



Dr Hirohiko Inanami **Medical Director, Iwai Orthopedic Medical Hospital** **Offering a less invasive** **method to cure spinal pain**

The Iwai Orthopedic Medical Hospital specializes in a special type of surgery that uses an endoscope resulting in less painful processes, shorter period of hospitalization and less risk of infection

The name of Japan has been synonymous with innovation and advancement. We have personally witnessed this unique feature of the Japanese people during our visits to various hospitals and discussions with the top doctors in Tokyo. This time Dr. Hirohiko Inanami at Iwai Orthopedic Medical Hospital highlighted the skilled application of endoscope in treating spinal pains.

Herniated discs cause pain and numbness because the medulla

protruding out of the intervertebral discs (hernia) causes pressure on spinal nerves. Conventionally, drug therapies or injections are not enough to fully treat the issue. During a surgery, several centimeters of the skin on the back is cut open, a section of lumbar or cervical vertebrae shaved and the hernia cut out and removed. However, this requires general anesthesia and a long period of hospitalization.

“That is why a less invasive surgery that uses an endoscope has been developed

in recent years. At our hospital, micro-endoscopic discectomy (MED) technique is applied to herniated discs with similar procedures for similar issues. These methods have excellent aspects such as less painful processes, short periods of hospitalization, small and less noticeable scars, and less risk of infection,” highlighted Dr. Inanami. According to the medical director, they have become the first in Asia to introduce the enSpire Interventional Discectomy System, which is the latest

low-invasive surgery. Since the scar is very small and local anesthetic is used, the patient can be discharged on the same or next day. At present, Iwai is the only hospital in Asia offering this type of treatment.

Dr. Inanami added, “We are the leading hospital in Japan in terms of the number of endoscopic surgeries of lumbar herniated discs and lumbar spinal canal stenosis. We have also been developing surgical devices for less invasive operations and conduct comparison tests of treatment medicines, therapeutic exercises, acupuncture, moxibustion, and so forth.”

Iwai Orthopedic Medical Hospital actively discloses medical treatment information: the patient can choose to view without any editing whole video images recorded during the endoscopic operation.

“At our hospital, the operation time for spinal cases is less than 30 minutes. However, in other hospitals it takes one hour or longer. I, myself, have done over 2 thousand surgeries over 10 years and this proves the amount of experience our doctors get over time. Furthermore, about 60 per cent of our patients feel little pain after the surgery and in 23- days time, no pain is left,” concluded Dr. Inanami.

On top of all these innovative techniques, the hospital is very conscious about the environment being the only hospital in Japan to use carbon offsets. In addition, the hospital contributes to the society in a wide range of fields by providing social activities such as medical treatments for mentally or physically challenged children with therapeutic horse riding and by providing doctors and nurses from other hospitals with educational opportunities to observe surgical operations.

With the enSpire Interventional Discectomy System guided by a fluoroscope, a needle of just over a millimeter in diameter is inserted under the local anesthetic and a wire at one end is used to remove the hernia.