

Analysis of reasons for Emergency Department (ED) visits and resulting admissions for breast cancer patients from July 2019 to August 2020: Experience of a rural cancer center in Maine.



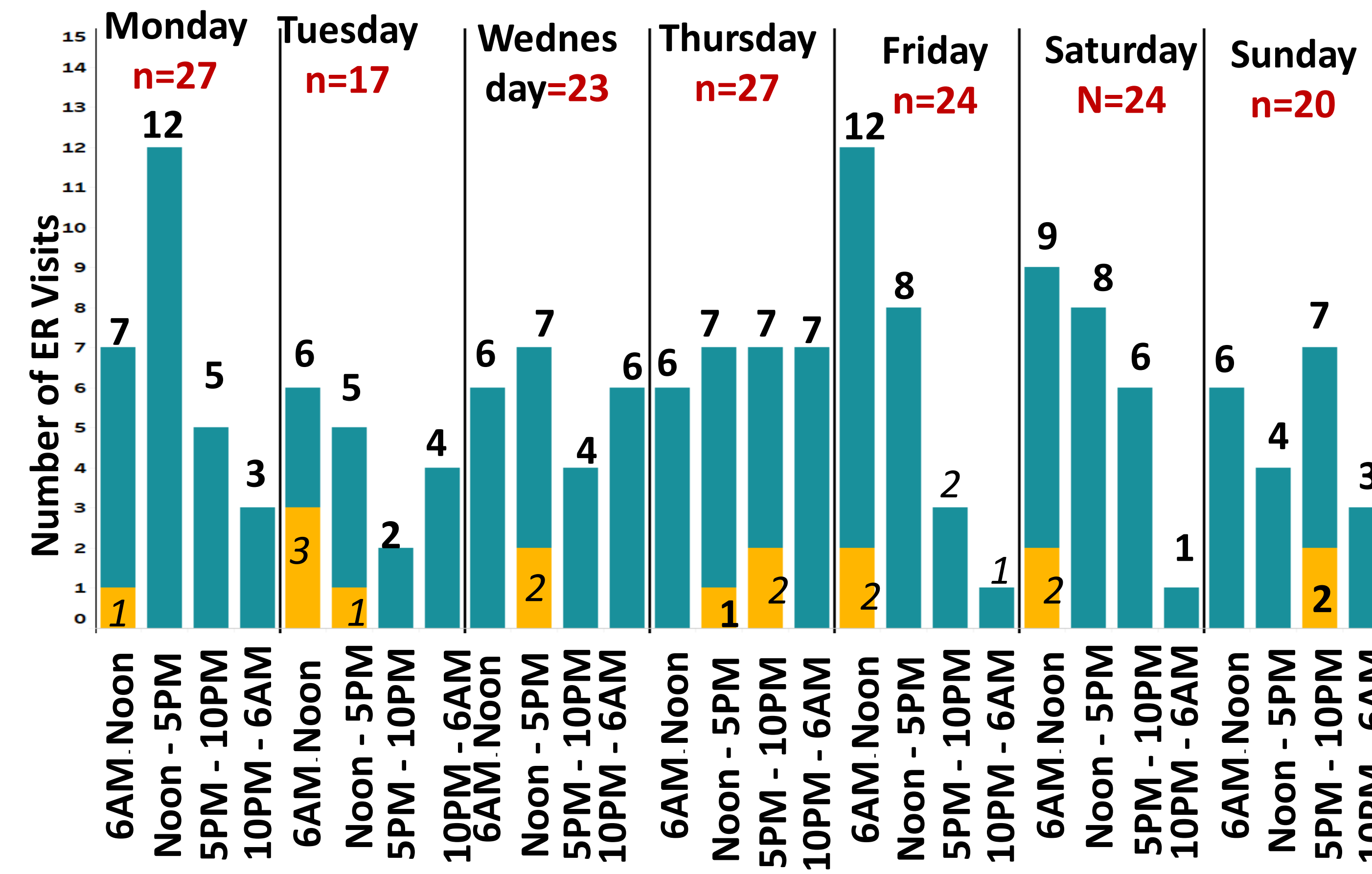
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Abstract

