

News

2008 Beijing Symposium on a Hearing Screening Program for Neonates and Children: Perspectives on interdisciplinary and international collaboration

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On December 27, 2008, the Beijing Symposium on a Hearing Screening Program for Neonates and Children was held at Beijing Tongren Hospital in Beijing, China. The symposium was sponsored by the Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery Branch of the Chinese Medical Association and organized by the Beijing Otorhinolaryngology Academy, the Otorhinolaryngology Faculty of Capital Medical University, and Beijing Tongren Hospital of Capital Medical University.

More than 130 delegates from 34 medical institutions nationwide participated in the symposium. Dr. Demin Han, President of Beijing Tongren Hospital, and Dr. Xingkuan Bu, Leader of the Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery Branch of the Chinese Medical Association, delivered opening speeches. Presentations at the symposium were given by Dr. Kimitaka Kaga from Japan's National Institute of Sensory Organs, Dr. Wei Tang from the University of Tokyo, Dr. Daofeng Ni from Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Dr. Xingkuan Bu from the First Affiliated Hospital of Nanjing Medical University, Dr. Zhiwu Huang from the People's Hospital of

Wuhan University, Dr. Zhensheng Chen from China's Rehabilitation Research Center for Deaf Children, Dr. Xingqi Li from the Institute of Otolaryngology of the People's Liberation Army General Hospital, Dr. Yisheng Qi from the Beijing Institute of Otolaryngology, and Dr. Shusheng Gong from Beijing Tongren Hospital.

A hearing screening program for neonates and children is an effective way to provide early detection, diagnosis, and rehabilitation for hearing impairments. The program will also help with the development of appropriate speech, language, and cognitive abilities in hearing impaired children. Such a program has been suggested and implemented in developed regions like the US, Europe, and Japan since the 1990s and was implemented in China in 2002. In China, the incidence of a hearing impairment among infants is estimated to be 0.1-0.3%, indicating of an average of 20 million newborns each year 20-60 thousand will be born with a hearing impairment. Individuals with a hearing impairment account for the largest proportion of the disabled. The Beijing Symposium focused on implementation of a hearing screening program and early detection and interventions for



Figure 1. 2008 Beijing Symposium on a Hearing Screening Program for Neonates and Children.



Figure 2. Rehabilitation center affiliated with Beijing TongRen Hospital.

children with a hearing impairment in China. Experts presented the latest results in their respective fields and discussed research topics and future academic development. Topics covered included early hearing tests, methodologies of hearing screening programs, hearing and balance disorders in children, perspectives on infant audiology, and policy and planning aspects of hearing impairment management and rehabilitation.

Dr. Kaga has worked at the clinical forefront of hearing impairment detection and intervention for more than 30 years in Japan. This was his sixth visit to China. He described the hearing screening program in Japan and previous studies on hearing and balance disorders in children. Dr. Tang presented an explanation of study design, ethical issues, and contributions to clinical research and he affirmed the need for interdisciplinary and international collaboration in academic development. After the symposium, Dr. Kaga was accompanied by Dr. Tang and a reporter on a visit to a rehabilitation center affiliated with Beijing Tongren Hospital and Dr. Kaga consulted on the case of a seven-month-old infant with bilateral hearing impairment and his family.

At the end of the Symposium, Dr. Han emphasized the importance of hearing impairment management and audiological development. Implementation of a consistent hearing screening program for neonates and children involves various fields such as otorhinolaryngology, audiology, pediatrics, maternal and child care, and social medicine. The Symposium succeeded in broadening horizons with regard to effective detection, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of children with a hearing impairment in China and it highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary and international collaboration in these efforts. (Reported on Dec. 27, 2008)

Appendix

- Progress of researches on hearing and balance disorders in children. (*Kimitaka Kaga, National Institute of Sensory Organs, National Tokyo Medical center, Tokyo, Japan*)
- Study design and ethical issues for clinical and basic research. (*Wei Tang, The University of Tokyo Hospital, Tokyo, Japan*)
- Academic and policy issues on early detection of hearing impairments in infants. (*Daofeng Ni, Peking Union Medical College Hospital, Beijing, China*)
- Development of infant audiology in China. (*Xingkuan Bu, The first affiliated hospital of Nanjing Medical University, Nanjing, China*)
- Clinical practice of early detection and intervention programs for children with a hearing impairment. (*Zhiwu Huang, Renmin Hospital of Wuhan University, Wuhan, China*)
- National prevention and rehabilitation programs for hearing impairment (2007-2015). (*Zhensheng Chen, China Rehabilitation Research Centre for Deaf Children, Beijing, China*)
- Overview of 1st AANO (Asean Academy of Neurotology Otolaryngology and Audiology) Congress 2008. (*Shusheng Gong, Beijing Tongren Hospital, Medical Capital University, Beijing, China*)
- Perspectives of Hearing Screening Program in China. (*Yisheng Qi, Beijing Institute of Otolaryngology, Beijing, China*)
- Closing remarks. (*Xingqi Li, Institute of Otolaryngology, Chinese PLA General Hospital, China*)

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