.75 | 0.003 | 0.141 | 0.21 | 0.15 |
|        |         |           |          |          | G/A | 0.01 | 0.21 | 0.31 | 0.21 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/A | 0.00 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.04 |
|        | *5      | Chromosomal deletion | Abrogated | wt/wt | 0.87 | 0.94 | 0.93 | 0.91 |
|        |         |           |          |          | wt/del | 0.13 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.09 |
|        | *6      | 1707delT  | rs5030655  | Abrogated | T/T | 1.00 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 0.003 | 0.141 | 0.21 | 0.15 |
|        |         |           |          |          | del/del | 0.00 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.02 |
|        | *9      | 2615_2617delAAG | Reduced | AAG/AAG | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.94 | 0.97 |
|        |         |           |          |          | AAG/del | 0.00 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.03 |
|        | *10     | g100 C>T  | rs1065852  | Reduced | C/C | 0.31 | 0.99 | 0.97 | 0.79 |
|        |         |           |          |          | C/T | 0.40 | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.13 |
|        |         |           |          |          | T/T | 0.29 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.08 |
|        | *41     | g2988 G>A  | rs28371725 | Reduced | G/G | 0.93 | 0.72 | 0.79 | 0.82 |
|        |         |           |          |          | G/A | 0.06 | 0.26 | 0.19 | 0.16 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/A | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
|        | XN      | Duplication | Increased | 2 copies | 0.99 | 0.87 | 0.99 | 0.98 |
|        |         |           |          | > 2 copies | 0.01 | 0.13 | 0.002 | 0.02 |
| CYP2C19 | *2      | 681 G>A   | rs4244285  | Abrogated | G/G | 0.48 | 0.79 | 0.75 | 0.67 |
|        |         |           |          |          | G/A | 0.40 | 0.18 | 0.23 | 0.27 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/A | 0.13 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.05 |
|        | *3      | 636 G>A   | rs4986893  | Abrogated | G/G | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.05 | 0.05 |
|        |         |           |          |          | G/A | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.05 | 0.05 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/A | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
|        | *17     | - 806 C>T | rs12248560 | Increased | C/C | 0.92 | 0.62 | 0.67 | 0.74 |
|        |         |           |          |          | C/T | 0.08 | 0.32 | 0.26 | 0.22 |
|        |         |           |          |          | T/T | 0.00 | 0.05 | 0.07 | 0.04 |
| CYP2C9  | *2      | c430 C>T  | rs1799853  | Reduced | C/C | 1.00 | 0.83 | 0.75 | 0.83 |
|        |         |           |          |          | C/T | 0.00 | 0.17 | 0.23 | 0.15 |
|        |         |           |          |          | T/T | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.01 |
|        | *3      | c1075 A>C  | rs1057910 | Reduced | A/A | 0.91 | 0.88 | 0.85 | 0.87 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/C | 0.08 | 0.12 | 0.14 | 0.13 |
|        |         |           |          |          | C/C | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.003 | 0.002 |
| CYP3A5  | *3      | 6986 A>G   | rs776746  | Markedly reduced | A/A | 0.10 | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.05 |
|        |         |           |          |          | A/G | 0.36 | 0.15 | 0.14 | 0.21 |
|        |         |           |          |          | G/G | 0.54 | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.75 |

