サイエンスに残されたフロンティア、 それは「細胞」

Cells, the Final Frontier in Science

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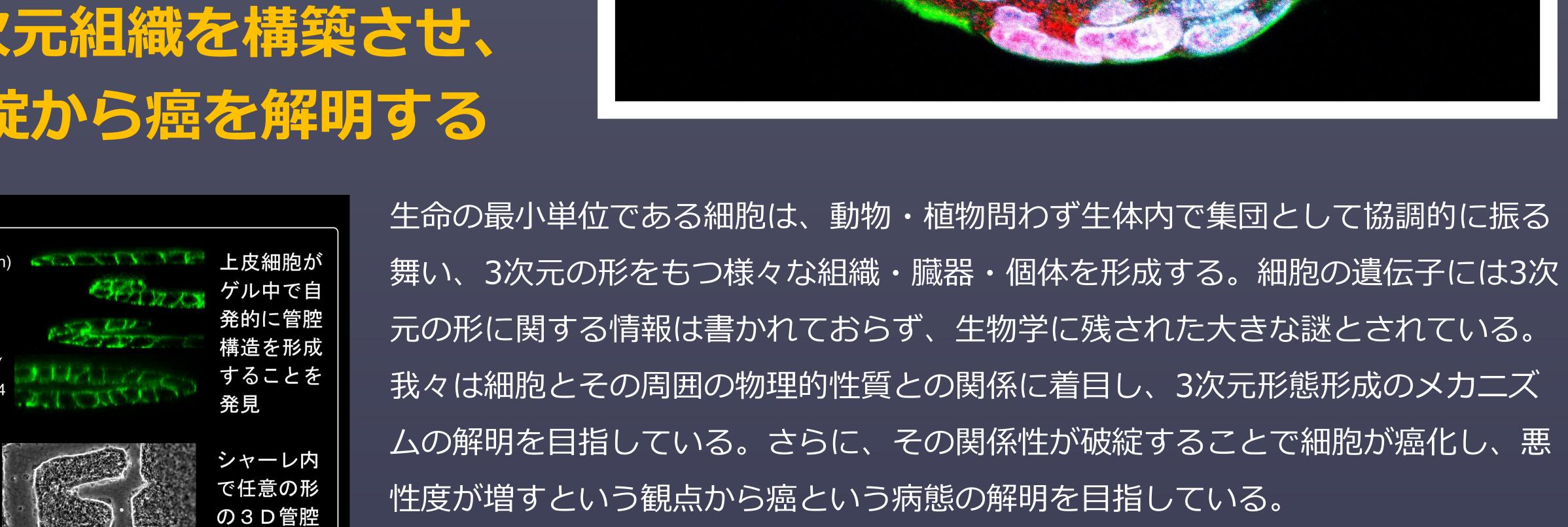
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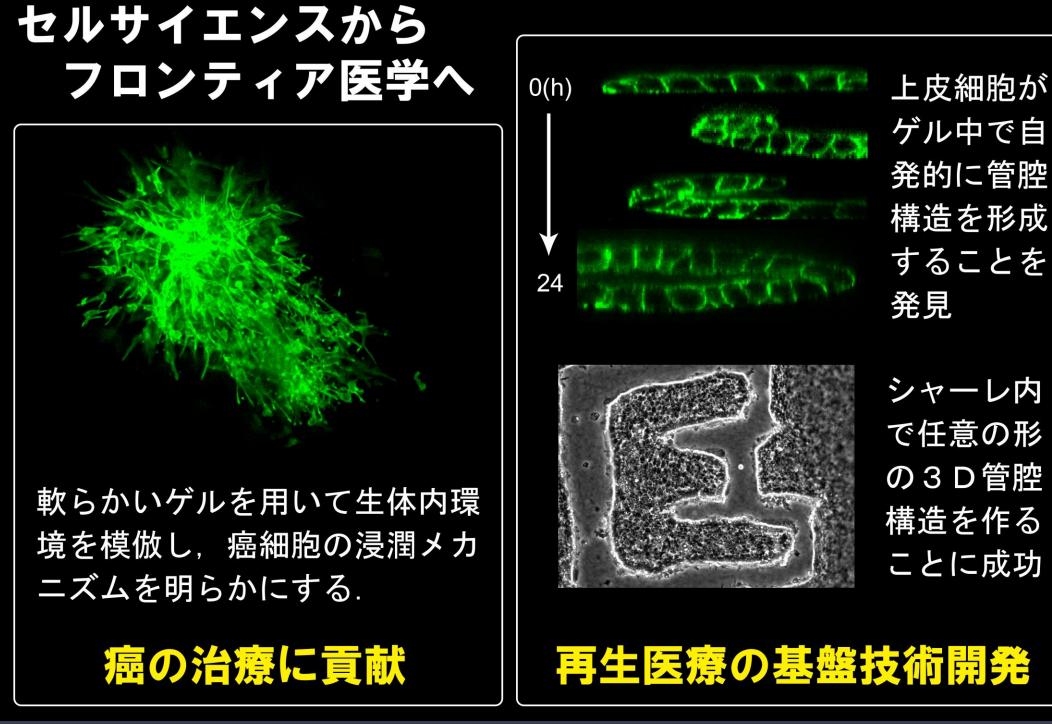
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細胞自らに3次元組織を構築させ、 さらにその破綻から癌を解明する