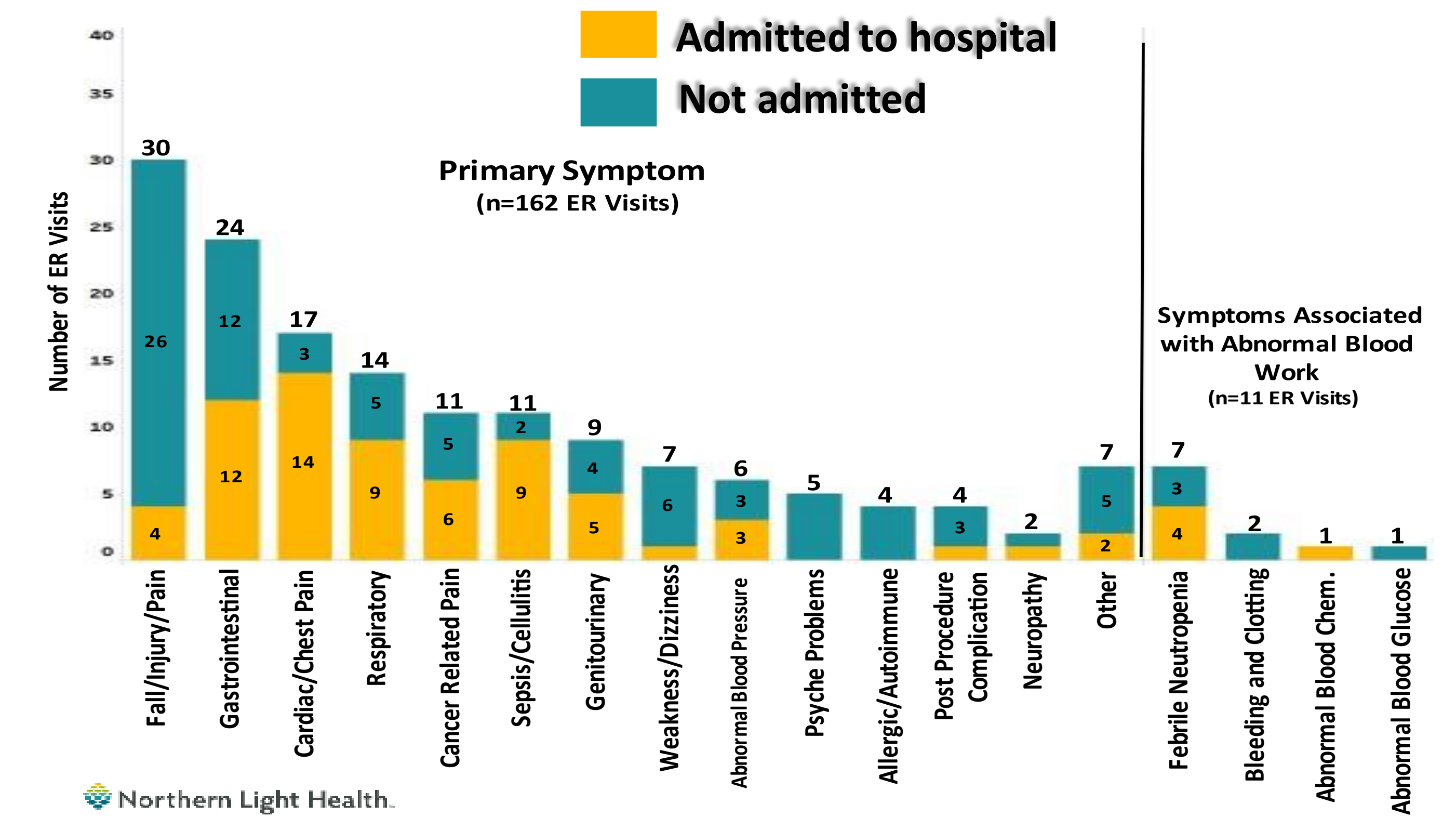
Objectives: Reducing ED visits in patients with cancer is cost saving and is particularly relevant during the COVID pandemic. **Method:** We analyzed the number of ED visits that occurred in our breast cancer population between July 1st 2019 and August 31st 2020 including demographics, stage distribution, treatment type within the month of ED visit, reason and time of the day, day of the week the visit occurred. **Results:** A total of 101 patients had 162 visits. 38 (38%) patients had more than 1 ER visit. Majority (36%) had stage 4 disease at the time of ED visit. The top 5 reasons for ED visits were fall and injury (N=30), gastrointestinal (N=24), cardiac (N=17), respiratory symptoms (N=14) and cancer related pain (N=11). Majority of patients who had fall and injury were on hormone therapy (N=17). The most common reasons for chemotherapy induced ER visits were GI related (N=8) and Neutropenic fever (N=7). Cyclophosphamide/doxorubicin is the common regimen associated with neutropenic fever in our patient population. A total of 72 (44%) visits resulted in admissions. Most common symptom category requiring hospital admissions are Cardiac (82.3%) followed by sepsis/cellulitis (81.8%), respiratory (64%), cancer related pain (54.5%) and GI (50%). Most were on endocrine therapy at the time of their visit (N= 59) and 31 patients were on no treatment at all. Falls were unrelated to disease or treatment and occurred in patients above 70 years old. Visits occurred during working hours from 6AM to 5PM, with peak incidence on Mondays and Fridays. 16 of 146 visits were directly referred to ER by the cancer center. **Conclusions:** Reducing ED visit in cancer patients is a worthwhile endeavor particularly in the context of the COVID pandemic. The main reason for ED visits were falls and injuries that were unrelated to disease or treatment. As a result, we are implementing systematic physical therapy assessment for our breast cancer population over age of 60 at our cancer center and also implementing call us first campaign as majority of the ED visits occurred during the working hours so as to get an opportunity to intervene prior to going to the ED.