Abbreviations: c, cDNA; del, deletion; DME, drug-metabolizing enzymes; g, gDNA; Leb, Lebanon; nd, not determined; POSH, Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer; Sing, Singapore; w, wildtype; wt, wildtype referring to major, that is, functional alleles. Note—Nucleotide positions refer to numbering according to the ATG start codon. CYP2D6*14, *15 and *17 alleles were detected by AmpliChip quality control only and were not included in the table. *XN, refers to duplication of EM alleles resulting in UM phenotype. *Refers to prevalence of UM phenotype based on multiple copies of functional alleles. Genotype frequencies that deviate from HWE have the following P values: <sup>1</sup>P = 0.02, <sup>2</sup>P = 0.045, <sup>3</sup>P = 0.006, <sup>4</sup>P = 0.003.
Figure 2. Metabolic profiling for tamoxifen (Tam) and five measured metabolites, N-desmethyltamoxifen (DM-Tam), (Z)-endoxifen, 4-hydroxytamoxifen [(Z)-4-OH-DDM-Tam] and norendoxifen [(Z)-4-OH-DDMT-Tam] in study cohorts from Singapore (Sing, N = 164), Lebanon (Leb, N = 78) and Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer (POSH, N = 345). Metabolite concentrations are presented as boxplots with whiskers defined by the 5th and 95th percentiles and extreme values outside the whiskers. The two dashed lines for Tam delineate putative non-compliant (>40 nM) and poorly compliant (40–150 nM) patients as defined from Tam plasma concentrations. Patients with Tam concentrations <150 nM were excluded from further analyses.

Table 3. CYP2D6 activity scores of compliant patients

| CYP2D6 activity scores | Singapore (n = 160) | Lebanon (n = 77) | POSH (n = 311) | Overall (n = 548) |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
|                        | No. of patients | %     | No. of patients | %     | No. of patients | %     | No. of patients | %     |
| 0.0                    | 0              | 0.0   | 4              | 5.2   | 25             | 8.0   | 29             | 5.3   |
| 0.5                    | 12             | 7.5   | 4              | 5.2   | 28             | 9.0   | 44             | 8.0   |
| 0.75                   | 52             | 32.5  | 2              | 2.6   | 7              | 2.25  | 61             | 11.1  |
| 1.0                    | 13             | 8.1   | 15             | 19.5  | 95             | 30.5  | 123            | 22.4  |
| 1.5                    | 48             | 30.0  | 15             | 19.5  | 53             | 17.0  | 116            | 21.2  |
| 2.0                    | 32             | 20.0  | 27             | 35.1  | 102            | 32.8  | 161            | 29.4  |
| 3.0                    | 1              | 0.6   | 10             | 13.0  | 1              | 0.3   | 12             | 2.2   |
| Unknown                | 2              | 1.2   |                |       |                |       | 2              | 0.4   |

Abbreviation: POSH, Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer.

Figure 3. Steady-state plasma concentrations of endoxifen and metabolic ratio DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen in premenopausal breast cancer patients according to genotype-based CYP2D6 activity score: (a) Endoxifen concentrations in Singapore (upper panel, N = 160, R² = 0.38; P < 10⁻¹²), Lebanon (middle panel, N = 77, R² = 0.34; P < 10⁻⁴) and POSH (lower panel, N = 306, R² = 0.33; P < 10⁻²¹) cohorts. (b) Metabolic ratios of DMT/(Z)-endoxifen in Singapore (upper panel, R² = 0.46; P < 10⁻¹³), Lebanon (middle panel, R² = 0.55; P < 10⁻⁹) and POSH (lower panel, R² = 0.55; P < 10⁻⁴⁰) cohorts. (c) Metabolic ratio DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen across all cohorts (N = 548, R² = 0.53; P < 10⁻⁷⁷). Data are presented as boxplots with whiskers defined by the 5th and 95th percentiles and extreme values outside the whiskers. DM-Tam, N-desmethyltamoxifen. **P < 10⁻³; ***P < 10⁻⁵; ****P < 10⁻¹⁰. POSH, Prospective study of Outcomes in Sporadic versus Hereditary breast cancer.
in multivariate Cox regression: $\text{HR}_{\text{per } 1 \text{ unit}} = 1.007$; 95% CI 1.000–1.014; $P = 0.036$ (Table 4). Because the per unit effect of this HR is rather small on a linear scale, we applied two cutoff values demonstrating worse (MR $\leq$ 31), moderate (MR 31–115) and better DRFS (MR $>$ 31) by Kaplan–Meier analysis (Log-rank $P = 0.001$; Figure 5b). This was confirmed in multivariate Cox regression with an increased HR for patients with MR $>$ 115 (low endoxifen formation rate) compared with patients with MR $<$ 31.

