

Report of my experience at the Boston Children's Hospital

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I had the wonderful experience as a visiting cardiologist at the Boston Children's Hospital (BCH). The opportunity was made possible by the exchange program from the Japanese Society of Pediatric Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery to the American Heart Association's Council on Cardiovascular Disease in the Young.

My specialty is the catheter treatments. We actively carry out ballooning and stenting treatments for complicated cardiac patients in which operation is impossible. I have more opportunities to study treatments abroad by reading the literature. Not only I read it in the literature, but the feeling that I wanted to experience actual treatment in a big hospital in the United States gradually became stronger.

There are about 80 staff doctors in the pediatric cardiology in BCH. Each of them has the specialty about catheter, echocardiology, other image evaluation (CT, MRI), and fetal cardiology. And there are about 1500 cardiac catheters and 1300 cardiac surgeries per a year in BCH.

I studied many interventional techniques. For examples, many stenting treatments from small size to large size are frequently used. The transcatheter pulmonary valve replacements which we can't use in Japan are also performed. The surgeon performs laparotomy surgery in a small area, the interventionist inserts a catheter into IVC directly, and performs the stenting treatment of the low birth weight patients with tetralogy of Fallot.

There are so many cases in cardiac MRI every day. There is anesthesia's equipment in MRI's room and BCH positively take cardiac MRI to complicated congenital heart disease of neonates and infants.

Rounding was completely different from Japan. American style's rounding is that many doctors and co-medical are discussing about the patient together at the same time for long time in every morning. About 30 minutes for one patient, Fellow doctors inquire about the patient's situation from his or her family, and presents detailed from medical history to current treatment. And the staff doctor comments on it and starts a lecture in the rounding time.

There is Dr. Jane Newburger at BCH that is driving the Kawasaki disease research in the United States. My research is Kawasaki disease. I investigated expression and functions of some microRNAs in the acute phase of Kawasaki disease by means of microarray technique. I found that some microRNAs were obviously upregulated in association with severity of the coronary involvements and that those microRNAs could work for beneficial biomarkers in the acute phase of Kawasaki disease. So that, I enjoyed the Kawasaki meeting in BCH.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to have visiting BCH. I would like to thank Dr. Isao Shiraishi and Dr. Kenichi Kurosaki in my hospital to allow me to apply this program. And, I am indebted to Dr. Sarah de Ferranti for inviting me to BCH. I would also like to thank Dr. Matan Setton who studied to my hospital as a visiting cardiology by the exchange program for introducing me to many doctors and guiding me in BCH. I look forward to maintaining collaborations with my colleagues across the world in this exchange program for many years.

