

桂皮醛对 miRNA-146a 干扰的骨关节炎滑膜炎性反应影响的实验研究

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摘要 目的:研究 miRNA-146a 基因及桂皮醛对 miRNA-146a 干扰的滑膜成纤维细胞释放 TLR4、NO、MMP-13 的影响,探寻其在 OA 滑膜炎性反应分子学机制中的作用。方法:采用脂质体转染法将 miR-146a 基因模拟及抑制性质粒载体对经 LPS 诱导后的 OA 滑膜炎性反应效应细胞滑膜成纤维细胞进行基因导入,并用桂皮醛对干扰后的细胞进行干预,检测不同组间 TLR4、NO 及 MMP-13 表达的差异。结果:miRNA-146a 相关质粒转染后的 TLR4、NO、MMP-13 浓度的变化趋势大致相同:与对照组比较,三者的 inhibitor 组均升高,mimics 组则均呈下降趋势($P < 0.05$)。桂皮醛单独作用于 miRNA-146a 干扰后的细胞时,与对照组比较,TLR4、NO、MMP-13 浓度均有明显下降($P < 0.05$),而当 mimics 和 CA 联合干预时,三者释放量显著下降($P < 0.05$)。结论:miRNA-146a 及桂皮醛均对骨关节炎滑膜炎性反应产生影响,当 mimics 和桂皮醛联合作用时,抑制炎症反应效果最好。为进一步阐明骨关节炎分子机制和药物靶点的识别与开发提供实验依据。

关键词 骨关节炎;microRNA-146a;toll 样受体;滑膜炎性反应

Experimental Study on Effects of Cinnamic Aldehyde on Synovial Inflammation in Osteoarthritic Based on the MicroRNA-146a Interference

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Abstract Objective: To investigate the influence of miRNA-146a gene disturbances and cinnamic aldehyde (CA) on TLR4, NO, and MMP-13, which was released by synovioblast, and to explore their roles in the molecular mechanism of synovial inflammation in osteoarthritis (OA). **Methods:** Plasmids of miR-146a gene mimics and inhibitors were loaded into LPS-induced FLS using lipofection transfection. Then the interferential FLS were treated with CA, and the release amount of TLR4, NO and MMP-13 were detected. **Results:** After the miRNA-146a related plasmid transfection, the variation tendency of the concentrations of TLR4, NO and MMP-13 were almost the same. Compared with control group, the inhibitor group was elevated, and mimics group was declined ($P < 0.05$). Compared with the control group, when the interferential FLS was treated with CA alone, TLR4, its release of TLR4, NO and MMP-13 were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$), whereas the mimics and CA coordinated intervention, the release was significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** Both of the miR-146a and CA have effects on synovial inflammation in OA, especially when mimics and CA were combined, the inhibition of inflammation was best. It could provide an experimental basis to clarify molecular mechanism, identify and develop novel drug targets of OA.

Key Words Osteoarthritis; MicroRNA-146a; Cinnamic aldehyde; Toll-like receptors; Synovial inflammation

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骨关节炎 (Osteoarthritis, OA) 普遍被认为是一种以软骨损伤为主,伴骨赘生成的多发性退行性疾病,而一些较新的参数表明,OA 还是一种由固有免疫诱发,以滑膜炎性反应为主要病理变化的受微小 RNA (microRNA, miRNA, miR) 异常影响的多因素复

杂疾病^[1-5]。miRNA 是一类能通过转录后水平介导基因沉默来调控目的基因的表达,广泛参与各种生物进程,在维持人体功能的细胞基因网络中起着至关重要作用的“调节器”^[6-7]。近年来,随着对 miRNA 认识的逐步深入,一些它们在 OA 滑膜炎性

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反应等自身免疫性疾病中作为重要的调节因子参与疾病的直接或间接的证据逐渐被发现,科研人员将研究焦点越来越多的放在 miRNA 与固有免疫中一类重要的模式识别受体 (Pattern Recognition Receptor, PRRs)——TLRs (Toll-like Receptors) 相互作用及机制的探索上^[8-14]。

