

RAAS与肝纤维化的研究进展

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摘要 肝纤维化是多种慢性肝病进展至肝硬化的中间过程, 其特征是以胶原蛋白为主的细胞外基质(extracellular matrix, ECM)的合成与降解失衡, 导致大量ECM沉积。在肝纤维化发生、发展过程中, 常伴有肾素-血管紧张素-醛固酮系统(renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system, RAAS)的激活, 血管紧张素转换酶-血管紧张素II-血管紧张素II受体1(angiotensin-converting enzyme-angiotensin II-angiotensin II type 1 receptor, ACE-AngII-AT1R)轴和血管紧张素转换酶2-血管紧张素(1-7)-Mas受体[angiotensin-converting enzyme 2-angiotensin (1-7)-Mas, ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas]轴是调节肝纤维化的两大重要因素。

关键词 肝纤维化; 肾素-血管紧张素-醛固酮系统; 细胞外基质

Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System and Liver Fibrosis Research Progress

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Abstract Liver fibrosis is the transition of many chronic liver diseases to liver cirrhosis, which is characterized by the imbalance of extracellular matrix (ECM) synthesis and degradation, leading to a large amount of ECM deposition. During the development of liver fibrosis, it's often accompanied by the activation of renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS). The angiotensin-converting enzyme-angiotensin II-angiotensin II type 1 receptor (ACE-AngII-AT1R) and angiotensin-converting enzyme 2-angiotensin (1-7)-Mas [ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas] of RAAS are two most important regulating factors for the process of liver fibrosis.

Keywords liver fibrosis; RAAS; ECM

肝星状细胞(hepatic stellate cell, HSC)是肝纤维化时过量细胞外基质(extracellular matrix, ECM)的主要来源, 激活的HSC大量增殖, 并分泌过多的ECM沉积于肝脏是肝纤维化形成的关键。正常肝脏中可以检测到血管紧张素II(angiotensin II, AngII)、血管紧张素II受体1(angiotensin II type 1 receptor, AT1R)、血管紧张素转换酶(angiotensin-converting

enzyme, ACE)、血管紧张素(1-7)[angiotensin (1-7), Ang(1-7)]、血管紧张素转换酶2(ACE2)等肾素-血管紧张素-醛固酮系统(renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system, RAAS)成分; 而且当肝脏受到损伤时, AngII、AT1R、ACE、Ang(1-7)、ACE2的含量发生明显改变。ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴是RAAS发挥作用的主要途径。RAAS激活后产生的

收稿日期: 2016-09-11 接受日期: 2016-11-14

国家自然科学基金(批准号: 81460126)、江西省自然科学基金(批准号: 20151BAB205009)和江西省科技支撑计划资助项目(批准号: 20151BBG70246)资助的课题

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Received: September 11, 2016 Accepted: November 14, 2016

This work was supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Grant No.81460126), Natural Science Foundation of Jiangxi Province (Grant No.20151BAB205009) and Science and Technology Support Plan of Jiangxi Province (Grant No.20151BBG70246)

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网络出版时间: 2017-02-07 12:05:04 URL: <http://www.cnki.net/kcms/detail/31.2035.Q.20170207.1205.002.html>

AngII和Ang(1-7)会参加肝纤维化的调节^[1]。本文就ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴在肝纤维化方面研究进展作一综述。

