

The Man with the “God Hands”



Dr. Masayuki Sada
Sada Hospital
2-4-28, Watanabedori,
Chuo-ku, Fukuoka
092-781-6381

Dr. Sada, a graduate of the Kurume University School of Medicine, was so impressed by the technique that, in 1990, he decided to go to Germany and study it in depth. His aim was to use laparoscopy for the purpose of cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal), a common but then-problematic operation. By 1991, he had brought this revolutionary surgery to Japan, becoming the first doctor to perform it in Fukuoka City. Since then, at the Fukuoka hospital founded by his grandfather in the early Showa period, Dr. Sada has used laparoscopy in over 5,200 gallbladder removals—causing him to become known nationwide by the nickname “God Hands.”

The traditional way of surgery, known as “open” cholecystectomy, involved cutting a wide area of the stomach. It left a noticeable scar and required at least two weeks of recuperation. Laparoscopic surgery, in contrast, used multiple small incisions to insert laparoscopes, usually cables with lights and cameras attached. These instruments would illuminate the inside of the abdomen and allow the surgeon to work

within the body. In the case of gallbladder removal, the organ could be “deflated” and removed through one of the incisions. With the advent of this procedure, surgeons no longer had to cut open the abdominal cavity, so the patient’s pain, trauma and healing time were all greatly reduced.

Sada Hospital, which opened in 1940 with only 14 beds, has grown steadily in size and status while maintaining an emphasis on constant education and the acquisition of new skills and technology. Nowhere has this been more apparent



than in the hospital’s pioneering use of laparoscopy. In 1998, the expertise gained from its thousands of successful operations led to advances in minimally invasive short-stay and outpatient surgeries, using forceps only three millimeters



in diameter. It became possible for 100 gallbladder removal patients to be released within a single day.

In 2009, the treatment was improved even more by the introduction of a brand-new, even less invasive method called SPS (Single Port Surgery) or SILS (Single Incision Laparoscopic Surgery). Previously, laparoscopy had used four small incisions and required a hospital stay of five or six days. Now, only a single 1.5-centimeter incision is made on the umbilicus (belly button). A special, flexible camera is used, meaning that any trauma for the patient is lessened to a bare minimum. The entire operation takes only 30 minutes to an hour, and the scar is very small and inconspicuous. There is little pain afterwards, and dissolving stitches are used so there is no need to remove them. Convalescence can take as little as one to three days.

SPS was introduced in Japan and has since spread around the world. The method is becoming especially popular with athletes. Smaller and fewer incisions mean less damage to muscles and other tissue, and there’s no need to miss matches or sit out on valuable training time during a lengthy hospital stay.

In addition to those with gallbladder problems, another group is benefiting from this form of surgery: people whose palms perspire excessively. “The patients tell me they’re too embarrassed to shake hands,” Dr. Sada says, “and some of them can’t even take exams because the papers become too wet with sweat.” In the past, because of the expense and difficulty of surgery, many who suffered from this disorder (clinically called hyperhidrosis palmaris) would have tried to live with it as best they could. Now the problem can be alleviated by a surgeon who carries out treatment on the sympathetic nervous system through a simple incision under the armpit.

胆のう摘出のゴッドハンド

「佐田厚生会 佐田病院」の佐田正之院長は内視鏡手術の第一人者だ。院長率いる外科チームが手術を行う佐田病院では、91年に内視鏡手術を開始して以来、5,200例以上の手術実績がある。2-3週間の入院の必要があった開腹による胆のう摘出手術は、内視鏡を用いれば5、6日の入院で済む。2009年には、SPSという、へそに一カ所、穴を開けるのみの手技を全国に先駆けて導入し、入院期間をわずか2、3日に短めた。傷口が目立たないため女性患者に大変好評だ。佐田病院の技術力の高さは国内外に知られており、現在では海外からの患者の受け入れも行っている。 www.sada.or.jp 福岡市中央区渡辺2-4-28 TEL: 092-781-6381