本研究采用脂质体转染法将固有免疫反应中的重要调节因子 miR-146a 基因模拟及抑制性质粒载体对经 LPS 诱导后的 OA 滑膜炎性反应效应细胞滑膜成纤维细胞 (Fibroblast-like Synoviocytes, FLS) 进行基因导入,并用具有抗炎、镇痛等作用的新兴中药提取物桂皮醛 (Cinnamic Aldehyde, CA) 对干扰后的细胞进行干预,通过对不同组间 TLR4、NO 及 MMP-13 的表达差异进行检测,研究桂皮醛对 miR-146a 干扰的 OA 滑膜炎性反应的影响,旨在对 OA 的分子学机制有更明晰的了解,以期对药物靶点的识别和开发提供新思路。

1 材料与方法

1.1 材料

1.1.1 组织采集 无菌滑膜组织取自于 2016 年 1 月—3 月北京中医药大学第三附属医院行膝关节置换术的原发性膝 OA 患者 (男、女各 2 例,年龄 55 ~ 75 岁),样例均符合美国风湿病学会制订的 OA 诊断标准。

1.1.2 试剂 桂皮醛 (HPLC $\geq 98\%$),源叶生物, LOT: H02M6Q1; Lipopolysaccharides from *Escherichia coli*, Sigma, LOT: 084M4107V; Collagenase Type II, Gibco, LOT: 1430519; 0.25% Trypsin-EDTA, Gibco, LOT: 1737903; DMEM/F12 (1:1) 培养基, Gibco, LOT: 1737884; FBS, Gibco, LOT: 1036489; Dulbecco's Phosphate Buffered Saline, Gibco, LOT: 8115155; Lipofectamine2000, invitrogen, LOT: 1612516; has-miR-146a mimics/inhibitor/N. C, 吉玛基因; TLR4 (Human) ELISA Kit, Abnova, LOT: 5C106L; MMP-13 (Human) ELISA Kit, Abcam, Lot: GR188683-1。

1.2 方法

1.2.1 滑膜成纤维细胞的体外分离和培养 术后 2 h 内将所取样本在盛有 Dulbecco's Phosphate Buffered Saline 的无菌培养皿中漂洗 3 次,手术剪修整留用滑膜层,再次漂洗后将组织剪成糊状,加入组织量 20 倍体积的 Collagenase Type II, 37 °C、5% CO₂ 的饱和湿度培养箱中消化培养 1.5 ~ 2 h, 100 目不锈钢筛网过滤,以 1 500 r/min 离心 10 min 后,收集细胞悬液接种到培养瓶中,当细胞生长至约瓶底面积

的 80% 时,以 1: (2 ~ 3) 传代比例进行传代。取对数生长期的细胞 (3 ~ 5 代) 用于实验。

1.2.2 细胞转染及药物干预 将对数生长期的 FLS 制备成细胞悬液以 5×10^5 个/孔的细胞密度接种于 6 孔细胞培养板, 37 °C、5% CO₂ 的饱和湿度培养箱中过夜。1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ Lipopolysaccharides from *Escherichia coli* (LPS) 诱导 24 h 后进行细胞转染, 分组如下: 1) inhibitor 组: Lipofectamine2000 + miR-146a inhibitor; 2) mimics 组: Lipofectamine2000 + miR-146a mimics; 3) inhibitor N. C 组: Lipofectamine2000 + miR-146a inhibitor N. C; 4) N. C 组: Lipofectamine2000 + N. C; 5) lipo2000 组: Lipofectamine2000; 6) 对照组; 7) 空白组: 细胞培养液 (未经 LPS 诱导)。相同条件的细胞培养箱孵育 6 h 进行转染反应, 换含血清的培养基后, 继续孵育 48 h 收集各孔内上清液进行检测。上述 miR-146a 干扰后的细胞加入受试液: 1) inhibitor + CA 组: 上述 inhibitor 组 + LPS (1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$) + CA (10 $\mu\text{g/mL}$); 2) mimics + CA 组: 上述 mimics 组 + LPS (1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$) + CA (10 $\mu\text{g/mL}$); 3) CA 组: LPS (1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$) + CA (10 $\mu\text{g/mL}$); 4) 对照组: LPS (1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$); 5) 空白组: 细胞培养液。相同条件再孵育 48 h 后, 收集各孔内上清液进行检测。

