

**FRIENDS IN JAPAN NEED HELP! This petition seeks insurance coverage of  
*Sclerotherapy and Embolization* treatments for patients suffering  
Hemangiomas and Vascular Malformation. PLEASE SIGN TO SUPPORT!**

Dear Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare

Hemangiomas and Vascular Malformations are the common terms for a rare congenital medical condition caused by abnormal formation of blood vessels. One type, "Infant Hemangioma" is a benign tumor that thankfully regresses naturally during the infant period. Unfortunately however, the other types do not regress naturally. In fact, quite the opposite. As the patient grows, the severity of the original symptoms increases exponentially, resulting in additional complications such as persistent sharp pain, ulcers, unexpected bleeding, abnormal growth of the affected limbs, internal and external dysfunction, as well as the obvious cosmetic issues, and so forth. It is a crushingly serious disease that heavily impacts the patient daily for the entirety of their lives. It's a burden no one should have to live with, but many are forced to with no choice.

About 10,000 people (one in 12,000-13,000) are estimated as patients in Japan. Because of the rarity, people don't have an established classification for this disease, so most patients are often forced to visit many hospitals, one after another until their condition has been accurately diagnosed and confirmed. However, even in the lucky case they can get an early diagnosis, the real problem is in getting treatment. The least invasive and most effective treatments known as "Sclerotherapy and Embolization" are not covered by medical insurance. Also, the facilities that can perform these treatments are severely limited.

"Sclerotherapy and Embolization" treatments embolize (obstruct) abnormal blood vessels with a solidifying agent that prevents blood flow to the affected regions, helping them to regress. In Japan, sclerotherapy has been performed and covered by insurance for esophageal varices, and varicose vein procedures. Some cases of Vascular Malformation have been performed with the same procedures and were covered in those cases by insurance because the treatments were observed as being useful. However, those cases are very limited and the present government regulations still prevent insurance from covering most cases of Vascular Malformation, so the patients are left to suffer without the required proper care. The unfortunate but stark reality is that patients often need multiple treatments. The result is that their mental, physical, and financial burdens become completely overwhelming and unrealistic for most patients and the families struggling to support them.

For doctors, there is risk as well. "Sclerotherapy and Embolization" is an established technique, but Vascular Malformation is not currently covered as one of its uses. Under Japanese law, that means that if a medical accident occurs, the doctors would be held liable for negligence. Also, medicines that are part of these treatments are not covered under Japanese Law. All of this poses an unfair risk and burden to doctors until it can simply be recognized under the law in order for patients to get covered treatment.

We would like to resolve this situation as soon as possible to ensure that all patients who are suffering this disease have coverage and access to these basic benefits under Japan's social security system. Therefore, we strongly request early approval of insurance coverage for "Sclerotherapy and Embolization" in all cases of Vascular Malformation.

(Continued on the next sheet)

**This petition seeks insurance coverage of *Sclerotherapy* and *Embolization* treatments for patients suffering Hemangiomas and Vascular Malformation.**

Signature

Name	Address	Country

- \*Please fill in your exact address and name (no omissions) with black pen or ball-point pen (no pencil).
- \*Please sign with handwriting.
- \*Minors can sign if they understand the contents and sign it of their own free will.
- \*No personal information submitted here will be used for any other purposes.
- \*Filling all the fields is not required. You can submit one signature per petition.

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