Timing of the ER visit



The above graph illustrates Timing of the visits in our study population.

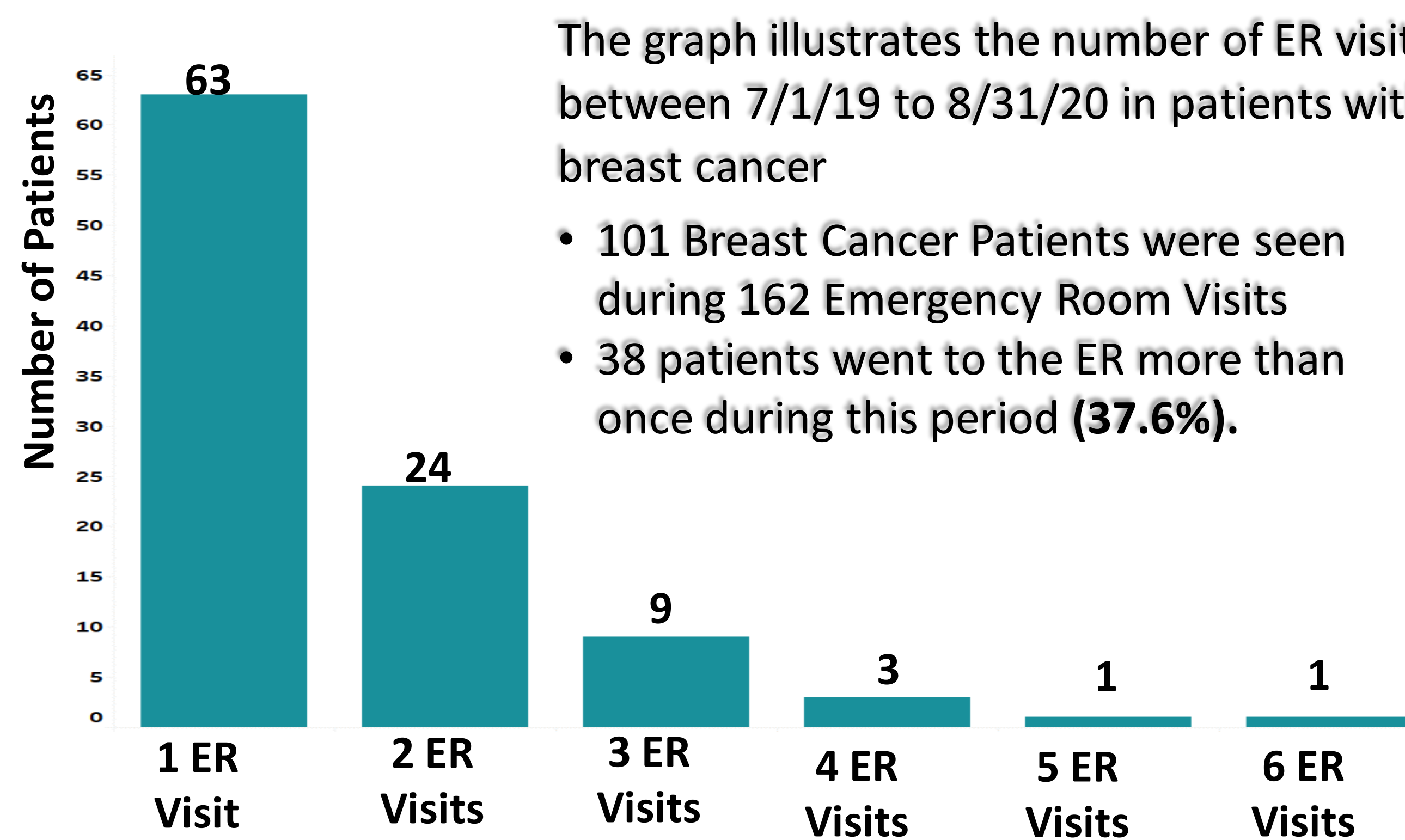
Reasons for ER visits and hospital admissions



The above graph illustrates the reason for the ER visit, number of patients requiring hospital admission

- Total Patients = 101
- Total ER Visits = 162
- Total Admissions to Hospital = 72 (44.4%)
- Most common symptom category requiring hospital admissions are Cardiac (82.3%) followed by sepsis/cellulitis (81.8%), respiratory (64%), cancer related pain (54.5%) and GI (50%).
- Cyclophosphamide/doxorubicin is the common regimen associated with neutropenic fever