1.2.3 相关检测 用 Griess 法对 NO 的释放量测定: 用双蒸馏水溶解并稀释亚硝酸钠溶液, 以 100 $\mu\text{mol/L}$ 为起始浓度 2 倍稀释, 用于标准梯度曲线的绘制。A 工作液 (1% 的对氨基苯磺酸溶液) 和 B 工作液 (0.1% 的 N-(1-萘基) 乙二胺二盐酸盐溶液) 各 50 μL /孔, 加入标准贮备液或待测样品室温静置 30 min, 酶标仪 540 nm 处测得各孔吸光值。用 ELISA Kit 对 TLR4 及 MMP-13 的含量进行测定 (按试剂盒说明书操作)。

1.3 统计学方法 本实验每组实验均做复孔 (个数 ≥ 3), 检测所得所有数据资料均以均数 $\pm$ 标准差 ($\bar{x} \pm s$) 表示, 以统计软件 SPSS 17.0 进行统计学分析, 组间比较采用单因素方差分析 (one-way ANOVA), 以 $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 miR-146a 表达水平对 TLR4、NO 和 MMP-13 释放量的影响 经过 miR-146a 干扰后的细胞表现出 TLR 及通路下游炎性递质的差异性释放: 1) 首先, 对照组炎性递质的释放量显著高于空白组, 证明 LPS 诱导炎性反应成功; 2) 巧合的是, TLR4、NO、MMP-13 在 miR-146a 干扰各组的变化趋势大致相同; 3) 与对

照组比较,三者的 inhibitor 组均升高,mimics 组则均呈下降趋势($P < 0.05$);4)另外作为对照参数的3组(inhibitor N. C 组、N. C 组和 lipo2 000 组)与对照组数值均较接近,差异基本无统计学意义($P > 0.05$),可认为几组之间不存在差别,说明用于本实验的质粒(miR-146a inhibitor、miR-146a mimics)及转染剂(Lipofectamine2 000)均起效并且对细胞无明显细胞毒性等影响。见表1。

表1 miR-146a 表达水平对 TLR4、NO 和 MMP-13 释放量的影响

指标 组别	TLR4 (ng/mL)	NO ($\mu\text{mol/L}$)	MMP-13 (pg/mL)
Inhibitor	31.85 $\pm$ 0.31	16.96 $\pm$ 0.24	243.75 $\pm$ 5.90
Mimics	24.02 $\pm$ 0.37	11.33 $\pm$ 0.36	167.81 $\pm$ 2.65
Inhibitor N. C	28.75 $\pm$ 0.27	14.58 $\pm$ 0.15	230.94 $\pm$ 4.76
N. C	29.02 $\pm$ 0.23	14.36 $\pm$ 0.50	237.81 $\pm$ 5.74
Lipo 2000	28.27 $\pm$ 0.21	14.55 $\pm$ 0.33	236.06 $\pm$ 2.65
对照组	29.07 $\pm$ 0.13	14.76 $\pm$ 0.17	235.32 $\pm$ 4.41
空白组	15.58 $\pm$ 0.09	10.74 $\pm$ 0.19	91.88 $\pm$ 1.86

