

The Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society 1996 Award

Professor Takehiko Tanaka

Professor Takehiko Tanaka who holds the chair of Nutrition and Physiological Chemistry, Osaka University Medical School, has devoted his life to attracting international professionals to a career in nutrition. Dr. Tanaka obtained his medical degree from Osaka University Medical School in 1953. Then he entered the Institute for Protein Research of Osaka University and spent his younger days in the basic research of protein metabolism and enzymology. In 1967, he became a professor and chairman of the Department of Nutrition and Physiological Chemistry of Osaka University Medical School. He has devoted himself to nutritional research and the organisation of those few departments responsible for human nutrition in medical schools in Japan.

In 30 years, he has developed and made significant contributions to several nutritional research areas: (1) the isozymes of glycolytic enzymes in higher animals, (2) the regulatory mechanisms for glycolytic enzyme genes, (3) regulation of polyamine synthesis, (4) metabolic approaches to cancer cachexia, (5) energy metabolism and whole body calorimetry. He helped establish the concept of "molecular nutrition". Using molecular biology, he demonstrated the regulation of L-type pyruvate kinase gene expression in various nutritional conditions. With these studies, he developed the new concept of "Nutrients and gene expression". His work in the field of energy metabolism was based on the fact that indirect calorimetry in small animals shows immediate heat production on the intake of several nutrients; he clearly showed that this was initiated by hormonal and autonomic nervous system signals.

Besides his research interests, he has been a Council Member of IUNS (the International Union of Nutritional Sciences), a member of the Japanese National Committee of Nutrition and Food Sciences, a member of the US-Japan Cooperative Medical Science Program, Secretary General of the Fifth Asian Society of Nutritional Sciences Council, and most recently, the president of the International Symposium on "Nutritional Support in Organ Failure".

Originally a basic scientist, he showed great understanding of clinical medicine, especially with his interest in the modern nutrition support systems of parenteral and enteral nutrition. Likewise, he promoted the need for nutrition assessment in clinical practice. His lectures have always been informative. He has contributed significantly to the education of nutritionists, dietitians and doctors and served as Dean of

Medicine at Osaka University. Thus, his contribution to the development of nutritional sciences is international and considerable.

The nomination of Professor Tanaka for the annual award of the Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society reflects his great service to the international development of nutrition science and clinical nutrition.

Akira Okada

President, Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society