

舌的发育及其调控机制

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摘要 舌是参与咀嚼、吸允、吞咽、发音等功能的重要器官。舌发育异常会导致无舌、小舌、舌裂、结舌、巨舌症、腭裂等严重的先天舌发育缺陷疾病。发育完全的舌由肌肉组织、结缔组织、黏膜组织及血管组成。调控舌发育的基因有Pax3/Pax7、Dlx基因家族、TGF-β家族和FGF等, 同时还受Shh与Wnt等信号通路调控。舌发育分子调控机制的研究对相关舌发育畸形疾病的诊断与治疗有重要意义。

关键词 舌; 颅面神经嵴细胞; 鳃弓; 肌原祖细胞; 调控机制

Regulation Mechanisms of Tongue Development

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Abstract Tongue is an important organ involved in chewing, swallowing, pronunciation. Abnormal tongue development will lead to aglossia, microglossia, bifid tongue, ankyloglossia, macroglossia and cleft palate. The normal tongue is composed of muscle, connective tissue, mucosal tissue and blood vessels. Paired box gene Pax3 and Pax7, Dlx genes, TGF-β and FGF genes have been proved to be critical for tongue development. Shh and Wnt signaling pathways are also involved in the regulation of tongue development. The study of molecular mechanism will contribute greatly to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of tongue development.

Keywords tongue; cranial neural crest cells; branchial arch; myogenic progenitors; regulation mechanism

在脊椎动物中, 舌由肌肉组织、结缔组织、黏膜组织及血管组成。舌参与咀嚼、吞咽、发音等生理活动, 同时, 也是感知味觉、温度和疼痛的重要器官。舌的异常发育会导致小舌、无舌、舌裂、结舌、巨舌等疾病。舌发育异常还会影响口腔内相关结构, 如牙齿、唇、颚等的正常发育, 进而影响个体咀嚼、吸允、吞咽、发音等一系列生理活动。

舌起源于第1~4鳃弓(branchial arches, BAs), 在小鼠胚胎期第10.5天(E10.5)咽原基开始隆起, 位于第一鳃弓中央位置^[1]。这个过程在人类则发生于胚胎期四周末。接下来, 舌中央突起两侧边缘突起膨

胀, 形成侧舌隆突。同时, 肌原祖细胞从枕部体节迁移至舌突, 形成舌部肌肉组织。E11.5侧舌隆突相互融合, 生长超过舌中央突起进而发育为舌前2/3部分。第三鳃弓在舌发育过程中形成联合突(copula)和腮下降起(hypopharyngeal), 逐渐发育组成舌后1/3部分。舌的前后部分在界沟(terminal sulcus)处融合。舌前2/3部分肌肉发达, 可以自由活动, 而后1/3部分则不能活动。

1 舌发育中的多种细胞来源

发育成舌的细胞来源是多元的。舌的结缔组织

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和血管由颅面神经嵴细胞(cranial neural crest cells, CNCC)迁移分化形成, 舌的肌肉细胞来源于枕部体节的成肌细胞, 黏膜组织则是由多层上皮细胞组成。头面部其他肌肉细胞并非来源于体节, 发育机制也不同^[2]。在脊椎动物胚胎中, 神经嵴细胞(neural crest cells, NCC)是起源于背侧神经管的一个可迁移及多潜能的细胞群, 迁入颅颌面的特定部位后, 进一步分化衍生出多种组织结构, 形成大部分颅颌面组织。近些年的研究发现, 颅面神经嵴细胞可以诱导分化为稳定的成骨细胞和成肌细胞等多种细胞, 这表明颅面神经嵴细胞类似于干细胞^[3]。利用Wnt1-Cre和R26R-LacZ两个遗传小鼠模型交配可以使神经嵴细胞得到标记, 结果显示, 舌部肌腱和结缔组织来源于颅面神经嵴细胞^[4]。

肌原祖细胞源于枕部第2到第5体节, 从不同体节以特定单向途径迁移至由神经嵴细胞来源的间质细胞形成的舌原基。肌原祖细胞一旦进入颅面部区域将立即与颅面神经嵴细胞建立紧密联系。Chick/quail重组实验表明, 在舌发育早期颅面神经嵴细胞围绕肌原祖细胞, 但并没有渗入肌原祖细胞核心^[5]。Parada等^[6]的研究证明, 在小鼠胚胎期, 肌原祖细胞迁移至舌原基之前, 颅面神经嵴细胞已经占据了侧舌隆突, 起始并诱导舌的发育。神经嵴细胞起始并指导成肌细胞增殖、分化成肌肉组织。这两种细胞间的亲密联系贯穿着舌形态发生的整个过程。

