**Case Study: Phantom Limb Pain**

Mark Jacobs, a 43 year old male is admitted with Phantom limb pain. Mark had a left below Knee amputation 6 months ago due to a motor vehicle accident. He is presently complaining of heaviness and severe pain to the left lower extremity.

1. **Define phantom limb pain**

* Sensation and or pain that occurs in 90% of amputees. The patient may experience feelings of pain, heaviness, numbness, burning, crushing pain, cramping, and or coldness. The sensation and or pain may subside with management however; the pain can become chronic (Dirksen, S. R., Lewis, S.L., Heitkemper, M.M., & Bucher, L., 2011).

1. **List examples of Non pharmacological treatment of phantom limb pain**

* Distraction, massage, therapeutic touch, Mirror cure

1. **What are the nursing diagnosis related to pain and comfort for Mark Jacobs**

* Acute pain related to tissue injury
* Chronic pain related to phantom limb sensation

1. **List nursing interventions for Mark Jacobs**

* Assess location, onset, duration, and factors that increase pain and or reduce pain.
* Fitting of prosthesis if patient has one
* Assess vital signs.
* Assess for drug allergies.
* Administer prescribed analgesic. Inform patient to request pain medication before pain becomes severe.
* Opioids may be ineffective because they do not alter response of afferent nerves to noxious stimuli.
* Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) may be useful for short term pain management (counterirritation).
* Education – discuss and teach alternative pain therapy

**Student home work** – Read an article on alternative treatment of phantom limb pain

Example of article

Moseley, L (2008). The Mirror Cure for Phantom Pain. Retrieved from http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-mirror-cure