**Table 4.** Cox proportional hazard models of DRFS for (Z)-endoxifen plasma levels, MR DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen or CYP2D6 activity score/phenotype

| Quantitative analyses | Categorical analyses |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
|                       | HR (per unit)$^a$ 95% CI Wald P | Factor HR 95% CI Wald P |
| (Z)-Endoxifen ($nM$)  | Unadjusted 0.989 0.973–1.004 0.142 | (Z)-Endoxifen ($nM$) > 35 1 (Reference) 24.7–35 1.61 0.76–3.38 0.210 |
|                       | Adjusted 0.992 0.977–1.007 0.291 | < 14.15 1.94 0.96–3.93 0.064 |
|                       | Nodal status Negative 1 (Reference) 2.09 1.11–3.92 0.022 | Chemotherapy No 1 (Reference) 1.65 0.71–3.83 |
| MR DM-Tam/(Z)-Endoxifen | Unadjusted 1.008 1.001–1.015 0.025 | MR DM-Tam/(Z)-Endoxifen < 31 1 (Reference) 31–115 1.43 0.86–2.37 0.167 |
|                       | Adjusted 1.007 1.000–1.014 0.036 | > 31 3.82 1.47–9.89 0.006 |
|                       | Nodal status Negative 1 (Reference) 2.09 1.12–3.89 0.021 | Chemotherapy No 1 (Reference) 1.62 0.70–3.74 0.260 |
| CYP2D6 activity score  | Unadjusted 0.611 0.425–0.88 0.008 | CYP2D6 phenotype class EM/UM 1 (Reference) 1.55 0.88–2.72 0.132 |
|                       | Adjusted 0.623 0.429–0.905 0.013 | hetEM/IM 1.98 0.82–4.89 0.128 |
|                       | Nodal status Negative 1 (Reference) 2.15 1.14–4.04 0.018 | Chemotherapy No 1 (Reference) 1.60 0.69–3.73 0.277 |

Abbreviations: CI, confidence interval; DRFS, distant recurrence-free survival; HR, hazard ratio; MR DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen, metabolic ratio N-desmethyltamoxifen/(Z)-endoxifen; TAM, tamoxifen. Node status was binary coded with factor levels negative vs positive; chemotherapy was binary coded with levels no (no chemotherapy given) and yes (chemotherapy given); CYP2D6 and tamoxifen metabolite predictor variables were coded categorically. Models were corrected for nodal status and chemotherapy and stratified for ethnicity. *For univariate analysis, HR refers to an increase by one unit (1 nM) of steady-state endoxifen plasma concentration, increase of the dimensionless MR DM-Tam/(Z)-endoxifen ranging between 8 (highest) and 176 (lowest) endoxifen formation rates and an increase by one unit of CYP2D6 phenotype score ranging from 0 (PM) to 3 (UM).
association was no longer significant (HRPM vs EM: 0.82; 95% CI 0.43–0.91; P = 0.008) and multivariate models (HRper 1 CYP2D6 score unit = 0.62; 95% CI 0.43–0.91; P = 0.013; Table 4). When grouping activity scores into the phenotype classes EM/UM, hetEM/IM and PM, Kaplan–Meier analysis indicated that PM patients have lower DRFS compared to EM subjects (Figure 5c; log-rank test P = 0.042). When adjusted for nodal status and chemotherapy use, the association was no longer significant (HREM vs EM = 1.98; 95% CI 0.82–4.79; P = 0.13; Table 4).

