

# Multimodal Omics Imaging of Human Brain Using MALDI HiPLEX-IHC

○Yumiko Toyama<sup>1</sup>, Takashi Nirasawa<sup>2</sup>, Shigeo Murayama<sup>3</sup>, Yuko Saito<sup>3</sup>, Maho Morishima<sup>3</sup>, Masaya Ikegawa<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Doshisha university, Kyoto, Japan

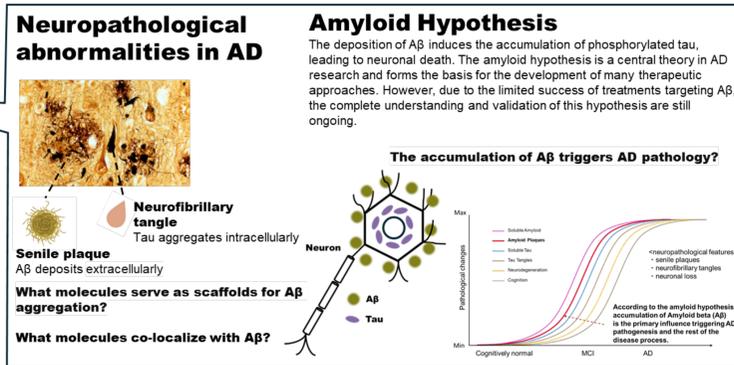
<sup>2</sup> Bruker Japan K.K., Yokohama, Japan;

<sup>3</sup> The Brain Bank for Aging Research, Tokyo Metropolitan Geriatric Hospital and Institute of Gerontology, Tokyo, Japan



## Introduction

MALDI HiPLEX-IHC enables layered imaging of unlabeled small molecules and target proteins. In this study, multimodal omics imaging was conducted on human brains from Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients and control subjects. The aim is to elucidate the localization of AD-related proteins using photo-cleavable probes and enhance the pathological understanding of AD brains by overlaying lipid imaging on these findings. AD is pathologically characterized by the aggregation of the Amyloid  $\beta$  ( $A\beta$ ) species. However, detailed information about the co-localization of specific small molecules with these protein aggregates remains unclear. Understanding these neurological and pathological changes is crucial for comprehending the progression of AD and is a significant focus of research aimed at developing new treatments.



## Methods

### Subjects

Human cortical specimens for MALDI-MSI and MALDI-IHC were obtained from those brains that were removed, processed and placed in  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  within 8h postmortem at the Brain Bank at Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology. For all brains registered, we obtained written informed consents for their use for medical research from patients or patient's family. Each brain specimen was taken from occipital cortex of 3 AD patients and 3 controls (Table1). Fresh frozen sections were used at a thickness of 10  $\mu\text{m}$ .

### MALDI-MSI for lipids

Matrix: DHA, TM-Sprayer

Spatial resolution : 40  $\mu\text{m}$

Mass range :  $m/z$  200-2000

Mode : Negative

Instrument : tims-TOF-fleX

case	gender	age at death	Braak Stage	CAA
1	M	88	V	1
2	M	78	VI	1
3	M	83	V	1
4	M	84	I	0
5	M	78	I	0
6	M	81	I	0

Table1 Clinical and pathological data of AD / CAA cases and control. The Braak stage and CAA score represent the degree of progression.

## MALDI-IHC with photocleavable mass-tags (PCMTs)

PCMTs:  $A\beta$ 42, pTau(pS404, Thr205),  $\alpha$ -synuclein, Amyloid precursor protein(APP), Nicastrin, NLF, MBP,GFAP