2 舌肌原细胞的迁移及分化调节因子

表达于肌原细胞中的与迁移相关的基因包括: 编码肝细胞增长因子受体的原癌基因(proto-oncogene that encodes a protein known as hepatocyte growth factor receptor, *c-met*)、编码GRB2-相关结合蛋白1(encodes the GRB2-associated-binding protein 1, *Gab1*)、编码转录因子瓢虫同源框1(encodes the transcription factor Ladybird homeobox 1, *Lbx1*)以及趋化因子受体4(chemokine receptor 4, *Cxcr4*)等。*c-met*作为细胞生长因子(hepatocyte growth factor, HGF)的受体是肌原细胞从体节迁移到四肢和舌形成区域所必须的调节基因^[7]。*c-met*基因纯合子突变体, 其四肢骨骼肌和舌内肌肉发育受限^[8]。小鼠*Gab1*基因突变揭示, *Gab1*是由酪氨酸激酶受体*c-met*介导的在肌原细胞迁移过程中的重要信号分子, 调控着肌原细胞的迁移和存活^[9]。*Lbx1*基因敲除会导

致肌原细胞的迁移受阻^[10-11], *Cxcr4*与*Lbx1*共表达于向舌原基迁移的肌原细胞中^[12], 暗示*Cxcr4*可能参与肌原细胞迁移过程。Vasyutina等^[12]发现, *Cxcr4*还可与*Gab1*协同作用调控肌原细胞的迁移过程。

舌成肌细胞在小鼠胚胎期E13~E15分化较为活跃。生肌调节因子(myogenic regulatory factors, MRFs)在成肌细胞中的表达精确调控其分化过程, 它包括生肌因子5(myogenic factor 5, *Myf5*)、肌特异调节因子4(muscle-specific regulatory factor 4, *MRF4*)、成肌细胞决定蛋白(myoblast determination protein, *MyoD*)和肌细胞生成素(myogenin, *MyoG*)。这4种调节因子的调控网络决定着包括舌成肌细胞在内的肌细胞的最终分化^[13]。*Myf5*最早表达于E8^[14], 是决定肌原细胞命运的主要因素^[15]。*MRF4*转基因小鼠可部分挽救*MyoG*基因缺失导致的肌生成缺陷^[16]。在*MRF4*表达的情况下, *Myf5*与*MyoD*双敲除小鼠的骨骼肌仍旧存在, 显示除*Myf5*和*MyoD*两个基因外, *MRF4*也是一个肌细胞终末分化重要调控基因^[17]。*MRFs*在卫星细胞再生成骨骼肌中也起重要作用, 关系着肌细胞的发育与再生的遗传控制^[13]。

3 舌发育的信号通路及转录因子

3.1 Pax3和Pax7

*Pax3*和*Pax7*是一对同源基因, 在维持哺乳动物肌原祖细胞的肌原性潜能、存活和生长中起关键作用。*Pax3*直接调节成肌细胞中*Myf5*的表达, 在骨骼肌形成中起关键作用^[18-19]。*Pax3*基因突变可以导致胚胎四肢肌肉发育缺陷^[20]。在*Pax3*敲除的小鼠中, 舌内肌和舌外肌都缺失, 导致新生小鼠不能吮吸而死亡^[15]。*Pax3*基因在正在迁移的肌原祖细胞中高表达^[21], 参与调控四肢中成肌细胞的迁移^[22-23]。*Pax3*缺失的中胚层组织来源的多能祖细胞(mesoangioblasts)不能挽救α-肌聚糖突变小鼠肌源性疾病表型。肌肉萎缩症模型小鼠体外实验表明, *Pax3*可以激活mesoangioblasts, 增强肌肉形成, 更有效的再生新的肌纤维。这说明, mesoangioblasts干细胞分化成骨骼肌需要*Pax3*的参与。

*Pax7*基因参与调控卫星细胞的存活和特化。卫星细胞是一群静止的单核肌原细胞, 存在于肌细胞膜和基底膜之间, 具有增殖、分化的潜力。通常在成熟肌肉中, 卫星细胞作为储备细胞是静止的, 一旦发生肌肉受伤便迅速增殖, 引起肌肉再生, 同时

产生更多卫星细胞。有趣的是, *Pax7*基因突变小鼠在胚胎发育期并没有明显的肌肉发育缺陷, 而*Pax7*基因突变成年小鼠含有很少或没有类似卫星细胞的肌纤维相关细胞, 其肌再生能力表现出严重的缺陷^[24]。*Pax7*基因的异位表达能促进成肌细胞的增殖和存活^[25]。过表达*Pax7*基因能下调*MyoD*的表达, 抑制细胞增殖, 维持卫星细胞群体^[26]。近期我们的研究发现, *Pax7*是Notch信号通路的靶基因, 参与调控舌肌肉的发育^[27]。用Shh-Cre特异性敲除表皮中Wnt信号分子分泌调控因子Wls(wntless WNT ligand secretion mediator)的表达, 导致Notch通路*Jagged1*、*Notch3*等基因表达显著下降, 舌固有层及其下面纵肌缺失。实验结果显示, Wnt通过Notch/Pax7调控舌发育过程^[27]。

