

Understanding muscle stem cell regenerative decline with aging

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Skeletal muscle has a remarkable capacity to regenerate by virtue of its resident Pax7-expressing stem cells (satellite cells), which are normally quiescent in the adult. Upon injury, quiescent satellite cells activate and proliferate, to subsequently differentiate and form new myofibers or self-renew to restore the quiescent satellite cell pool. Through a combination of global gene expression/bioinformatics and molecular/cellular assays, we found that resting satellite cells have basal autophagy activity, which is required to maintain the quiescent state. We will discuss the consequences of the autophagy failure in the regenerative potential of muscle stem cells, particularly in the context of aging.