CYP2D6 genotype and clinical outcome
Cox modeling revealed a significant linear association between CYP2D6 activity score and outcome (DRFS), both in univariate (P = 0.008) and multivariate models (HRper 1 CYP2D6 score unit = 0.62; 95% CI 0.43–0.91; P = 0.013; Table 4). When grouping activity scores into the phenotype classes EM/UM, hetEM/IM and PM, Kaplan–Meier analysis indicated that PM patients have worse DRFS compared to EM subjects (Figure 5c; log-rank test P = 0.042). When adjusted for nodal status and chemotherapy use, the association was no longer significant (HREM vs EM = 1.98; 95% CI 0.82–4.79; P = 0.13; Table 4).

DISCUSSION
This is the first study that investigated a purely premenopausal breast cancer population for interindividual variability of tamoxifen metabolism and its influence on clinical outcome. In contrast to postmenopausal patients, little is known regarding the clinical relevance of variable tamoxifen metabolism for drug response in premenopausal patients. Although premenopausal patients may receive aromatase inhibitor treatment as an alternative to tamoxifen, a personalized approach in the premenopausal setting must confront the lack of available alternatives and address the dilemma of young women stopping tamoxifen prematurely due to ADRs. Emerging data report a link between steady-state endoxifen concentrations and clinical outcome do not reflect the premenopausal setting. Notably, Madlensky et al. provided the first clinical outcome data for endoxifen; however, their study lacked premenopausal subgroup analysis. Similarly, a small exploratory study performed with 48 oophorectomized women is not reminiscent of the premenopausal setting.

Our comprehensive approach with premenopausal women accounts for potential determinants of tamoxifen response, including tamoxifen metabolites, CYP2D6 phenotypes and drug compliance. Notably, compliance is a serious issue as non-compliance pertains to up to 50% of patients by year five of the recommended tamoxifen treatment and has been associated with poor survival. In our study, tamoxifen compliance assessment via blood concentrations was limited to the first year of treatment and the poor/non-compliance rate of 10% (POSH) was lower than expected. Although first-year compliance may not be predictive for compliance for the full 5-year treatment duration, this has been accounted for by excluding all poorly/non-compliant patients from subsequent analyses. Regardless of the true compliance rate known to us we suggest, that outcome stratification based on CYP2D6 metabolism would be perhaps even better in a fully compliant population. We observed a clear CYP2D6 genotype effect for plasma endoxifen and endoxifen formation from DM-Tam. This strong effect was independent of age, BMI or non-CYP2D6 DME polymorphisms, which together contributed less than 3% of the observed variability in endoxifen formation. The CYP2D6 effect is similar to that observed in postmenopausal patients and holds true across ethnic groups (Asians, Europeans and Middle Eastern Arabs) independent of the differences in CYP2D6 allele frequencies. Our data clearly show that endoxifen formation follows the same principle in pre- and postmenopausal women driven by CYP2D6. Yet, its contribution to formation is estimated at approximately 53% suggesting that other factors contribute to the bioavailability of endoxifen. Additional findings of a correlation between impaired CYP2C9 activity and decreased 4-OH-Tam formation, as well as CYP2C19 loss-of-function and decreased formation of the anti-estrogen norendoxifen, corroborate previous in vitro observations and point to additional relevant metabolic pathways involved in the formation of antiestrogens. Moreover, a potential non-genetic influence on tamoxifen metabolism by adipose tissue acting as sequestering ‘compartment’ for lipophilic tamoxifen metabolites is supported by the observed association between BMI and decreased DM-Tam concentrations.

