RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW OF MIRROR THERAPY FOR PHANTOM LIMB PAIN AT A PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY INSTITUTION

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INTRODUCTION / AIM
To describe and compare the doses and duration of use of opioids, gabapentin, amitriptyline, and methadone in patients with phantom limb pain (PLP) after amputation, in a group that received mirror therapy (MT) in addition to the standard treatment for PLP and a group that received only the standard treatment (non-MT). The overall incidence and duration of PLP, duration of follow-up by the Pain Service, and incidence of PLP at 1 year post-amputation are also described.

METHODS
A retrospective review of patients’ medical records from June 2009 to March 2015 was completed. The duration of PLP, duration of Pain Service follow-up, initiation of MT, pharmacologic pain management, and pain scores were analyzed using the Wilcoxon rank sum test.

RESULTS
Of the 22 patients who underwent an amputation during the last 6 years at our institution, 19 (86%) experienced PLP; 39% of those patients still experienced PLP at 1 year post-amputation (14% of the MT group and 75% of the non-MT group). The MT group experienced PLP for a mean (± SD) of 246 (± 200) days, and the non-MT group experienced PLP for 541 (± 363) days (p=0.08).

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS
MT in children with cancer-related amputations is not associated with reduction of pain medication doses for neuropathic PLP; MT is associated with lower incidence of PLP at 1 year and shorter duration of PLP.

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