

Professor Yoshihide Fujimoto

Yoshihide Fujimoto was born in a rural area of Kyoto Prefecture, Japan in 1926. He graduated from University of Tokyo in 1951. After one year of internship, he studied general surgery, cardiovascular surgery and organ transplantation at Department of Surgery II, the University of Tokyo Hospital. He studied on kidney transplantation at Harvard University from 1963 to 1964. In these early days, he was interested in thyroid and endocrine diseases. He investigated thyroid pathology, autoimmune thyroid disease, subacute thyroiditis, and so on. He also launched a research to apply ultrasonography for the diagnosis of thyroid cancer in 1960s. He published a textbook entitled “Clinical thyroidology: new concept of diseases and treatment” (Chugai Igakusha, in Japanese) in 1968. The book had been revised four times until 1980 and became a kind of bible for Japanese doctors who aspired to endocrine surgeons or endocrinologists.

After serving as Lecturer at University of Tokyo (1970-1977) and Professor at Department of General Surgery, University of Tsukuba (1977-1981), he was appointed the first Professor for Department of Endocrine Surgery, Tokyo Women’s Medical University (TWMU) in 1981. He was a founding member of the International Association of Endocrine Surgeons (IAES) and served as the fifth President from 1987 to 1989. During the period, he also founded the Asian Association of Endocrine Surgeons in 1988 and the Japanese Association of Endocrine Surgeons in 1989. After he retired from President of the Endocrine Medical Center, TWMU, he moved to Cancer Institute Hospital, in Tokyo as Adviser in 1992. He had trained substantial number of endocrine surgeons. He passed away on July 23, 2016 at his age of 90.

He was a very forward-looking and enlightening person. He deliberated on the differences in the traditional treatment strategy for patients with thyroid cancer between the Western countries and Japan. Hence, he had already asserted the concept of risk-adapted management of thyroid cancer since 1970s. He had also claimed to avoid over-treatment for patients taking quality of life into primary consideration. He was one of the great pioneers in global endocrine surgery and the father of endocrine surgeons in Japan and Asia.