

WIDE-RANGING EFFECT OF Covid-19: A TIME FOR REFLECTION

Toshio Ohshiro MD PhD

First of all, may I welcome all our readers to this first 2020 issue of Volume 29 of *Laser Therapy* in the Year of the Rat! As I am sure many of you know, the Oriental zodiac comprises 12 animals, and with this year, the Rat starts off the cycle of 12. Why is the rat the first of the cycle, you ask? Perhaps because it is not only strength that determines rank, but brains as well, or perhaps in the case of the Rat, you might say 'cunning' if you were being a little unkind! However, I have always been amused by the fable of the Jade Emperor and the Rat. Legend has it that the Jade Emperor (one of the representations of the First God) was having a party, and invited the animals to come but challenged them to a race to decide their order in the zodiac. Rat tricked Ox into giving him a ride, but just before the finishing line, with Ox ahead of the rest, Rat jumped off and scampered over the line first: hence the Jade Emperor made him the first animal in the Zodiac (which is Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Boar). So, to consider another animal fable, namely the hare and the tortoise, slow and steady does not always win the race!

On a more sombre note, it is normally my custom in the first Editorial in each new volume of the journal to announce that the winners of the Toshio Ohshiro-*Laser Therapy* Best Paper and Good Paper Awards and the Ming-Chien Kao Award for Young Scientists have been selected by the Referees. Sadly, this year is not normal. First of all, we lost a key member of our Editorial Team last year, and that delayed the publication of the final fourth issue of Volume 28. "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", as they say, and I am however happy to say that the regrettable delay in publication of this issue allowed us to compile the results of the adjudication of the various Paper Awards for Volume 28, which I will talk about later in the Editorial.

Since January we have all been beset by the ravages of the Covid-19 crisis, and not only has our Editorial Team been further cut, but due to the more serious measures imposed by the Japanese Government to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, the Ohshiro Clinic and Japan Medical Laser Laboratory are under lockdown. That is why first of all this issue is late again, for which I humbly apologize. However, since we breathed life back into the journal from Volume 14 some 15 years ago, we have been absolutely spot on as far as getting the journal out on time has been concerned: it really breaks my heart that we have failed to do so now due to circumstances

which are totally beyond our control.

In the second place, even more sad for me is that, given the uncertainty of when things will get back to normal with the escalating cases here in Tokyo coupled with the currently depleted *Laser Therapy* Editorial Team, I have with regret taken the unprecedented step of announcing the suspension of publication of *Laser Therapy* for the near future. I promise you that, as soon as things get back onto an even keel, we will be putting the journal out again. I very much regret having to take this step, but I cannot see any other way out of this impasse imposed by the repercussions of the Covid-19 crisis.

The Late Emeritus Professor Kazuhiko Atsumi: Loss of a Valued Colleague

The sad news unfortunately continues. It was with tremendous sadness I heard that my long-time and much-respected colleague in the field of laser in surgery and medicine, Emeritus Professor Kazuhiko Atsumi, passed away at the very end of 2019 at the age of 91. His Obituary appears elsewhere in this issue of *Laser Therapy*, but I wanted to give my personal appreciation of the man and his achievements. It is true to say that we entered the pioneering stage for medical lasers together, and together we worked to further the cause of the medical laser not only in Japan, but overseas as well. I went to the USA to study the dermatological laser with the late Professor Leon Goldman in 1975, and was one of the first to bring the medical laser to Japan in 1976. Prof Atsumi's main field was medical engineering and he is renowned for his work on the artificial heart in Japan, but the exciting possibilities for the laser in surgery and medicine also caught his strong imagination, and he founded the Japan Society for Laser Surgery and Medicine (JSLSM) in 1977. He wanted to disseminate this knowledge into the Asian Pacific countries, and so together with me, he founded the Asian Pacific Association for Lasers in Medicine and Surgery (APALMS) in 1986, following the enormous success of the 4th meeting of the International Society for Laser Surgery and Medicine (ISLSM) in Tokyo, in 1981. Prof Atsumi was the President of that event, and I was proud to join with him in an executive role in the Organizing Committee.

