Naoki Ito, Senior Researcher at the Department of Gerontology, Laboratory of Molecular Life Science, Received the “Best Young Investigator's Award” from the Japan Muscle Society

Naoki Ito, a senior researcher at the Department of Gerontology, Laboratory of Molecular Life Science of FBRI, was selected to receive the “Best Young Investigator's Award” at the 6th Annual Meeting of the Japan Muscle Society, held from December 18 to 20, 2020. This award is presented to young researchers in recognition of outstanding research presentations made at the meeting.

In a heavily aging society, frailty and sarcopenia* have become urgent social and economic issues. At present, many aspects of the causes of frailty and sarcopenia remain unclarified. In this award-winning research presentation, the group headed by Senior Researcher Naoki Ito clarified that the proteins "Slc12a8" and "Sirt1" in the lateral hypothalamic area particularly regulate skeletal muscle function, thereby uncovering a new molecular mechanism related to skeletal muscle function.

Their achievement will lead to the clarification of the causes of onset of frailty and sarcopenia, and is expected to make a substantial contribution to the future research and development of preventive methods and treatment drugs for frailty and sarcopenia.

【Reference】
* Frailty: a concept that represents the state of impaired resilience from stress due to the decrease in reserves caused by aging, positioned as the stage preceding the need for long-term care.
* Sarcopenia: the loss of muscle mass caused by aging, which is defined in combination with functional aspects such as decreased grip and gait speed; Sarcopenia is considered to be one of the important factors contributing to frailty, because when sarcopenia proceeds, falls and decreased physical activity tend to result, which in turn probably increase frailty and need for long-term care.

The Imai team in the Department of Gerontology
(Naoki Ito, Senior Researcher, second person from the top right)