3.2 Dlx基因家族

颅面神经嵴细胞最早迁移至第1鳃弓, 构成大部分舌原基。*Dlx*(distal-less homeobox)基因提供颅面神经嵴细胞和鳃弓内背腹及远近的极性信息。*Dlx5*和*Dlx6*只在下颌舌前2/3部分表达, Heude等^[28]的研究表明, 颅面部肌细胞生成取决于颅面神经嵴细胞*Dlx5/6*的表达。敲除*Dlx5/6*基因的突变体, 其颈舌肌缺失, 舌内附肌发育减少、组织紊乱。在肌肉形成过程中, *Dlx5/6*由颅面神经嵴细胞表达而非成肌细胞表达。*Dlx5/6*基因在颅面神经嵴细胞发育而来的间质和中胚层之间相互作用中起关键作用。这种相互作用调控肌原细胞的命运(determination)和分化(differentiation)等。在舌发育中*Dlx*基因家族建立了第1鳃弓背腹模型, 而且调节颅面神经嵴细胞和肌原细胞的命运和分化过程^[1]。转录因子*Hand2*(heart and neural crest derivatives expressed 2)在下颌发育中同样起重要作用, *Hand2*可以抑制*Dlx5/6*在第1腮弓远端间质的表达^[29]。若*Hand2*基因缺失, 侧舌隆突无法隆起, 导致无舌。因此, *Hand2*基因决定下颌弓(第1腮弓)远端区域——下颌的发育, 关系着舌形态的发生。

3.3 TGF-β和FGF

在脊椎动物中, 功能多样且结构保守的转化生长因子-β(transforming growth factor-β, TGF-β)家族存在至少35个成员, 广泛分布于全身, 作为胞外配体起作用。TGF-β家族通过组织间的相互作用调节骨骼肌的发育。成纤维细胞生长因子(fibroblast growth factor, FGF)家族共有23个成员, 几乎表达于所有组织^[30]。成纤维细胞生长因子受体(fibroblast growth

factor receptor, FGFR)可分为四类, FGFR1~4都属于单次跨膜蛋白。FGF通过与特异的受体FGFR结合, 激活受体胞内段的酪氨酸激酶, 进而激活Ras/MAPK(rat sarcoma/mitogen activated protein kinase)、PLC(phospholipase C)等信号途径发挥促进细胞增殖、分化与迁移等生物学过程, 参与哺乳动物各项生命活动^[31]。

TGF-β及其受体TGF-βRII和FGF10表达于颅面神经嵴细胞的间质细胞, FGF10受体FGFR则表达于成肌细胞中。TGF-β信号通路调控FGF10的表达, 而FGF10通过作用于成肌细胞而影响其增殖和分化^[32]。Parada等^[1]用Wnt1-Cre特异敲除神经嵴细胞中TGF-β通路组分, 导致舌发育严重缺陷。颅面神经嵴细胞缺失TGF-β受体2(TGF-β receptor 2, *Tgfb2*)基因会导致小舌, 颅面神经嵴细胞来源的结缔组织和舌肌发育都有缺陷^[32-33]。在*Tgfb2*的Wnt1-Cre条件性敲除小鼠中, 肌纤维组织紊乱且密度低, 但是能表达肌球蛋白重链(myosin heavy chain, MHC)^[32]。*Tgfb2*突变小鼠出现小舌是因为肌细胞增殖降低, 与颅面神经嵴细胞中成纤维细胞生长因子10(fibroblast growth factor 10, FGF10)的表达下调有关, 而且外源的FGF10可以阻止*Tgfb2*突变小鼠肌细胞数量的减少^[32]。相反, *Tgfb2*突变小鼠的颅面神经嵴细胞增殖不受影响^[32]。由以上实验结果可知, 表达于颅面神经嵴细胞中的TGF-β通过调节FGF10的表达间接调控成肌细胞的增殖和肌肉组织的形成。

3.4 舌发育过程中的Shh信号通路

Shh(Sonic Hedgehog)基因属于Hedgehog基因家族, 最早由诺贝尔生理学奖获得者Wieschaus和Nusslein-Volhard在果蝇中发现。该家族具有高度保守性。在无脊椎动物, 果蝇体内只含一种*Hh*基因, 但在哺乳动物体内则有3种类型的*Hedgehog*基因, 分别为*Shh*、*Dhh*和*Ihh*。在该家族中, *Shh*表达最广泛、功能最广泛、研究最多。作为一种重要的形态发生素, *Shh*参与胚胎发育、机体器官组织形成等重要生命活动, 与神经系统发育^[34-35]、头面部发育^[36-38]、四肢发育^[39]、皮肤的发育^[40]及肿瘤的发生^[41]相关。