Up till that year, the ISLSM was actually known under the name of the International Society for Laser Surgery, as founded in Israel in 1975 by another 'Great' in

the medical laser field, the late Professor Isaac Kaplan, and changed its name to the ISLSM at the Tokyo meeting. In the meantime, the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery was conceived in 1979 by Drs Goldman and Ellet Drake, and in 1981 the ASLMS held its first meeting in San Diego. I attended that meeting together with Prof Atsumi, and the same again in the 2nd meeting in Hilton Head Island, so Prof Atsumi had a strong grounding both nationally and internationally in the field and I was proud to be working alongside him. The ISLSM held a meeting successfully every 2 years after 1981, with the exception of 2011 and 2013 when illness and the deteriorating world economy prevented these meetings being held. Otherwise, Prof Atsumi and I attended every one of the meetings, with his guidance at the heart of the ISLSM.

Then arose the separate entity of laser therapy, as distinct to laser surgery, which I had been working on since 1978, and Prof Atsumi also became interested so he worked together with Prof Giovanni Galletti to found the International Society for Low Power Laser Applications in Medicine (ISLPLAM), with the first meeting held in Bologna in 1987. ISLPLAM encompassed both laser therapy and laser surgery. At that same time I was concerned that there was not a society dedicated solely to laser therapy and photobioactivation (now photobiomodulation), so in London in 1988 I convened a meeting which was the foundation and inception of the International Laser Therapy Association (ILTA). In the same year John Wiley announced that they would publish the journal *Laser Therapy*, and they also published the first book on laser therapy, "Low Level Laser Therapy: A Practical Introduction" by myself and Calderhead. LLLT joined the world stage!

The first ILTA meeting was successfully held in Okinawa under my presidency in 1990: Prof Atsumi contributed to that success. However, we were worried that having two separate societies dedicated to the therapeutic laser would splinter knowledge and resources, so Prof Atsumi and I agreed to 'marry' the ISLPLAM and ILTA at the 3rd ILTA meeting in Barcelona in 1994, to form the World Association for Laser Therapy (WALT).

Moving back to the wider field of laser in surgery and medicine, Prof Atsumi was still concerned that there was not enough cooperation between the many new medical laser societies, both national and international, that were being formed as the laser found more and more applications in the medical field, so in 1996 he worked with Prof Nikos Nikolopoulos and myself to form the first forum to bring together as many representatives as possible of societies for laser in medicine and surgery to attempt to unite knowledge in the field. This finally occurred during the 1996 meeting "A Laser Window on the World" hosted by the Greek Medical Laser Society and the European Society for Laser in Aesthetic Surgery (ESLAS), I was determined that this forum should meet regularly and from 1996 through to 2004 I worked with Prof Atsumi and Prof Kaplan to hold a

Forum at ISLSM, APALMS or other international meetings. The scope of the Forum grew with each meeting, and with the cooperation of Prof Atsumi, Prof Kaplan and myself, this resulted in the inaugural meeting of the World Federation of Societies for Laser Medicine and Surgery, the WFSLMS, of which Prof Atsumi became the first president.

From the beginnings in the first formal ISLSM meeting in Dallas, USA in 1979, Prof Atsumi tirelessly challenged and enlarged the goals of the ISLSM, then the JSLSM, ASLMS, ISLPLAM, ILTA/WALT and his brainchild, the WFSLMS. His absence will be felt, not just in Japan, but in the APAC region, indeed, internationally. He will be sadly missed.

Journal Awards

As I mentioned above, the delay in publication of this issue of the journal enabled us to compile the results from the adjudication of the annual *Laser Therapy* Awards for Volume 28, namely the Toshio Ohshiro-*Laser Therapy* Best Paper/ Good Papers Awards, and the Mind-Chine Kao Awards. The results in brief are as follows, and more details will appear in the next issue of the journal, whenever it will appear.

Toshio Ohshiro-Laser Therapy Best Paper Award:

"Photodynamic therapy by lysosomal-targeted drug delivery using talaporfin sodium incorporated into inactivated virus particles", from Sharmin Akter and colleagues.

Toshio Ohshiro-Laser Therapy Good Paper Awards:

"Efficacy of seasonal allergic rhinitis using an 810 nm diode laser system", from Katsumi Sasaki and colleagues.