3.2 CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS TLR4 浓度的影响

CA 单独作用于 FLS 后,与对照组比较,TLR4 浓度明显下降($P < 0.05$),说明 CA 能抑制 TLR4 的释放;但是,与空白组比较可见,TLR4 浓度仍较高,无法降至未做诱导的细胞水平。当 inhibitor 和 CA 联合干预时,TLR4 浓度与对照组比较略微下降;而当 mimics 和 CA 联合干预时,TLR4 浓度下降程度最高。见图1。

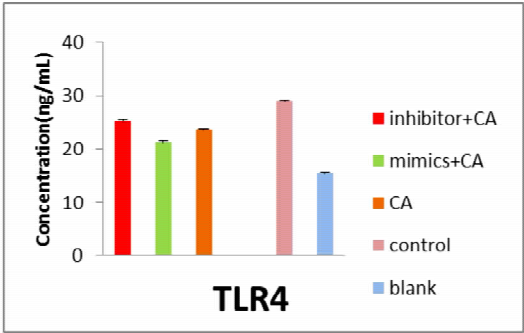


图1 CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS TLR4 浓度的影响

2.3 CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS NO、MMP-13 释放量的影响

CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS NO、MMP-13 释放量的影响趋势大致相同:首先,与 TLR4 相似地,和对照组比较,CA 单独作用时的 FLS NO、MMP-13 释放量均有明显下降($P < 0.05$),说明 CA 对 NO、MMP-13 释放有显著的抑制作用,但与空白组比较可见,仍无法降至未做诱导的细胞水平。当 inhibitor 和 CA 联合干预时,NO、MMP-13 释放量仍维持在相对较高的水平;而当 mimics 和 CA 联合干预时,

NO、MMP-13 释放量出现极其显著的下降($P < 0.05$)。结果见图2、3。

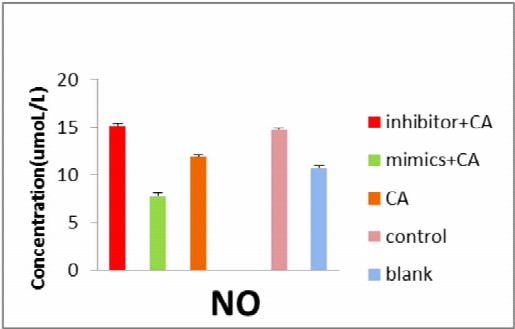


图2 CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS NO 浓度的影响

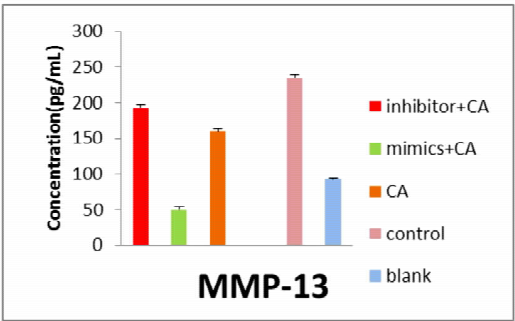


图3 CA 对 miR-146a 干扰的 FLS MMP-13 浓度的影响

3 讨论

OA 是一种在长期机械作用和炎症反应等压力下由一系列复杂机制驱动的涉及关节软骨(Articular Cartilage, AC)、滑膜等多组织损伤导致体内稳态失衡的慢性临床综合征^[16-18]。相对于其他疾病,OA 以其高患病率、进展的致残率和疼痛为特点成为最常见的关节疾病^[19-20],影响着世界各地超过 20% 的人群,预计到 2020 年,OA 的患病率可能会飙升至 57%,是最亟待解决的医疗和社会问题^[21-22]。但目前临床上普遍应用的治疗 OA 的方法对缓解疼痛、修复相关组织损伤和改善关节功能的治疗目标尚未能达到满意的疗效。保守治疗包括物理治疗配合常用的药物如镇痛剂、非甾体类抗炎药(Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs, NSAIDs)、选择性的环加氧酶-2(Cyclo-oxygenase-2, COX-2)抑制剂,类固醇抗炎药和糖皮质激素注射等。然而,它们只能暂时的对 OA 的某些临床症状起到有限的缓解,却不能对损伤的 AC 等组织行使修复与保护等功能。此外,长期的大剂量的使用(The Epidemiology, Etiology, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Osteoarthritis of the Knee)这些药物还存在着一些潜在的安全隐患,如增加胃肠道反应、肝脏损伤、心血管疾病等不良反应发生的风险^[23-26]。关节置换手术是对保守治疗疗效欠佳的重度 OA 患者的最终选择也是公认有效的治疗方法。