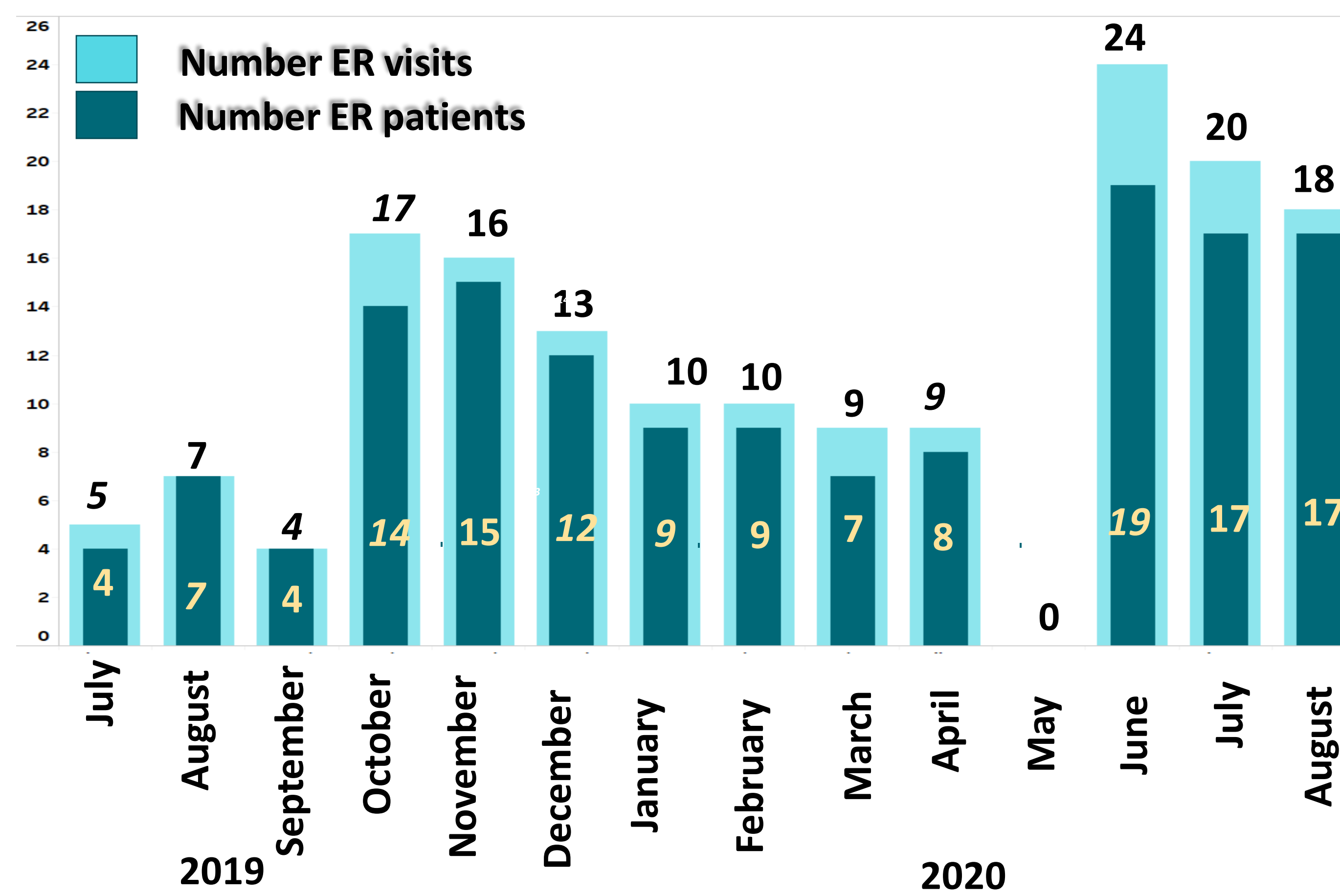
ER Visits by Breast Cancer Patients



The graph illustrates the number of ER visits between 7/1/19 to 8/31/20 in patients with breast cancer

- 101 Breast Cancer Patients were seen during 162 Emergency Room Visits
- 38 patients went to the ER more than once during this period (37.6%).

ER visits month specific



The above graph illustrates month wise ER visits in our study population.

Conclusions

- Reducing ED visit in cancer patients is a worthwhile endeavor particularly in the context of the COVID pandemic.
- The main reason for ED visits were falls and injuries that were unrelated to disease or treatment.
- As a result, we are implementing systematic physical therapy assessment for our breast cancer population over age of 60 at our cancer center and also implementing "call us first campaign" as majority of the ED visits occurred during the working hours so as to get an opportunity to intervene prior to going to the ED.