

Five years experience in a population of patients with hemophilia: musculoskeletal comprehensive approach

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Introduction and Objectives: Therapeutic advances for patients with hemophilia have reduced bleeding, but musculoskeletal conditions (joint and muscle bleeds, arthropathy and synovitis) have become the greatest occurrence. To prevent these conditions impairing the patient's independence and quality of life, a multidisciplinary approach was taken on the prevention and treatment of these conditions involving orthopedics, physiatrists and physical and occupational therapists. Our objective was to evaluate the incidence of hemophilic arthropathy and synovitis in patients with a comprehensive treatment and understand its relationship with physical activity.

Materials and Methods: From June 2009 to September 2013 a group of 48 patients with hemophilia A was periodically evaluated for bleeding episodes, presence of arthropathy and synovitis and their functional status. Physical therapy, routine home exercises and guidelines for sports were provided.

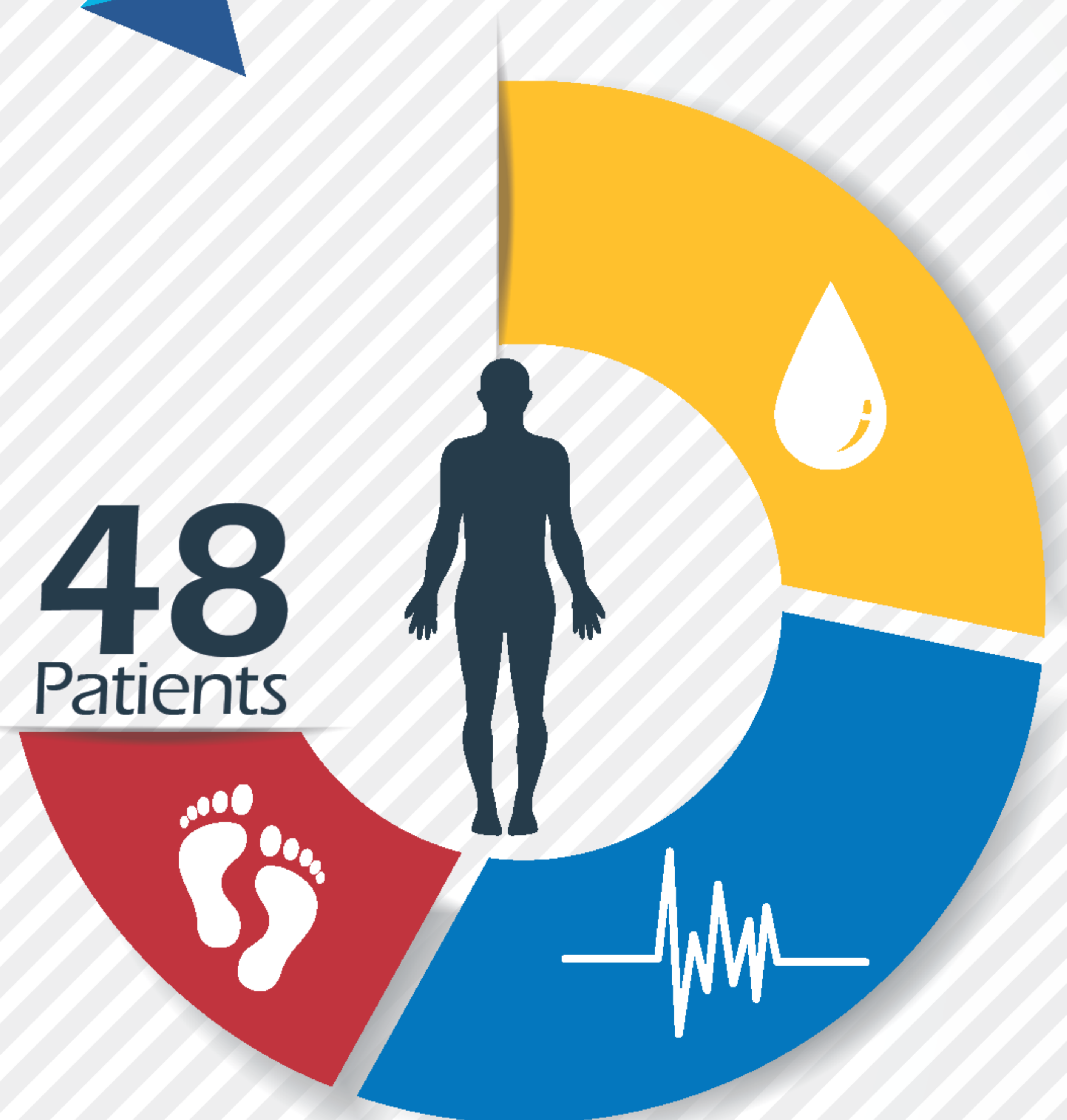
Results: There forty-eight hemophilia A patients were from 3 - 69 years (mean 26). They completed a five appointments/patient /year. The table summarizes the evolution of arthropathy and synovitis.

Arthropathy	187	222	+18.7%
Synovitis	22	14	-36.4%
	Beginning	Ending	Changes %

At the beginning, the maximum number of joints per person with synovitis was four with the greater occurrence in those around 9 years, while the group with no synovitis average 29 years showing an inverse relationship between age and synovitis. At the end there were no more than two affected joints per persons. Arthropathy however showed a progressive trend over time. Patients with average age of 54 exhibited up to ten joints affected, the worse were elbows and ankles.

All patients performed weekly physiotherapy 1.31 times at clinic and 0.9 times at home. On the follow-up this ratio was 1 and 1.13 respectively. At the start 20 patients were practicing sport (swimming, cycling, gym) increasing 65% to 33 at the end.

48
Patients



Conclusion: Once arthropathy begins, it worsens according to its natural course despite maintained or increased physical activity levels. However, a significant reduction in the incidence of synovitis might play a role in reducing the need for medications, minimize or delay the onset of joint injury and encourage physical activity.