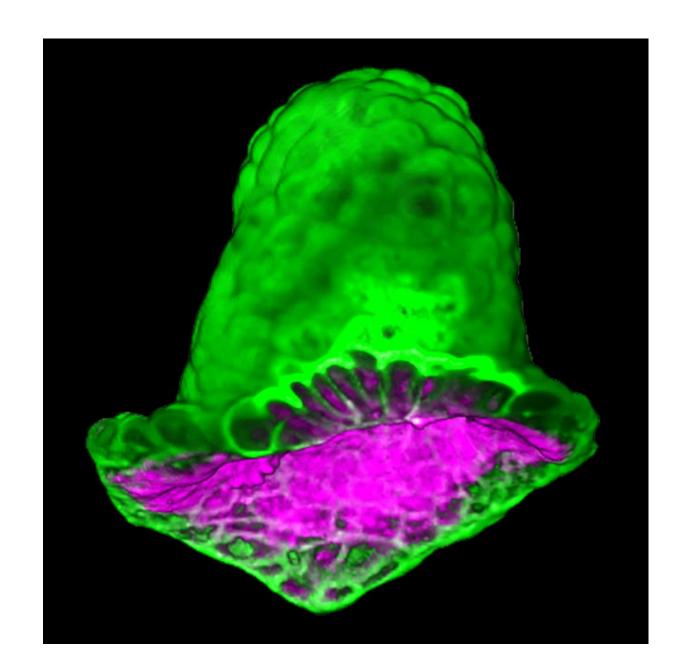
3D morphogenesis of animal and plant organs is the final mystery in biology because the blueprints to form 3D structure are not written in DNA. We try to understand the mechanisms that determine the 3D shape of a biological body from the viewpoint the physical properties of the extracellular environment. Moreover, we try to reveal the mechanisms of malignant alteration induced by failure of the relationship between normal cells and the extracellular environment.





軟らかい基質を用いた上皮細胞シートの 3次元形態形成

3D morphogenesis of epithelial sheets using viscoelastic substrates



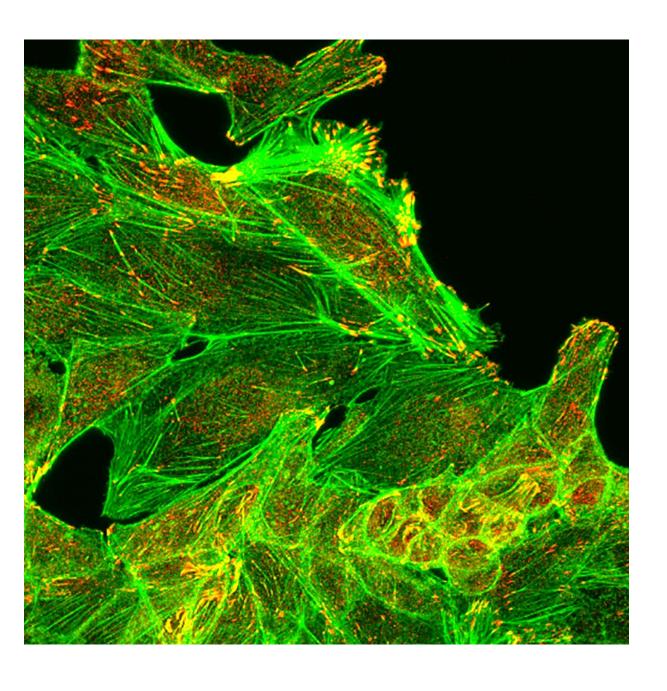
胚発生や組織形成において細胞の集団は3次 元の形態を形成する。この際、細胞を取り囲 む環境の物理的な性質(軟らかさ、空間的な 制限)が細胞集団の振る舞いに影響を与える。 我々は上皮細胞のシートを軟らかいコラーゲ ンゲル中で重層培養することで管腔構造を形 成させることに成功した。さらに、粘性に富 む培養基質を用いることで小腸の絨毛のよう な3次元形態を形成させることに成功した。

3D morphogenesis is an essential process for various phenomena such as embryonic development and tissue formation. Mechanical properties of the extracellular matrix are understood as factors that affect the cell behavior. We show that a collagen gel overlay induced epithelial sheet folding from the periphery that migrated inwardly, resulting in the formation of a 3D luminal structure in a collagen gel. We also cultured epithelial cells on a viscous substrate. The cells presented a tulip hat-like 3D morphology induced by the deformation of the peripheral substrate.



基質の硬さに誘引される癌細胞の悪性化 機構

Acceleration of metastatic growth of cancer cells induced by substrate stiffness



細胞を取り囲む基質が硬くなると癌細胞の悪 性度が増すことが近年明らかとなってきた。 例えば、乳癌の悪性腫瘍は健康な組織に比べ て硬く、しこりとして感知することができる。 我々は大腸癌の細胞を硬さの異なる基質で培 養することで、悪性度の指標となるMMP-7 というタンパク質の発現が上昇することを明 らかとし、さらに、YAP、EGFR、integrin、 MRLCを介するシグナル経路を同定した。

Recent studies have shown that stiff substrates trigger cancer progression such as metastasis and cell proliferation. For example, it is well known that malignant breast tissues are stiff compared with normal mammary tissues. We found that stiff substrates enhanced cancer progression by upregulating matrix metalloproteinase-7 expression, which is an indicator of poor prognosis, through the positive feedback loop of yes-associated protein, epidermal growth factor receptor, integrin and myosin regulatory light chain in colorectal cancer.

