

Self-Report

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I had the privilege of spending three months as an international clinical trainee at Adachi Medical Center in Tokyo, Japan. Coming from the Philippines, where resources for neurosurgical training can be limited, this opportunity to learn in a highly specialized environment was both professionally valuable and personally memorable.

A major highlight of my training was working under **Professor Yuichi Kubota**, whose mentorship greatly shaped my experience. Under his guidance, I was introduced to the basic principles of electroencephalography (EEG) and its role in the evaluation of medically refractory epilepsy. Learning how EEG findings relate to seizure localization was especially meaningful, given the limited availability of comprehensive epilepsy surgery programs in my home country. I was also grateful for the opportunity to assist in anterior temporal lobectomy with amygdalohippocampectomy and to participate in stereo electroencephalography (SEEG) implantation using the ROSA robotic system, which gave me valuable exposure to modern epilepsy surgery.

My training was further enriched by visits to other institutions. At **Osaka University Hospital**, I observed a frame-based SEEG implantation performed by Dr. Khoo Hui Ming, which broadened my understanding of different approaches to invasive EEG monitoring. I also attended the **Osaka Stroke Congress**, where I gained insight into current trends in cerebrovascular neurosurgery and academic exchange within the field. Another memorable part of my stay was participating in a **skull base cadaver dissection course at Hokkaido University**. As skull base surgery is one of my main interests, this hands-on experience was particularly valuable in strengthening my anatomical understanding, microsurgical orientation, and appreciation of the precision required in these complex procedures.

At Adachi Medical Center, I had the valuable opportunity to participate in an endovascular workshop on mechanical thrombectomy. In addition, I utilized my free time to refine my microsurgical techniques in the skills laboratory and to engage in focused research and study, particularly in the field of epilepsy surgery.

Observing transsphenoidal surgery performed by Dr. Shozo Yamada allowed me to appreciate the precision and refined microsurgical techniques required in pituitary and skull base surgery, particularly through the trans nasal approach. His mastery of delicate anatomical navigation highlighted the importance of meticulous, fine movements in achieving optimal outcomes. Likewise, witnessing Gamma Knife radiosurgery at Tsukiji Clinic under Dr. Toru Serizawa demonstrated the efficiency and coordination of a highly experienced team, capable of managing multiple cases with remarkable speed and accuracy. Together, these experiences significantly broadened my exposure to the diversity and sophistication of modern neurosurgical practice.

This training experience would not have been possible without the generous support of **Professor Mikhail Chernov**. From the very beginning, he ensured that my stay in Japan was both productive and comfortable by assisting with accommodation, hospital orientation, and overall logistics. His guidance in my research work, particularly in data analysis and academic writing, has been invaluable.

I am also sincerely grateful to **Dr. Xinli You**, my fellow international trainee, for her constant support throughout my stay. Her help in navigating the hospital system and assisting with data extraction greatly facilitated our research work, while her companionship made my experience in Tokyo more enjoyable.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the **faculty members, professors, residents, nurses, and staff** at Adachi Medical Center for their kindness and for allowing me to participate in selected procedures and observe a

wide range of neurosurgical cases. The exposure to advanced cranial and spinal cases, as well as the teamwork within the department, will greatly influence my future practice.

Above all, I am deeply grateful to the **patients** who made this learning experience possible. Their trust and willingness to undergo complex procedures are the foundation of medical education and progress. I sincerely wish them the best in their recovery and continued health.

Beyond the hospital, my stay in Japan also allowed me to experience the country's culture, traditions, and daily life. Living in Tokyo provided a unique perspective on the balance between Japan's rich heritage and modern society. I also had the opportunity to attend a traditional martial arts demonstration at the Nippon Budokan, which reflected the discipline and cultural values that parallel the precision seen in Japanese medicine.

I was fortunate to visit Hakone, where I had the opportunity to see Mount Fuji up close while experiencing different modes of transportation such as trains, cable cars, and cruise ship. Alongside these experiences, discovering the variety of Japanese cuisine, from simple dishes like ramen and udon to fresh sushi and sashimi, became an enjoyable part of daily life. These moments allowed me to appreciate not only the beauty of Japan but also the warmth and kindness of the people I encountered.

Looking back, these three months have been a truly meaningful chapter in my professional and personal life. I remain deeply grateful to Professor Kubota, Professor Chernov, and the entire team at Adachi Medical Center for their support and generosity. The experiences and lessons I gained here will stay with me, and I hope to carry them forward in contributing to neurosurgical care when I return to the Philippines.

With deepest gratitude,

Raymark C. Santiago



Assisting Professor Kubota during surgery
(「手術中に久保田教授を補助して」)



Stroke Congress at the Osaka International Convention Center
(大阪国際会議場でのストロークコンGRES)



Martial arts demonstration at the Nippon Budokan
(日本武道館での武道演武)



With Dr Xinli You during microvascular workshop
(マイクロ血管ワークショップにおいて、You欣麗先生と)



With Mount Fuji in the background
(富士山を背景に)



Skull Base Cadaver Dissection Course at Hokkaido University
(北海道大学での頭蓋底カダバー解剖コース)



Farewell dinner with Professor Kubota and Professor Chernov
送別会 (久保田教授とチェルノフ教授とのディナー)