To understand the clinical relevance of tamoxifen metabolism in premenopausal patients, we conducted an outcome analysis (POSH) after excluding all patients with incomplete follow-up and/ or delayed study entry (Singapore, Lebanon). The association of endoxifen concentrations with clinical outcome was inconclusive; yet, when we grouped endoxifen levels into distinct classes, patients with low concentrations (<14.1 nM) were at increased risk of distant relapse or death compared with patients with high endoxifen (>35 nM; Figure 5a). Importantly, the low endoxifen class contained 88% of all PMs (24 of 27 patients) thereby support-
ing the notion of a link between deficient CYP2D6 phenotype, reduced endoxifen concentration, and impaired clinical efficacy of tamoxifen. Our data are in line with those of Madlensky et al. who reported an distant recurrence rate for patients with low endoxifen concentrations (5.9 ng ml⁻¹, 15.8 nM) in a patient cohort comprising pre- and postmenopausal patients. In contrast to endoxifen alone, using MR DM-Tam/endoxifen as a surrogate for CYP2D6 endoxifen formation demonstrated a strong association between high MR (low endoxifen concentrations) and an increased risk for recurrence or death, thereby substantiating the clinical relevance of the CYP2D6-mediated pathway for tamoxifen response. Together these data support the antagonistic potency of active metabolites at the ER, rather than the inhibition of ER, abundant tamoxifen and major tamoxifen through receptor saturation, in premenopausal patients. This is further substantiated by the lack of an outcome association with variable concentrations of tamoxifen and DM-Tam (Supplementary Figure 2). Notably, our in vivo data confirm the in vitro prediction by Maximov et al. who demonstrated that endoxifen, rather than ER low-affinity tamoxifen metabolites, matters in blocking breast cancer cell replication in the presence of estrogen concentrations equivalent to premenopausal patients.

Our observation that CYP2D6 PM or low activity score patients had less favorable outcome compared with EM or high activity score patients supports the relevance of the CYP2D6 genotype for the prediction of tamoxifen outcome in premenopausal women, a hypothesis that has been originally postulated for the postmenopausal setting. This association was considerably stronger when using activity scores as compared with classifying into three CYP2D6 phenotype groups (Table 4) supporting a gene-dose effect. Unlike in postmenopausal breast cancer where chemotherapy has been suggested to abrogate the CYP2D6 tamoxifen outcome effect, our data do not support this notion despite the large majority of POSH patients having received chemotherapy as it is the standard in the premenopausal setting. Combination chemotherapy produces chemical oophorectomy in the majority of premenopausal women over the age of 40 resulting in lower circulating estradiol levels compared with premenopausal patients taking tamoxifen alone; however, the ovarian function of most POSH patients may have remained intact as inferred from their median age of 37.5 years. Another confounding factor in pharmacogenetic studies is the deviation from Hardy–Weinberg Equilibrium, which has been observed in the POSH cohort for CYP2D6*3 and *9, likely due to rare frequency or population admixture. Borderline deviation from Hardy–Weinberg Equilibrium was observed for CYP2D6*10 in the Singapore cohort, which could be attributed to the *36-*10 genotype (not analyzed) and/or population admixture (17% Malays/Indians vs 83% Chinese). Because genotyping was done from germline DNA, Hardy–Weinberg Equilibrium deviation is not considered a confounder in our outcome analysis.

A limitation of this study is its moderate sample size, given that more than 800 patients would be required to detect a CYP2D6-related clinical effect in premenopausal women with sufficient power. This low power might explain the lack of significance with CYP2D6 phenotype in multivariate Cox analysis (P = 0.13). However, breast cancer in young women is less frequent than in postmenopausal women, resulting in smaller available cohorts with simultaneous collection of serum, genomic DNA and detailed follow-up per patient. We therefore restricted our outcome analyses to the 306 compliant patients for whom, both pharmacogenetic and pharmacokinetic data were available. This design differs from a previous preliminary dataset with more patients but without control for compliance. It may be argued that this design may give rise to a selection bias; however, we believe that strict inclusion criteria including first-year compliance, serum availability for pharmacokinetic measurements and a reasonable follow-up time are integral to CYP2D6-related outcome analysis. Notwithstanding, our study presents the largest analyses of purely premenopausal patients for which pharmacokinetic and pharmacogenetic outcome associations have been described. No information on co-medication was available for the POSH cohort, a reason why we cannot comment on their possible influence on the results. In the Singapore and Lebanon cohorts, pharmacokinetic analyses were likely not influenced because no patient received moderate/strong CYP2D6 inhibitors. Collectively, our data for the association of tamoxifen outcome with endoxifen formation/concentrations in premenopausal patients must be considered exploratory therefore, its potential clinical relevance awaits confirmation by independent studies.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
HB and MS report scientific collaborations with Roche Molecular Diagnostics and Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics Products in the previous 3 years. The remaining authors declared no conflict of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
We thank the patients, physicians, nurses and data managers for their participation in this study. This work was supported by the Robert Bosch Foundation, Stuttgart, Germany, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, SCHR 1323/2-1 and MU 1727/2-1), Germany and IZEPHA (Grant 21 0-0), Germany, The German Cancer Consortium (DKTK), American University of Beirut Medical Practice Plan (AUBMPP), and National Medical Research Council Grant NMRC/1159/2008 and NMRCG13161. PS is a fellow of the FP7 EU Marie Curie Initial Training Network FightingDrugFailure (GA238132).