但不易被患者普遍接受,而且手术相关的一些严重的并发症如感染、深静脉血栓形成和后续使用中的假体松脱也是应该被考虑到的问题^[27-29]。因此,开发一种新的药物既能对终止或逆转 OA 进程有足够的治疗效果,又能尽可能地避免几乎可以忽略不计不良反应是值得关注的要点问题。最近,研究人员发现,一些从天然产物分离出的小分子或生物活性成分可通过各种途径有效的减轻疼痛、缓解 OA 炎症反应。桂皮醛是从樟科植物桂皮精油中分离出的主要生物活性化合物,也是具有发汗解肌、温经通脉功能的中药桂枝的主要有效成分。研究表明,CA 及其衍生物显示出良好的免疫调节性能,它能通过对相关炎症反应通路的调节减少 LPS 诱导的巨噬细胞促炎性递质表达,抑制 NF- κ B 的激活和相关下游炎症细胞因子的分泌^[30];还能减少 IL-1 β 诱导的 COX-2 的激活和 PGE2 的产生^[31];在 TNF- α 处理的内皮细胞中可抑制单核细胞与内皮细胞的黏附^[32]。而且细胞毒性小,并有一定的组织器官保护作用,是一种新型的抗炎剂^[33]。

我们逐渐认识到,加深对 OA 发生发展的分子机制的理解,有助于帮助发现导致 OA 的关键途径和分子,进一步推动新疗法的发展。越来越多的研究发现,滑膜细胞的固有免疫应答反应是 OA 进程中的关键环节^[34-35]。健全的固有免疫系统是对感染的即时防御及对病原体的持久抵抗至关重要的屏障。然而,如果它被不适当的激活和终止,就会危害宿主健康,导致一系列急性和慢性炎症反应紊乱的病理状态的临床表现^[36]。因此,众多复杂的分子机制从多个层次共同调节以保持炎症反应受到抑制,这些“调节器”种类众多,从可溶性受体到诱导的细胞内蛋白质^[37-40]。Toll 样受体 (TLRs) 是固有免疫系统中一类分子量在 90-150kDa 之间的 PRRs,在启动和调控固有免疫系统中扮演着重要的角色^[41-42]。这种跨膜糖蛋白受体大量表达于 OA 滑膜细胞上^[43-44],其中,于 1997 年由 Medzhitov. R 等发现的第一个哺乳动物 TLR——TLR4 在诱导炎症反应及相关基因的表达和修复受损关节组织上有着不可忽视的作用^[45-46]。越来越多的研究试图通过对 TLRs 的调控进而干预由其参与激活的炎症反应通路的下游炎症递质的释放,最终达到缓解 OA 炎症反应的目的。

