

English Abstracts of Invited Articles

Validity of DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) Tattoos and Their Potential Problems in Japan: From a Case Reported in the U.S.

Shigeru Chiba

DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) tattoos show that the tattoo bearers do not want to be resuscitated when they suffer a cardiopulmonary arrest in the terminal stage of illness. In the U.S., there is a case reported in which an unconscious patient with a DNR tattoo on his chest was taken to a hospital, but the doctors found themselves in a dilemma whether to honor the tattoo as they could not find any other advance directives. The concept of DNR is widely spreading among health care workers in Japan. I will discuss the validity of DNR tattoos and the potential problems they pose in Japan.

How Doctors Should Respond to Medical Neglect Including Blood Transfusion Refusal

Keishi Yoshida

Medical neglect refers to parents failing to obtain adequate medical treatment for their child, often attributing it to the family's specific beliefs. It is becoming a critical issue in the Japanese medical care system and, although the exact number has yet to be revealed, the number of medical neglect cases may be significantly large. This passage demonstrates how the act of disregarding children's right to receive treatment is completely unacceptable and presents the recommended measures by doctors to treat those neglected children. In the end, what doctors could do beyond treatment is also proposed.

Recommendations for Future Medical Treatment by the Introducing AI

Yota Kin

In recent years, artificial intelligence (AI) technology has been developing at a tremendous pace. This is no exception in the medical field, and from the viewpoint of diagnosis and prognosis prediction, the day when AI surpasses humans may be close. However, incorporating AI into the medical field raises various issues such as those involving privacy, law and human psychology. Furthermore, there are roles that only human doctors can play when it comes to providing medical treatment. If a doctor can make good use of AI as assistants while cherishing the work that AI cannot do, better medical practices can be performed.

Achieving the Sense of Motherhood through Epidural Birth and Issues for its Acceptance in Japan

Taro Haga

The rate of epidural birth in Japan is 6.1%, which is lower than that of other countries. One reason is that, in Japan, labor pains are thought to give mothers a sense of motherhood. In an interview after childbirth, no difference was found in terms of sense of motherhood between epidural birth and natural birth. Viewing childbirth as a rite of passage, advocating the back-to-nature movement, and listening to obsolete information by medical staff are keeping epidural birth from becoming widely acceptable in Japan. Providing evidence-based education will be the issue in the future.

The Ethical Issues with Anesthesiological Informed Consent and How it can be Improved

Ryosuke Morikawa

Anesthesia is necessary for surgical operations, but it can cause anxiety and risks for patients. Anesthesiologists should always obtain informed consent before administering anesthesia. However, it is doubtful that, in general, autonomic patients themselves would make a decision to receive anesthesia. Ideally, informed consent should contribute to better doctor-patient relationships, and patients themselves should decide their treatment plans following the consent procedures. However, in a clinical setting, anesthesiological informed consent is often performed at bedside, in a short amount of time, and by someone other than the responsible anesthesiologist. This situation may be due to the nature of anesthesiology—in almost all cases, anesthesia is requested by each surgery department and anesthesiologists tend to be fully occupied with intra-postoperative management. Also, patients generally think they do not have control over anesthesia and tend to leave it entirely up to the anesthesiologist. To improve this situation, many measures have been taken, including performing preoperative assessment at preoperative anesthesia clinics (PACs), introducing anesthesia nurse coordinators and using audiovisual aids in preoperative evaluations. Comparing the informed consent practices with other countries, such as the United States and Germany, also serves as a good reference. While these measures may improve anesthesiological informed consent, it is important that anesthesiologists do their best to communicate with patients. To build a good doctor-patient relationship, each anesthesiologist should reexamine the importance of informed consent and continue to brush up on his/her informed consent skills.