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS
HB, TM, PS, WS and MS designed the research. BC, RD, BE, DE, BG, SG, M2H, JSSL, TM, RCHN, PS, ES, WS, AT, NSW, YSY and NKZ performed the research. HB, BC, BE, DE, ME, TM, PS, WS, MS, SW and NKZ analyzed the data. BC, DE and AT contributed study materials or patients. WS, MS and HB led the study. qDE established the POSH study cohort. BC established the Singapore study cohort. NKZ and AT established the Lebanon study cohort as co-principle investigators. BC, RD, BE, DE, SG, M2H, JSSL, RCHN, AT, NSW, YSY and NKZ collected samples and data. PS and WS performed the genotyping. BG and TM performed the drug metabolite analytics. PS, WS, TM and SW performed the statistical analysis. HB, BC, DE, TM, PS, WS, MS, SW and NKZ wrote the manuscript. All other authors contributed primarily to the patient ascertainment and/or data, and sample collection and preparation. All authors reviewed the final manuscript.

The Pharmacogenomics Journal (2015), 84 – 94 © 2015 Macmillan Publishers Limited
REFERENCES

1 Grant M, Harbeck N, Thomssen C. St. Gallen 2011: summary of the consensus discussion. Breast Care (Basel) 2011; 6: 136–141.
2 Winer EP, Hudis C, Burstein HJ, Wolff AC, Pritchard KI, Ingle JN et al. American Society of Clinical Oncology technology assessment on the use of aromatase inhibitors as adjuvant therapy for postmenopausal women with hormone receptor-positive breast cancer: status report 2004. J Clin Oncol 2005; 23: 619–629.
3 Early Breast Cancer Trialists’ Collaborative Group. Effects of chemotherapy and hormonal therapy for early breast cancer on recurrence and 15-year survival: an overview of the randomised trials. Lancet 2005; 365: 1687–1717.
4 Davies C, Pan H, Godwin J, Gray R, Arriagada R, Raina V et al. Long-term effects of continuing adjuvant tamoxifen to 10 years versus stopping at 5 years after diagnosis of oestrogen receptor-positive breast cancer: ATLAS, a randomised trial. Lancet 2013; 381: 805–811.
5 Gray R, Rea D, Handley K, Bowden SJ, Perry P, Ell HM et al. tToms: long-term effects of continuing adjuvant tamoxifen to 10 years versus stopping at 5 years in 6,953 women with early breast cancer. J Clin Oncol 2013; 31: 6s (supplement abstract 5).
6 Bowles EJA, Buist DSM, Chubak J, Yu O, Johnson J, Chestnut J et al. Endocrine therapy initiation from 2001 to 2008 varies by age at breast cancer diagnosis and tumor size. J Oncol Pract 2012; 8: 113–120.
7 Lorizio W, Wu AHB, Beattie MS, Rugo H, Tchu S, Kerlikowske K et al. Simulation with cells in vitro of tamoxifen treatment in premenopausal breast cancer patients with different CYP2D6 genotypes. Br J Pharmacol (in press).
8 Madlensky L, Natarajan L, Tchu S, Bell T, Pu M, Mortimer J, Flatt SW et al. Clinical and pharmacometric predictors of side effects from tamoxifen. Breast Cancer Res Treat 2012; 132: 1107–1118.
