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ACUTE HAEMATOGENOUS OSTEOMYELITIS AND ARTHRITIS IN CHILDREN: A REGION BASED RETROSPECTIVE STUDY

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Objectives: To evaluate signs, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and complications in children with osteomyelitis (OM), arthritis (SA) and combination (OA) in the Nijmegen region of The Netherlands.

Methods: Fifty-five children, 32 with OM, 19 with SA and 4 with OA were included in this retrospective study. All were admitted to Canisius-Wilhelmina Hospital (1983-2001) or University Medical Centre St Radboud Nijmegen (1990-2001).

Results: Mean age at presentation was 3 years 8 months and 4 years 7 months for OM and SA, respectively. For OM, median duration of symptoms till presentation was 5 days, 63% of children had fever, 97% pain, 91% loss of movement of affected extremity, 63% had a swollen, 53% a hot and 53% a red affected site. For SA, median duration of symptoms was 3 days, 79% had fever, 100% pain, 90% loss of movement of affected joint, 79% had a swollen, 74% a hot and 42% a red joint. The most affected sites were for OM femur and humerus, and for SA the knee. Mean erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) at presentation was 67 and 41 mm/hr for OM and SA respectively and mean C-reactive protein (CRP) 71 and 90mg/l. At presentation, 56% and 47% of x-rays and 89% and 83% of 99m Tc-bone scintigraphy showed signs of OM and SA, respectively. For OM and SA a microorganism was found in 53%, Staphylococcus aureus being most common.

Conclusion: Our results are consistent with those described in literature.