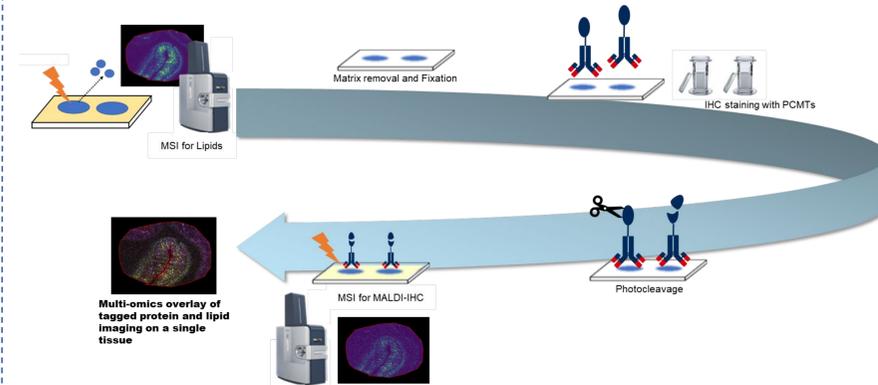
Matrix: CHCA, TM-Sprayer

Spatial resolution: 40  $\mu\text{m}$

Mass range:  $m/z$  500-2000

Mode: Positive

Instrument: tims-TOF-fleX



## Results and Discussions

### MALDI-IHC for AD-related proteins

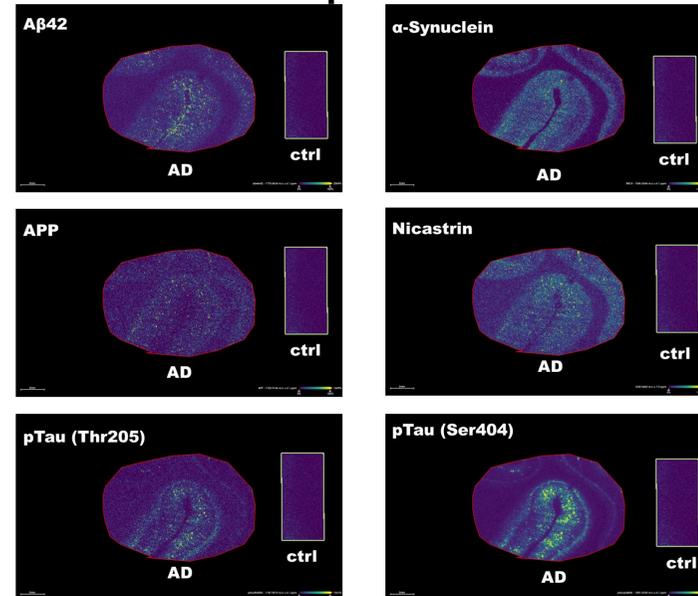


Figure. 1 Single peak imaging of tagged proteins  $A\beta$ 42  $m/z$  1770.88,  $\alpha$ -synuclein  $m/z$  1045.57, APP  $m/z$  1722.92, Nicastrin  $m/z$  1039.56, pTau (Thr205)  $m/z$  1747.92, pTau(Ser404)  $m/z$  1201.69, scale bars = 2 mm