9 Ruddy KJ, Desantis SD, Gelman RS, Wu AHB, Punglia RS, Mayer EL et al. Prospective observational study of breast cancer treatment outcomes for UK women aged 18-40 years at diagnosis: the POSH study. J Natl Cancer Inst 2013; 105: 978–988.
10 Zanger UM, Raimundo S, Eichelbaum M. Cytochrome P450 2D6: overview and update on pharmacology, genetics, biochemistry. Pharmacogenet Genomics 2012; 22: 93–101.
11 Madlensky L, Natarajan L, Tchu S, Pu M, Mortimer J, Flatt SW et al. Tamoxifen metabolite concentrations, CYP2D6 genotype, and breast cancer outcomes. Clin Pharmacol Ther 2011; 89: 718–725.
12 Irwin Jr WJ, Walko CM, Weck KE, Ibrahim JG, Chiu WK, Dees EC et al. Genotype-guided tamoxifen dosing increases active metabolite exposure in women with reduced CYP2D6 metabolism: a multicenter study. J Clin Oncol 2011; 29: 3232–3239.
13 Zanger UM, Schwab M. Cytochrome P450 enzymes in drug metabolism: regulation of gene expression, enzyme activities, and impact of genetic variation. Pharmacol Rev 2011; 63: 133–141.
14 Sistenon J, Sajantila A, Lao O, Corander J, Barbuji X, Fuselli S. CYP2D6 worldwide genetic variation shows high frequency of altered activity variants and no continental structure. Pharmacogenet Genomics 2007; 17: 93–101.
15 Goetz MP, Suman VJ, Hoskin TL, Grant M, Filippis M, Safgren SL et al. CYP2D6 metabolism and patient outcome in the Australian Breast and Colorectal Cancer Study Group trial (ABC09). Clin Cancer Res 2013; 19: 500–507.
16 Province MA, Goetz MP, Brauch H, Folkard DA, Hebert JM, Whaley R et al. CYP2D6 genotype and tamoxifen therapy initiation from 2001 to 2008 varies by age at breast cancer diagnosis and tumor size. J Oncol Pract 2012; 8: 113–120.
17 Ratain MJ, Nakamura Y, Cox NJ. CYP2D6 genotype and tamoxifen activity: understanding interstudy variability in methodological quality. Clin Pharmacol Ther 2013; 94: 185–187.
18 Brauch H, Schroth W, Goetz MP, Mutter TE, Winter S, Ingle JN et al. Tamoxifen use in postmenopausal breast cancer: CYP2D6 matters. J Clin Oncol 2013; 31: 176–180.
19 Rabinovitch MM, Leyland-Jones B, Bouzay M, Pagani O, Tang W, Krammer R et al. CYP2D6 genotype and tamoxifen responsible postmenopausal women with estrogen-receptive breast cancer: the breast international group 1-98 trial. J Natl Cancer Inst 2012; 104: 441–451.
20 Ratain MJ, Drury S, Hayes DF, Stearns V, Thibert JN, Haynes BP et al. CYP2D6 and UGT2B7 gene and risk of recurrence in tamoxifen-treated breast cancer patients. J Natl Cancer Inst 2012; 104: 452–460.
and a potential lead compound for novel therapeutic agents. Breast Cancer Res Treat 2012; 133: 99–109.

48 Lash TL, Lien EA, Sørensen HT, Hamilton-Dutoit S. Genotype-guided tamoxifen therapy: time to pause for reflection? Lancet Oncol 2009; 10: 825–833.