"Long-Term Safety and Efficacy of Fractional CO₂ Laser Treatment in Post-Menopausal Women with Vaginal Atrophy", from Scott Evan Eder and colleagues.

Ming-Chien Kao Awards:

"Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection using the Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Laser" (Secondary publication), from Yoshinori Morita and colleagues.

"Photobiomodulation guided healing in a sub-critical bone defect in calvarias of rats", from Angela Maria Paiva Magri and colleagues.

"Effects of 830 nm low-power laser irradiation on body weight gain and inflammatory cytokines in experimental diabetes in different animal models", from Ujjal K. Bhawal and colleagues.

Our congratulations to the worthy winners. It is always a problem to choose between excellent papers, so please do not be despondent if your paper did not make it this time. The Awards will recommence once publication of *Laser Therapy* resumes.

Tokyo, May 2020.

THE WINNERS OF LASER THERAPY AWARDS 2019

It is our great pleasure to announce once again the winners of THE LASER THERAPY AWARDS 2019. The winners were selected by the Editorial Team for LASER THERAPY who screened the papers in the Volume 28, 2019 issues. We would like to congratulate the selected winners by presenting them with their prize-money and certificates.



- ▼ **Photodynamic therapy by lysosomal-targeted drug delivery using talaporfin sodium incorporated into inactivated virus particles**

Sharmin Akter



- ▼ **Efficacy of seasonal allergic rhinitis using an 810 nm diode laser system**

Katsumi Sasaki

- ▼ **Long-Term Safety and Efficacy of Fractional CO₂ Laser Treatment in Post-Menopausal Women with Vaginal Atrophy**

Scott Evan Eder



- ▼ **New Development for Safer Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection using the Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Laser (Secondary publication)**

Yoshinori Morita

- ▼ **Photobiomodulation guided healing in a sub-critical bone defect in calvarias of rats**

Angela Maria Paiva Magri

- ▼ **Effects of 830 nm low-power laser irradiation on body weight gain and inflammatory cytokines in experimental diabetes in different animal models**

Ujjal K. Bhawal

MESSAGES FROM THE WINNERS

BEST PAPER AWARD

Sharmin Akter,

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to the Editorial Board Members of LASER THERAPY to choose our paper for the Best Paper Award 2019. I was so surprised when I received the notification that our paper has been selected for Best Paper Award! I am truly honored to receive this award and it will be very much helpful for my future career. I wish to thank all co-authors of this publication for their scientific inputs. I strongly believe that, this wonderful initiative of award giving will definitely inspire the young researchers to publish their research findings in LASER THERAPY.

GOOD PAPER AWARD

Katsumi Sasaki,

It is great honor to be selected to receive the GOOD PAPER AWARD 2019 for our article entitled "Efficacy of seasonal allergic rhinitis using an 810 nm diode laser system". On behalf of my coauthors, I sincerely thank the entire editorial board members of Laser Therapy.

Recently, 810 nm diode laser system is usually used for the allergic rhinitis. Further research will be needed in near future. Thank you again for the honor of being published in this journal, and particularly for being chosen to receive this award.

MING CHIEN KAO AWARD

Yoshinori Morita,

It is a great honor for me to receive this award.

I would like to thank all members, especially for J. Morita MFG Corp, for their tremendous support and cooperation. We will do our best to commercialize this futuristic "Carbon Dioxide Laser device" for safer and steady Endoscopic treatment.

Thank you.

MING CHIEN KAO AWARD

Angela Maria Paiva Magri,

We are very happy with this announcement and honoured to receive the award. We would like thank Laser Therapy for considering our paper for publication and award. Also, we would like to thank all the collaborators of this study. We also would like to thank the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) and São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) for financial support. Thank you so much!

MING CHIEN KAO AWARD

Ujjal K. Bhawal,

It is a great honor for me to be given Ming-Chien Kao Award 2019 for the execution of the project. I am truly obliged for this great honor and recognition given by the Editorial Board Members of LASER THERAPY. The entire journey was a learning experience for me and with the success of this project; the team had converted into a family and I am more energized and charged up to take up new and challenging projects which would work in the benefit of basic science research of laser biology and medicine. Thank you again for such an important recognition.