Five-year survival after first diagnosis of breast cancer is 13% lower in African American women than in Caucasian American women, an alarming disparity that cannot be explained by stage of disease at presentation (American Cancer Society, 2007; Jemal et al., 2007). U.S. cancer studies have found strong evidence that Caucasian patients receive more aggressive initial treatment for breast cancer than African American patients, resulting in higher mortality among non-Caucasian populations (Blackman & Masi, 2006). In the United States, only half of the African American women eligible for adjuvant breast cancer therapy receive it (Hershman et al., 2005). The treatment disparities also are evident in treatment delay and missed appointments (Hershman et al., 2003). Clinical delays in breast cancer from onset of symptoms until treatment affect ultimate prognosis. Nonadherence to breast cancer treatment and treatment delays from diagnosis to initiation of treatment, specifically adjuvant chemotherapy, may be among the reasons for worse breast cancer outcomes in African American women (Bickell et al., 2006; Blackman & Masi, 2006; Hershman et al., 2003, 2005). This recognition is critical because it suggests that breast cancer survival disparity can be decreased through clinical interventions that increase adherence to chemotherapy.

Distinctive and specific attitudes, perceptions, and stressors among African American women may affect breast cancer treatment adherence (Bickell et al., 2006). Knowledge regarding treatment and its likely outcome is critically important for decision making related to adherence to prescribed therapy (Battaglia, Roloff, Posner, & Freund, 2007; Rosenzweig, Wiehagen, Brufsky, & Arnold, 2007). Several factors are known to contribute to nonadherence to breast cancer treatment among African American women, including (a) perceptions, beliefs, and unique stressors (Ahmed, Fort, Elzey, & Belay, 2005; Bradley, 2006; Lythcott, Green, & Kramer-Brown, 2003; Steinberg et al., 2006); (b) inaccurate knowledge...