49 Dowsett M, Haynes BP. Hormonal effects of aromatase inhibitors: focus on pre-menopausal effects and interaction with tamoxifen. J Steroid Biochem Mol Biol 2003; 86: 255–263.

50 Kiyotani K, Mushiroda T, Imamura CK, Hosono N, Tsunoda T, Kubo M et al. Significant effect of polymorphisms in CYP2D6 and ABCC2 on clinical outcomes of adjuvant tamoxifen therapy for breast cancer patients. J Clin Oncol 2010; 28: 1287–1293.

51 Kiyotani K, Mushiroda T, Hosono N, Tsunoda T, Kubo M, Aki F et al. Lessons for pharmacogenomics studies: association study between CYP2D6 genotype and tamoxifen response. Pharmacogenet Genomics 2010; 20: 565–568.

52 Ravdin PM, Fritz NF, Tormey DC, Jordan VC. Endocrine status of premenopausal node-positive breast cancer patients following adjuvant chemotherapy and long-term tamoxifen. Cancer Res 1998; 48: 1026–1029.

53 Jordan VC, Fritz NF, Langan-Fahey S, Thompson M, Tormey DC. Alteration of endocrine parameters in premenopausal women with breast cancer during long-term tamoxifen therapy as the single agent. J Natl Cancer Inst 1991; 83: 1488–1491.

54 Gaedigk A, Bradford LD, Alander SW, Leeder JS. Cyp2d6*36 gene arrangements within the Cyp2d6 locus: association of Cyp2d6*36 with poor metabolizer status. Drug Metab Dispos 2006; 34: 563–569.

55 Saladores PH, Schroth W, Eccles D, Tapper W, Gerty S, Brauch HB. Abstract 2671: CYP2D6 polymorphisms are not associated with tamoxifen outcome in premenopausal women with ER positive breast cancer of the POSH cohort. Cancer Res 2012; 72: 2671–2671.

56 Kiyotani K, Mushiroda T, Imamura CK, Tanigawara Y, Hosono N, Kubo M et al. Dose-adjustment study of tamoxifen based on CYP2D6 genotypes in Japanese breast cancer patients. Breast Cancer Res Treat 2012; 131: 137–145.

57 Barginear MF, Jaremko M, Peter I, Yu C, Kasai Y, Kemeny M et al. Increasing tamoxifen dose in breast cancer patients based on CYP2D6 genotypes and endoxifen levels: effect on active metabolite isomers and the antiestrogenic activity score. Clin Pharmacol Ther 2011; 90: 605–611.

58 Dickschen K, Eissing T, Mürdter T, Schwab M, Willmann S. Overcoming CYP2D6-mediated tamoxifen resistance: phenotype-specific tamoxifen-endoxifen combinations. Breast 2013; 22: 586.

59 Ahmad A, Shahabuddin S, Sheikh S, Kale P, Krishnappa M, Rane RC et al. Endoxifen, a new cornerstone of breast cancer therapy: demonstration of safety, tolerability, and systemic bioavailability in healthy human subjects. Clin Pharmacol Ther 2010; 88: 814–817.

60 Regan MM, Pagani O, Fleming GF, Walley BA, Price KN, Rabaglio M et al. Adjuvant treatment of premenopausal women with endocrine-responsive early breast cancer: design of the TEXT and SOFT trials. Breast 2013; 22: 1094–1100.

61 Pagani O, Regan MM, Walley BA, Fleming GF, Collieoni M, Láng I et al. Adjuvant exemestane with ovarian suppression in premenopausal breast cancer. N Engl J Med 2014; 371: 107–118.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article’s Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in the credit line; if the material is not included under the Creative Commons license, users will need to obtain permission from the license holder to reproduce the material. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/

Supplementary Information accompanies the paper on the The Pharmacogenomics Journal website (http://www.nature.com/tpj)