1 RAAS简介

1.1 RAAS组成以及生物学效应

RAAS是一种由多种蛋白酶和短肽组成的复杂的网络调节系统,主要由肾素、血管紧张素原(angiotensinogen, AGT)、ACE、ACE2、AngII、Ang(1-7)、AT1R、AT2R及醛固酮(aldosterone, Ald)组成^[2]。RAAS组分的基本介绍如下。(1)ACE是存在于血管内皮细胞的一种蛋白水解酶,它可以将AngI转化为AngII, AngII与其受体AT1R在体内形成ACE-AngII-AT1R轴发挥着重要作用。(2)ACE2是ACE的同系物,它能将AngI、AngII分别水解为Ang(1-9)和Ang(1-7)。ACE2与其受体Mas在体内形成ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴,发挥着与ACE-AngII-AT1R轴截然相反的生物学效应。(3)AngII是一个八肽,是RAAS系统中最重要的组成成分。AngII具有很强的收缩血管升高血压效应,同时还可以刺激肾上腺球状带分泌醛固酮进一步升高血压。(4)Ang(1-7)是一个七肽,主要由ACE2水解产生,也可以由中性内肽酶、寡肽酶和羧脯酰胺酶水解生成。Ang(1-7)通过与受体Mas结合发挥扩张血管和抑制细胞增殖的效应,它可以对抗AngII的效应。

RAAS存在于多种组织中并通过调节血容量和外周阻力,调控血压和水盐代谢平衡,从而维持机体内环境恒定。RAAS在高血压、动脉粥样硬化、心肌肥厚、血管中层硬化、细胞凋亡、心力衰竭等各种疾病中的作用均已相继得到证实。

RAAS在肝纤维化中具有重要的调节作用,并且已经被视为抗肝纤维化药物的靶点^[3]。AngII刺激成纤维化细胞的分化,转化生长因子- β (transforming growth factor- β , TGF- β)和胶原I型蛋白的合成^[4]。HSC中的AngII在众多通路中都是依靠AT1R受体发挥作用的^[5]。活化的HSC中的AT1R、ACE呈现出一种过表达的现象,而且局部纤维化组织中AT1R、ACE的含量也显著升高^[6]。当HSC活化后分泌Ang2,引起TGF- β 的高表达,促进肝纤维化的发生,在应用AT1R拮抗剂后TGF- β 的合成减少,肝纤维化的程度减轻^[7]。不论在人或者大鼠的慢性肝损伤中,ACE2的浓度都会上调。研究证实,ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴

与ACE-AngII-AT1R轴具有截然相反的生物学效应,相互制衡。当ACE2、Ang(1-7)浓度升高以后,对肝损伤有修复作用^[8]。

2 ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴与肝纤维化

AngII可促进肝星状细胞核酸、蛋白质、胶原的合成,并通过与肝星状细胞膜上的AT1R结合后,激活一系列信号转导途径,使转化生长因子TGF- β 和血小板源性生长因子表达增加,从而刺激肝星状细胞合成胶原增加。在肝损伤的情况下,不仅经典的肾素成分(ACE、AngII和AT1R)过表达,而且新发现的肾素成分[ACE2、Mas和Ang(1-7)]也表现上调^[9-10]。在运用药物阻断AT1R以及AngII后,对肝纤维化具有保护作用。有论文报道,RAAS与肝纤维化确实存在着密切的关系^[11]。大鼠实验证实模型组的AngII、AT1R含量升高,并且与对照组相比大鼠肝纤维化的程度更加严重^[12]。体内实验证实,Ang(1-7)能减轻肝纤维化^[13]。不难看出,当发生肝纤维化时,RAAS的一些成分的确是发生了变化。

2.1 ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和肝纤维化的关系

ACE-AngII-AT1R轴是AngII发挥作用的基础。ACE将AngI转换成AngII, AngII与受体AT1R结合,在肝纤维化的进程中发挥生物学效应。

早些年的研究发现,当肝损伤时,ACE-AngII-AT1R轴中ACE、AngII和AT1R的浓度会重新调整,肝损伤的严重程度与ACE、AT1R的浓度正相关^[14]。随后,ACE在肝损伤中扮演的正相角色得到进一步的证实,肝纤维化组的ACE浓度均会升高^[15]。AT1R在ACE-AngII-AT1R轴中同样具有重要的地位。在应用AT1R受体阻断剂后,检测肝功能时发现,治疗组的ALT、AST和HYP降低,肝功能得到改善^[16]。在中药对肝纤维化的研究中同样可以发现,肝损伤偏轻的治疗组AT1R浓度较模型组都有所降低^[17]。

