

HEART HERO 2019: DR CHUICHI KAWAI

Emeritus Professor of Kyoto University

Past President of the World Heart Federation

Nominated by Japan Cardiovascular Association (JCVA)

"A positive outlook on life and a desire to try new things can make your heart healthier."

I was born in 1928 and I turned 91 years old this year. I am a doctor, a researcher, and an educator specializing in heart disease. I became adept at tennis when I was in elementary school approximately 80 years ago and won awards at numerous tournaments. In high school, however, I developed osteomyelitis of the tibia. Following surgery, I was told that my wondrous relationship with tennis had come to an end. Consequently, I wanted to become a doctor. My own experience prompted me to choose a profession of treating illness.

From 1974 to 1991, I served as the chief Professor of the Faculty of Medicine at Kyoto University, and from 1987 to 1988, as President of the World Heart Federation. Although more than 30 years have passed since then, it was essential for me to see patients as a physician during that time. Even now, at 91 years of age, I continue seeing patients. Because I provide advice to patients, I need to have updated knowledge, and so I actively attend cardiovascular conferences and meeting to raise questions. If doctors have concerns regarding their own health, they will have trouble listening to a patient's complaints from the patient's perspective and will be unable to make the right decisions. Actually, I do not know any secrets to health, but I believe that a positive outlook, more than anything else, has kept my heart and body healthy.

The Japanese population is rapidly aging, and in 2030, one-third of the population will be 65 years of age or older. Populations are aging elsewhere in the world as well. For preventing cardiovascular diseases such as myocardial infarction, the first step is establishing a healthy lifestyle.



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Even if a myocardial infarction occurs, a patient may be able to live a long, healthy life. Patients aged 80 and older who receive cardiac rehabilitation are living active lives. Of utmost importance is the personal desire to be healthy and contribute to society. My being chosen as a Heart Hero implies that a positive outlook is an aspect of cardiovascular health. To everyone around the world, I encourage you to take care of your bodies as you enter your golden years and be sure to have a positive outlook.



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