



Australasian Wound & Tissue Repair Society

One Minute With An AWTRS Member

Helen Cao, intercalated MbChb PhD candidate, University of Otago

1. What are you working on now?

My PhD research is investigating the impact of subcutaneous adipose tissue in caesarean section wound healing. By comparing adipose characteristics between individuals, we hope to identify new biological targets to improve surgical wound healing.

2. What/who motivates and inspires you?

I am motivated by the desire to constantly learn, develop new skills, and evolve the way I think. Undertaking research has certainly provided that opportunity, and I am inspired by the numerous researchers that display innovation and passion with the work they do.

3. Where did you study previously?

All of my tertiary study to date has been completed at the University of Otago. I studied health science first year and completed two years of Medicine, before taking time a pause to try out research.



4. What made you choose science?

Growing up my favourite subjects were always those built upon reasoning and problem solving, so naturally I enjoyed the methodical approach to science. The most appealing aspect to me though is the power that science provides to implement positive changes around the world.

5. Who is/was your favourite science teacher and why?

It would have to be my A-level Physics teacher in high school, although ironically this was the subject I struggled most with. Despite hating quantum physics with a passion, Mr Bennet was so supportive and engaging that I managed to pull through with a loose understanding of those wild concepts.

6. What do you hope to achieve in the next 12 months?

I will be returning to my Medicine course in 2021 so I hope that I'll have an exciting year of clinical learning and growth in a (once again) completely new environment. Aside from that I hope to put out my first publications with some of my current research findings!

7. Favourite holiday destination?

My favourite place to visit is Asia, in particularly China where my family originate from. The combination of culture, food, entertainment and scenery never fail to amaze.

8. If I wasn't doing this (job), I'd be...

The idea of being an artist sounds fun, as I love producing things with my own hands and seeking aestheticism. I do love being able to work with people in both Medicine and research though!

9. How can people connect with you and your work?

Feel free to email me at caohe722@student.otago.ac.nz or reach out to me on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000517870858>.