在ACE-AngII-AT1R轴中,处于中心位置的AngII在ACE酶的调节下,借助受体AT1R,在肝纤维化的进展中更加具有其独特的生物学效应。静脉泵持续地给予AngII,60 d后肝脏发生了纤维化^[18]。这一体内实验结果表明,AngII确实对肝纤维化有影响。肝纤维化的发生得益于HSC的激活、细胞外基质的沉积。AngII通过增加转录因子NF- κ B(nuclear factor-kappa B)和AP-1(activator protein-1)的活性,激

活HSC,使细胞外基质增多沉积形成肝纤维化^[19]。而*AngII*基因敲除后,肝脏胶原纤维的分泌减少,肝纤维化的程度减轻^[20]。在药物研究方面,抑制*AngII*的合成可以减轻肝纤维化的程度。*Aliskiren*为一种抑制RAS活性,减少*AngII*生成的药物。研究表明,在应用此药物后,可以减轻肝脏脂肪变性,在非酒精性脂肪肝的治疗中具有显著效果^[21]。同样,*Munshi*等^[22]在应用*AngII*拮抗剂后,明显可以减弱肝纤维化的程度。*Pantazi*等^[23]还发现,洛沙坦通过增加去乙酰酶1的表达,发挥对肝损伤的保护作用,降低*AngII*的含量,可以改善非酒精性肝病的情况^[24]。

肝纤维化时,肝脏氧化应激压力、炎症反应都会较正常有所增加。而在应用ACE抑制剂以后,治疗组的氧化应激压力、炎症反应、CCL4诱导的大鼠肝纤维化程度都会减轻^[25]。早期,*Bataller*等^[26]发现,*AngII*消耗肝细胞内的NADPH提高肝脏活性氧含量。此研究证明,还原氧化在肝纤维化中的作用。而新近研究也证明,氧化还原反应在肝纤维化确实具有重要作用^[27]。血管内皮细胞的活化程度与肝纤维化确实存在着关系^[28]。*AngII*通过增加内质网的氧化应激压力,引发内皮细胞的功能紊乱^[29]。在进一步的研究中,*AngII*是通过下调miR-590-5p从而诱导肝内皮细胞的凋亡,加重肝损伤的^[30]。在对局部*AngII*对肝损伤的研究发现,*AngII*激活ROS,增加肝损伤,而在加用ACE抑制剂后可以降低HSC的ATP贮存量,保护肝脏^[31]。由此可见,减少*AngII*的合成在未来的抗肝纤维化的研究中具有一定的前景。

ACE-*AngII*-AT1R轴的活化后在增加肝脏胶原蛋白的合成、氧化还原反应、促进血管内皮细胞凋亡等方面加快肝纤维化的进程。

2.2 ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-Mas轴和肝纤维化的关系

ACE2将*AngII*转换成*Ang(1-7)*,*Ang(1-7)*通过受体Mas发挥对抗*AngII*的生物学活性作用。这条轴是*Ang(1-7)*发挥作用的主要途径^[32]。

ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-Mas轴的作用,在许多器官、组织中都有报道。有研究发现,*Ang(1-7)*通过Mas受体,对抗ACE引起的肺泡细胞凋亡^[33]。而且在早期的急性肺损伤时应用*Ang(1-7)*,也可以收到良好的效果^[34]。不仅如此,*Ang(1-7)*还具有抗辐射引起的骨骼肌纤维化的作用^[35]以及降低*AngII*处理后巨噬细胞内胆固醇的含量^[36]。除此之外,ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-

