

Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society 2000 Award

AKIRA OKADA MD, PhD

*Department of Paediatric Surgery, Osaka University Medical School,
Suita, Osaka, Japan*



Dr Okada's work as a surgeon, clinical researcher and nutritionist opened a new era of clinical nutrition through the introduction and establishment of modern nutrition support (particularly total parenteral nutrition). His efforts to recognize and treat critically ill hospitalized patients, especially those with intestinal failure, were realized by the development of nutrition assessment and treatment to which he and his team in Osaka University Medical School devoted their professional life in the 1970s through to the 1990s.

Dr Okada was born in Hyogo, Japan on 29 November 1938 and took his medical doctor's degree at Osaka University Medical School. In 1968, Dr Okada obtained his PhD with work on Hirschsprung's Disease. Following this, he went to the University of Minnesota and spent 2 years as a surgical research fellow from 1969 to 1971, with opportunities to learn from the pioneering work of Dudrick and Wilmore on central venous nutrition. After returning to Osaka, Dr Okada organized the total parenteral nutrition (TPN) team in the Surgical Department of Osaka University, and then engaged in experimental and clinical studies in order to establish safe and practical TPN methods with clear indications and an understanding of the limitations. In this way he also fostered clinical nutrition research. At the same time, he established a new area of research in trace elements physiology (six cases of zinc deficiency reported by his group in 1975 were the first in the world), amino acid metabolism in various organ disorders, methodology of nutritional assessment and patho-physiology of intestinal failure. Furthermore, Dr Okada introduced the system of home (parenteral and enteral) nutrition for intestinal failure patients in Japan. As such, he did much to develop modern nutrition support systems in medicine.

In 1982, he became a professor and has been chairing the newly founded Department of Pediatric Surgery. From April 1998 to March 2000, he served as a director of Osaka University Hospital.

Dr Okada's achievements are well recognized internationally. Quite recently (1998), he organized an International Symposium on 'Growth factors and nutrients in Intestinal Health and Disease' in Osaka, which attracted great attention among the world's experts. He currently serves as an Editor of the *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition* and as an editorial board member of seven other international scientific journals. The Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society is proud to bestow its 2000 Award on Akira Okada, who was its Founding President.