



**Ohasama-machi**  
**Coordinates for Ohasama-machi**  
N39° 27' 59.6"  
E141° 17' 8.6"



## ■ Locations of study

Ohasama-machi, Hanamaki-shi, Iwate Prefecture (In 2006, Ohasama-machi, Hienuki-gun was amalgamated with the city of Hanamaki)  
(Population: 6,286 as of September 30, 2009 (Statistical data of Hanamaki city))

## ■ Intended test subjects

Residents of the town of Ohasama

## ■ Scope of study

Height, weight, medical interview, home blood pressure, ambulatory blood pressure, search for genes associated with hypertension and organ damage, glucose tolerance test, blood insulin, head MRI, carotid echo, pulse wave velocity, dementia test, ADL, lifestyle surveys, etc.

## The “Ohasama Study” opened the way for the development of a global standard.

If blood pressure can be measured at home, it may lead to the prevention of strokes. In 1986, Omron responded to the idea of frontline doctors.

The study was born of one doctor’s sincere wish for the good health of local residents. In 1986, Dr. Kenichi Nagai, at the time the young medical director of the Iwate Prefectural Ohasama Hospital, was proactively striving to raise healthcare awareness in the community along with providing daily consultations and treatment. The area around Ohasama-machi in Hanamaki City, located in the middle of the Iwate Prefecture, was in those days a typical Tohoku rural community and was notorious for high incidence rates of hypertension and strokes, which were attributable to the cold climate, and diets high in salt and deficient in animal protein and fat. Dr. Nagai found this situation too critical to overlook and consulted with Dr. Yutaka Imai of Tohoku University, who was a classmate of his at medical school, seeking ways to raise health awareness in the community.

Dr. Imai suggested encouraging the residents of Ohasama-machi to monitor their own blood pressure at home by distributing a home blood pressure monitor to each household. Dr. Nagai agreed emphatically with Dr. Imai’s idea.

At that time taking a blood pressure measurement was considered a medical practice that could only be carried out by a doctor or nurse. There were questions such as “Will the residents really participate in the project?” and “Are there any blood-pressure monitors that enable accurate measurement at home?” It seemed that there would be a number of obstacles to overcome. However, led by Dr. Imai, who was already convinced that home blood pressure monitoring would be a significant tool for a new type of self-health management, the study project was launched.

One day, Omron received a phone call from Dr. Imai asking if Omron would be willing to provide home blood pressure monitors for his study. The idea fit perfectly with Omron’s

desire to “contribute to better health for individuals through the dissemination of home medical care”.

In response to Dr. Imai’s request, Omron donated 300 home blood pressure monitors that were both accurate and easy to use, features that Omron uncompromisingly pursues in all its products. There were comments about the monitors such as, “With this accuracy we can make an accurate comparison between office and home blood pressure recordings” and “I didn’t know how easy it is to measure blood pressure at home.” All three parties involved in the study - doctors, residents, and Omron – were positive about the project, and their shared goal of promoting good health led to the commencement of a large-scale study using home monitoring of blood pressure among the residents of Ohasama-machi.

That study would provide extensive evidence used in the development of the global standard for home blood pressure measurement, and became known worldwide as the “Ohasama Study”.



## The residents of Ohasama-machi have continued full participation in the study for over 25 years.

Out of a desire to remain in good health they monitor their blood pressure at home daily. During the course of the study a strong bond formed between the residents and the doctors, which has been the foundation of the Ohasama Study to this day.

What has led to this study continuing for over 25 years? Why do the residents of Ohasama-machi continue so positively take their blood pressure at home? The answer to these questions is in the “feedback”. The Ohasama Study is not a simple data collection activity; it has always been intended to return real results to the residents in the form of good health. Ohasama-machi could be described as the town where all households have home-use blood pressure monitors. Residents continue to visit the Ohasama County Medical Center with their blood pressure passbooks in hand every Monday. At the medical center, doctors including Dr. Imai and local public health nurses serve as advisors to the visiting residents. They give advice about lifestyle modification or possible treatment based on the data from the individual’s home blood pressure monitoring, and may prescribe medication such as antihypertensive drugs if necessary. Residents feel a sense of satisfaction that daily home blood pressure monitoring positively enhances health self-awareness, and because doctors follow up on each individual’s blood pressure records as a precaution. Strong motivation generated by mutual trust has been the basis for the continued support of the Ohasama Study.

A total of 11,381 residents have participated in the study.

The relationship between home blood pressure monitoring and prognoses has been tracked for 15 years on average, and for 25 years at the most. On average, about 1,000 residents participate in the project each year.

The Ohasama Study is the only home blood pressure study in the world that has been continued for such an extended period with such a large number of participants. In this regard, Dr. Imai says, “We’ve been able to continue this project because it is not intended for research only, but genuinely for health check-ups.” Proof of this assertion lies in the fact that countless diseases have been diagnosed and many lives were saved.



“I had an aneurysm detected.” “An adrenal gland disorder was detected.” “My hypertension has been alleviated by reducing salt intake.” Voices such as these please Omron and the doctors engaged in the Ohasama Study the most. Health awareness is now so high that each household has at least one home-use blood pressure monitor and some households even have two or three. Their desire to remain healthy as long as possible encourages continued participation in the study. Supported by their encouragement, the Ohasama Study continues to this today.