Mas轴和肝纤维化的关系研究这一方面也吸引了众多学者的兴趣。

有研究者表明,ACE2可以改善肝纤维化。而在ACE2基因敲除以后的小鼠,在诱发肝纤维化后,与对照组相比肝纤维化程度更重^[37]。不仅如此,ACE2的缺失会加重脂肪肝的程度,增加肝细胞内的氧化压力和炎症程度造成肝损伤。该作者证实,ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-Mas轴的激活对肝损伤具有保护作用,通过ATP/P2受体,CaM(calmodulin)信号通路调节脂质代谢基因的表达,减少脂质的堆积改善肝功能,而且在激活Akt/PI3K/IRS-1/JNK(set-inethreonine kinase/phosphatidylinositol 3 kinase/insulin receptor substrate-1/Jun N-terminal kinase)信号通路中也发挥作用^[38]。这些实验结果都表明,提高ACE2的含量是可以起到对肝纤维化的保护作用的,而且ACE2的缺失会使得*Ang(1-7)*的浓度下降,会打破*Ang(1-7)*与*AngII*的系统调节平衡,使得机体对肝脏的保护靶点受到破坏,致使肝纤维化的发生发展得不到控制。当受体Mas基因敲除后,与野生型小鼠相比肝脏的损伤程度加重^[39]。这些都说明,ACE2、Mas与肝纤维化之间确实存在着关联。

作为ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-Mas轴中心内容的*Ang(1-7)*,在肝纤维化的进程中又发挥着怎样的作用呢?早些年,在对*Ang(1-7)*激动剂(A-799)的研究中就已经发现,它可以在肝纤维化中发挥保护作用^[40]。*Ang(1-7)*还通过抑制表皮生长因子,改善糖尿病引起的血管内皮功能紊乱^[41]。*Ning*等^[42]在胆管结扎诱发肝纤维化的研究中发现,*Ang(1-7)*可以抑制肝窦血管的生成。治疗组与模型组相比,胶原蛋白合成减少,肝纤维化程度减轻。炎症因子在肝纤维化中也起到一定的作用。有研究者用白细胞介素22可以降低HSC活性和炎症因子的表达,从而改善肝纤维化^[43]。有报道称,口服*Ang(1-7)*会减轻肝脏的炎症反应^[44]。新近研究表明,*Ang(1-7)*抑制NLRP3炎性小体的活性,减少胶原蛋白的合成,而且*Ang(1-7)*可以对抗*AngII*在肝纤维化中氧化还原的副作用,降低*AngII*引起的HSC的活化,最终在切片染色中观察到*Ang(1-7)*组肝纤维化程度减轻^[13]。

从上述内容看来,在肝纤维化的进程中,ACE2-*Ang(1-7)*-Mas轴激活后在减少胶原蛋白合成,改善内皮细胞的功能以及保护肝细胞的还原能力等方面

发挥了保护性的作用。

3 展望

肝纤维化发病机理及其防治是肝病领域的研究热点,目前已经取得了一些进展和突破,但迄今仍未完全明了。寻找新的有效的干预靶点,已经成为肝纤维化基础研究的瓶颈和焦点。目前,针对肝纤维化发病机制的研究主要从HSC、ECM及细胞因子这三个角度展开。越来越多的研究表明,RAAS参与调节HSC活化和ECM沉积过程,ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴在肝纤维化形成过程中发挥关键作用。ACE-AngII-AT1R轴主要表达为促进肝纤维化效应,而ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴主要为抑制肝纤维化作用。调节ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴平衡[比如抑制ACE-AngII-AT1R轴、降低AngII水平,或者激活ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴、增加Ang(1-7)含量等]可能成为治疗肝纤维化的新靶点。为此,ACE-AngII-AT1R轴和ACE2-Ang(1-7)-Mas轴的研究会越来越受到重视。RAAS在肝纤维化防治中的临床应用还有很多工作需要完成,但是相信随着对RAAS研究的不断深入,RAAS必将为肝纤维化的治疗提供新的策略和途径。

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