

The Best Combination of Image Quality and Operability for Use in Pain management



Clinic Director Hiroaki Kimura

Q1 Please tell us about how you treat pain at your clinic?

In recent years, the fascia (A sheet of connective tissue covering or binding together body structures) has been gaining attention as a source of pain. While we administer nerve blocks at our clinic, we are now also providing a new treatment called ultrasound-guided fascia release. It is a technique where we inject and release physiological saline solution or extracellular fluid into the fascia. The fascia has mostly been ignored by Western medicine, but it is possible that abnormalities of the fascia can cause not only pain of the locomotive organs, but also clinical conditions of unknown etiology that come under other disciplines, such as internal medicine, gynecology, otolaryngology, and ophthalmology.

Q2 Tell us about why you introduced the OPESCOPE ACTENO. Was it because of its functionality and performance?

At the clinic, we perform ultrasound-guided fascia release, but there is a limit to how deep we can see with ultrasound. For example, it is hard to image the center of the sacroiliac joint, or the area around the lumbar nerve roots. We also need to be able to observe how injected solution diffuse between the fascia. So, we introduced fluoroscopy system. When I was working as a physician in a hospital, I sometimes had to do nerve root blocks under fluoroscopy guidance, and the system was very heavy, there were cables all over the C-arm, and the procedure took a long time. So, when we needed fluoroscopy system at the clinic, we looked for a cost-effective system with priority on image quality and ease of operation. After comparing various systems from Japan and overseas, Shimadzu ACTENO was the best, and we decided to install it.

Q3 How exactly do you find the system useful?

What stood out about it was the easy operability with no cables around the C-arm, and the fact that we could see the tip of the needle clearly. We are very pleased with the image quality. For example, when administering a sacroiliac joint block, we can place the needle tip in the sacroiliac joint slit quickly and accurately. The compact-sized system allows us to operate with ease, even in confined places. But when we administer nerve blocks under fluoroscopy guidance, even though the fluoroscopy time is short, we still feel that we need to be careful about X-ray exposure. The ACTENO has pulsed fluoroscopy modes and other excellent radiation exposure-reducing functions, and we look forward to seeing technology that can reduce exposure even more, while still retaining good image quality.



A Word from Dr. Kimura to Prospective Users

There are many patients who seek treatment for pain at clinics other than pain clinics and the importance of learning techniques such as fascia release becomes increasingly apparent. We can treat most types of pain that are seen in a general outpatient setting by using a combination of ultrasound and fluoroscopy systems. The ACTENO has good operability of the C-arm and good basic functionality for fluoroscopic image quality, and I think that it is the best, most cost-effective system for our needs.