miRNA 是一种能几乎在各个水平对 TLRs 及其介导的相关通路进行调控,广泛参与到 OA 的生理病理学,维持 AC/滑膜等组织各项功能的负向调机

器^[47-49]。这类长度约为 20 ~ 25 个核苷酸 (Nucleotide, nt) 的内源性非编码单链小分子 RNA 分子能识别靶 mRNA 上的 3' 非翻译区 (Untranslated Regions, UTR) 并对其部分互补的位点进行结合绑定,通过对靶 mRNA 降解或阻碍翻译,调节靶基因的蛋白质生成^[50-51]。近年来,人们逐渐发现细胞在免疫系统的发育和功能上尤其受到 miRNA 的调控^[52-54]。作为 OA 进程中强劲的转录后调节器,从细胞命运决定到信号活动的参与,miRNA 构成了一个新的固有免疫应答的调节层^[55-57]。尤其是第一个被发现可调节免疫系统的 miRNA——miR-146,其中位于其 5 号染色体上的家族成员之一 miR-146a 是一种 NF- κ B 依赖型基因,在 TLRs 介导的 NF- κ B 炎症反应通路上直接调节 2 个关键的下游适配器分子——肿瘤坏死因子相关受体相关因子 6 (TNF Receptor-associated Factor, TRAF6) 和白介素 1 受体相关激酶 (interleukin 1 receptor associated kinase, IRAK1) 的蛋白水平,负反馈循环控制 TLRs 和细胞因子促炎性信号作用^[58-61]。作为一种新兴的可独立影响 OA 发生发展的基因,其表达的抑制可能是促发 OA 的重要影响因素,该基因也可作为诊断 OA 的生物学标志^[62-63]。

越来越多的证据表明对 miRNA 的管制可以有效调控 OA,研究者们试图通过干扰某些 miRNA 在细胞中的表达和活动以明确它们在疾病进程中的具体作用,一种将外源性的 miRNA 的模拟剂 (Mimics) 和抑制剂 (Inhibitors) 利用转染试剂人工的参入宿主细胞,使其获得新的遗传标志的方法应运而生。Lipofetamin2 000 是一种当前应用广泛且毒性较低的高效阳离子脂质体转染试剂,可瞬时的将人工合成的外源性基因序列导入细胞内,影响相关基因的表达。

本研究利用 Lipofetamin2 000 转染法将促进和抑制性 miR-146a 质粒转染入 FLS,选择一种代表性的 TLRs TLR4 及其介导的信号通路下游释放的典型炎症递质 NO 和 OA 进程中诱发胶原蛋白降解和破坏的主要物质 MMP-13,几种重要因子联合检测,有助于更全面、高效的证实它们在 OA 滑膜炎症反应中的变化趋势和交互作用,以推测 OA 的进展,提供合理的病情评估以指导临床治疗用药。结果显示,miR-146a inhibitor 可上调 FLS 释放 TLR4、NO、MMP-13 水平;miR-146a mimics 则可使三者浓度均减低,且 miR-146a 干扰后三者的变化趋势相似。以上结果表明,miR-146a 基因在 FLS 的目标干扰(上调或下降)可以对 TLRs 及其信号通路下游的炎症递质

和金属蛋白酶进行调节,进一步影响 OA 滑膜炎性反应。

现有研究对 miR-146a 在 OA 中大致的调节机制及其所发挥的调节作用已有一定的了解,但它们之间进一步的调控机制和联合药物使用对 OA 影响的研究仍处于初期阶段。所以在上述研究的基础上,我们基于已有数据的提示发现,miR-146a 作为一个 OA 滑膜炎性反应炎症反应的分子抑制剂扮演着重要角色。随后,我们在 miR-146a 表达的消融导致在一些免疫相关的改变的基础上,选取一种新型的具有抗炎活性及潜在保护作用的生物活性化合物 CA 结合 miRNA 干扰技术来共同治疗 OA 滑膜炎性反应。结果显示,CA 本身就有抑制 TLR4、NO、MMP-13 表达的效果,当 inhibitor 和 CA 联合干预时,CA 可抵消部分 miR-146a 缺失所带来的炎症反应问题;而当 mimics 和 CA 联合干预时,就显示出了对 OA 滑膜炎性反应优势的抑制作用,考虑它们很可能能协同通过 TLRs 调控其信号通路上的其他组件共同抑制滑膜炎性反应。该研究结果在明确 miR-146a 干扰作用的同时,对其联合中药有效成分的抗炎作用进行评估,从基因层面为进一步了解 OA 滑膜炎性反应机制、选择合理的药物进行靶向治疗以控制病情进展及组织修复提供了新的方案。

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