

APASL Fellowship Experience at Chiba University: A Journey of Academic and Cultural Enrichment

Academic Highlights

The APASL Fellowship at Chiba University provided an unparalleled opportunity to deepen my expertise in advanced hepatology and interventional procedures. Over the course of the program, I gained hands-on exposure to state-of-the-art techniques, including:

- Tumor Ablation Techniques: Learning the nuances of radiofrequency ablation (RFA) and microwave ablation (MWA), with a focus on individualized patient care.
- Participation in the 11th International Ablation Training Program at Juntendo University, learning from world-renowned experts.
- Contrast-Enhanced Ultrasound (CEUS): Observing its application in diagnosing hepatic lesions and monitoring treatment responses.
- Transarterial Chemoembolization (TACE): Understanding embolization strategies tailored to tumor characteristics.
- Hepatic arterial infusion chemotherapy (HAIC): Delivers chemotherapy drugs directly into the hepatic artery, which supplies blood to liver tumors which allows for a higher concentration of chemotherapy agents in the tumor while minimizing systemic toxicity compared to intravenous chemotherapy.
- Liver Biopsy Procedures: Gaining insights into diagnostic techniques for chronic liver diseases.
- Endoscopic Injection Sclerotherapy (EIS): Observing innovative approaches to managing esophageal varices.

The structured schedule ensured a balance between theoretical discussions, procedural observations, and interactive case-based learning. Faculty members emphasized integrating imaging findings with clinical decision-making, which was particularly impactful for early-career doctors aspiring to specialize in hepatology.

Cultural Insights

Beyond the academic rigor, the fellowship also offered a unique cultural experience. The late year until early year period of fellowship give us experience of late fall, winter, and early spring season in Japan. Living and training in Japan provided insights into:

- **Japanese Work Ethic:** The meticulous attention to detail and patient-centered care demonstrated by the medical team were inspiring.
- **Collaborative Environment:** Interacting with local colleagues fostered cross-cultural exchange, enriching both professional and personal perspectives.
- **New Year's Celebration:** Visited a traditional shrine for Hatsumode (first shrine visit of the year) and experienced Japanese New Year customs
- **Early Sakura Viewing:** Witnessed the breathtaking plum blossoms and early cherry blossoms in Tokyo and Chiba, marking the transition into spring
- **Cultural Immersion:** Exploring Chiba and other regions allowed me to experience Japanese traditions, cuisine, and hospitality firsthand.

Why This Fellowship Matters?

For early-career doctors across Asia, this fellowship serves as a gateway to mastering cutting-edge hepatology practices while experiencing the rich cultural heritage of Japan. The program not only enhances clinical skills but also broadens horizons through international collaboration.

The APASL Fellowship is more than just a training program—it is a journey that expands both professional and personal horizons. We gain firsthand experience with advanced hepatology techniques, interact with some of the brightest minds in the field, and immerse yourself in a culture that values precision and dedication.

For any young doctor passionate about interventional hepatology, liver imaging, and multidisciplinary teamwork, this fellowship is an unparalleled opportunity. The experience not only enhances your technical skills but also broadens your perspective on global medical practices and cultural diversity.

I strongly encourage early-career doctors across Asia to consider this program. It is a stepping stone toward becoming a well-rounded hepatologist with expertise that goes beyond borders.

Visual Highlights



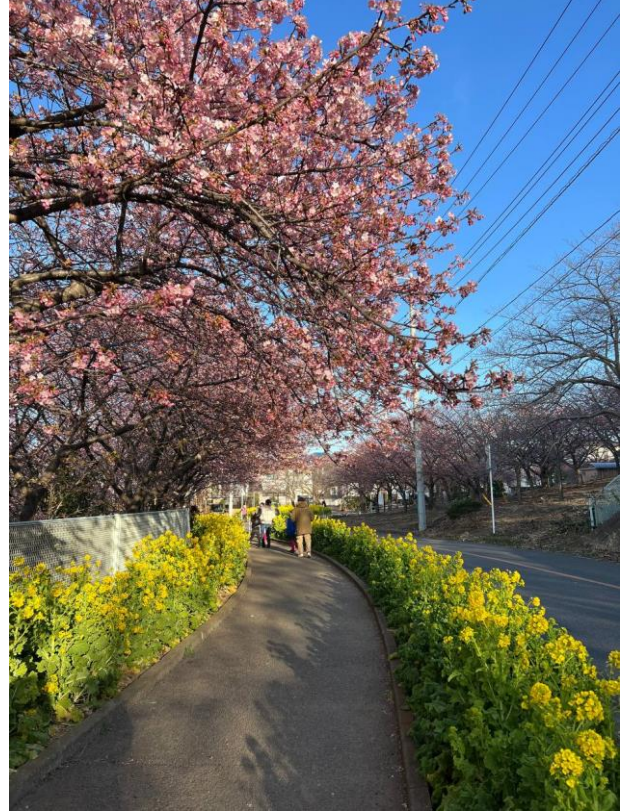
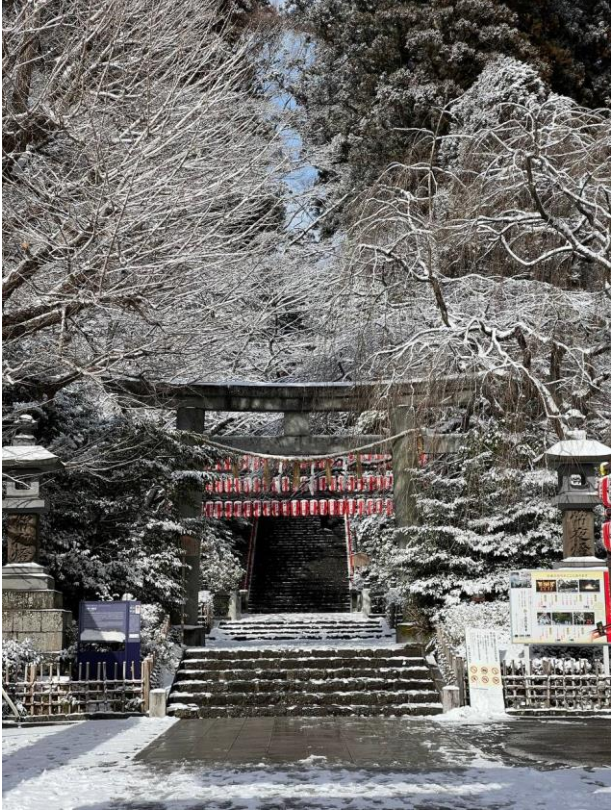
Working station for liver ablation at Chiba University Hospital



A group photo with faculty members of Hepatology team of Chiba University Hospital



A
Snapshot of participation in the 11th International Ablation Training Program at Juntendo University during the fellowship period



A cultural moment— visiting a local landmark during winter and early spring