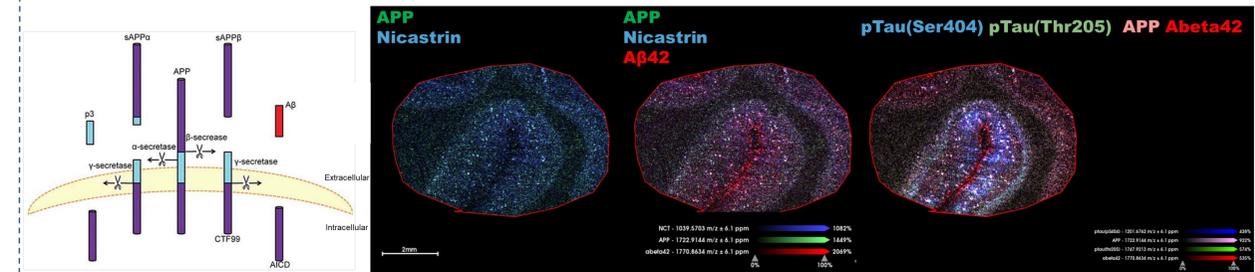


Figure.2 Multiplex staining imaging of tagged proteins

APP is sequentially cleaved by  $\beta$ -secretase and  $\gamma$ -secretase, resulting in the production of  $A\beta$ . Nicastrin is a component of the  $\gamma$ -secretase and serves as its active site. In the AD brain, APP and nicastrin exhibited the same localization pattern. On the other hand,  $A\beta$ 42 exhibited a specific deposition pattern along meningeal blood vessels and the brain surface. Different phosphorylation sites of tau molecules were overlaid with APP and  $A\beta$ 42. Tau phosphorylated at the 205 tyrosine and 404 serine residues exhibited a distribution along the structure of the cerebral cortex, demonstrating a similar localization pattern.

### The combination of targeted protein imaging and non-targeted lipid imaging

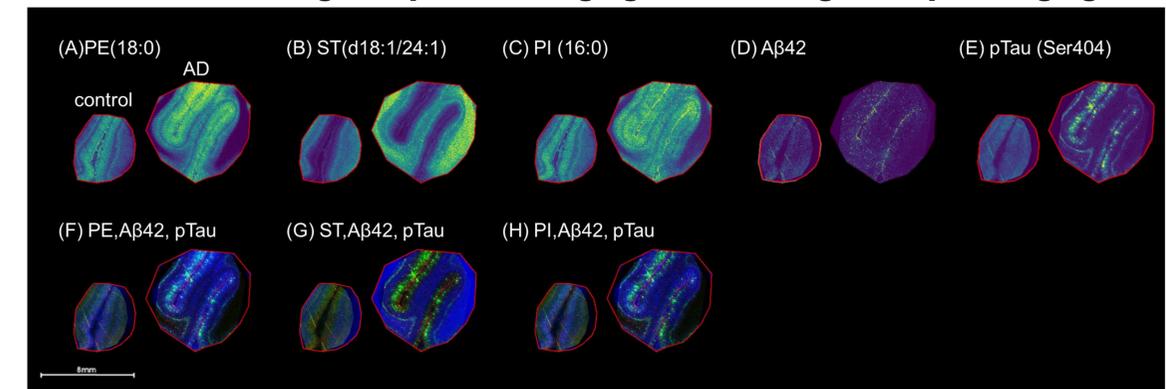


Figure.3 Overlay tagged proteins imaging and lipids imaging

Upper: Single peak imaging of lipids and tagged proteins, Lower: Merged imaging (Red:  $A\beta$ 42, Green: ptau, Blue: Lipid), scale bar = 8 mm

(A) PE(18:0)  $m/z$  480.3101, (B) ST (d18:1/24:1)  $m/z$  888.6257, (C) PI(16:0)  $m/z$  571.2898, (D)  $A\beta$ 42  $m/z$  1770.88, (E) pTau (Ser404)  $m/z$  1201.69

(F) Blue: PE(18:0), Red:  $A\beta$ 42, Green: ptau (G) Blue: ST(d18:1/24:1), Red:  $A\beta$ 42, Green: ptau (H) Blue: PI(16:0), Red:  $A\beta$ 42, Green: ptau

PE and PI demonstrated distribution patterns in the gray matter, complemented by ST which showed distribution in the white matter. PE, PI, and ST species have been reported to fluctuate in the brains of AD patients and are known to be involved in the  $A\beta$  production pathway.

## Summary

Performing multi-omics imaging with MALDI-IHC has the potential to reveal pathologically specific interactions and correlations among different molecular classes. This study successfully visualized the localization of AD-related proteins in the brain, which were difficult to detect with previous protein-targeted MALDI-MSI and classic IHC staining.

$A\beta$  species exhibit differences in aggregation and toxicity due to variations in structure and sequence. Microdomains located in specific regions of the cell membrane are deeply associated with AD pathology. As a next step, visualizing the co-localization of different  $A\beta$  molecular species in the AD brain in addition to current strategy.