由*Shh/Ptc1/Smo*介导的*Shh*信号通路中, *Shh*是一种分泌蛋白, 由分子量为45 kDa的无生物活性的前体蛋白经剪切和修饰后形成。*Ptc1*(Patched)作为一种跨膜蛋白, 是*Shh*的细胞受体。

Smo(Smoothed)也是一种跨膜蛋白, 在无Shh存在时与Ptc1结合^[42]。Shh信号通路中Shh在第一鳃弓上皮细胞中特异性表达, 其受体Ptc1在间质细胞中表达, 对舌上皮中的Shh信号作出应答^[6], 即Shh信号从上皮细胞传递到间质细胞中。Shh的缺失或失活会诱导下颌发育畸形, 甚至舌发育缺陷^[43-45]。在舌发育的起始阶段, 条件性、完全失活Shh会导致舌发育不全, 证明Shh信号对舌的发育起重要调控作用。Millington等^[46]发现, Wnt1-Cre条件性敲除*Kif3a*基因的小鼠颅神经嵴细胞的初级纤毛被破坏, Gli活性下降, 导致舌发育缺陷。在神经嵴细胞中激活Gli2能部分挽救无舌表型, 说明在下颌突中缺失GLI的激活形式(GLI activator isoform, GLIA)能阻止Gli靶基因的转录, 影响下颌与舌的发育, 导致小颌畸形和无舌。*Smo*基因的Wnt1-Cre条件性敲除小鼠胚胎没有舌, 突变小鼠舌发育缺陷最早出现在E10.75^[47]。在这个时期, 枕部体节来源的肌原祖细胞在下颌弓中线周围积累, 但在突变体胚胎中没有发现这些肌原祖细胞。

3.5 舌发育过程中的Wnt信号通路

Wnt一词来源于果蝇中的*wingless*基因和小鼠中的*Int-1(insert 1)*基因, 是Shh信号通路调控的目的基因之一。对Wnt的研究最早集中在其诱导肿瘤形成的功能, 后来渐渐拓展至细胞繁殖、胚胎发育和组织器官形态发生等过程。经过人们多年的研究发现, Wnt基因编码分泌蛋白, 在进化过程中高度保守, 在人类基因组中共有19个同源基因。因为Wnt家族成员众多, 其受体蛋白也很多, 下游信号传递分子更复杂, 所以Wnt信号通路具有多个分支, 可以为经典的Wnt信号通路(经由β-catenin的Wnt通路)和非经典的Wnt信号通路[如调控细胞内钙信号的Wnt/Ca²⁺通路, 调控细胞平面极性的Wnt/PCP(planar cell polarity)通路以及Wnt/ROR2(receptor tyrosine kinase-like orphan receptor 2)通路等]。

已有研究表明, Wnt/β-catenin信号通路对小鼠舌早期发育过程中起重要调控作用。如Liu等^[48]发现, 味蕾的形成依赖于Wnt/β-catenin信号通路调控, Wnt5a对舌的生长发育很重要, 敲除该基因会导致舌短小。Lin等^[49]研究发现, 舌上皮中的Wnt信号通路诱导Shh的表达调控舌原基的早期发育: β-catenin的失活与舌上皮细胞中Shh表达的下调相关, 与间质中Ptc1和Gli1的表达减少有关。在舌上皮中条

件性敲除β-catenin将导致严重的颅面部的畸形, 包括舌生长阻滞, 使侧舌隆突变小而分离, 奇结节(Tuberculum)与侧舌隆突的联合异常。在该突变体小鼠E14.5的胚胎中, 舌较正常的小、畸形且完全没有味蕾。因此, 推测造成小舌的原因可能是颅面神经嵴细胞来源的间质细胞数量大量减少^[27]。我们实验室研究发现, *Islet1*是上皮细胞中β-catenin信号通路的上游调控因子, *Islet1*突变可以导致Wnt及Shh信号通路活性显著下降, 下颌发育出现严重缺陷, 同时还发现, 舌上皮中的*Islet1*通过Wnt信号通路调控Shh的表达, 进而影响下颌发育^[50]。

4 展望

对Pax3/Pax7基因、Dlx基因家族、TGF-β和FGF等基因及Shh、Wnt等信号通路的研究为从多个层面揭示舌形态发生期控制舌发育和组织间相互作用的分子机理奠定了基础。对生物体内舌发育期间多种相关基因及信号通路的作用机理的研究, 将使在胚胎期对舌发育相关畸形进行预防和干预成为可能, 以及对先天无舌、小舌、舌裂、结舌、巨舌症患者、人类Pierre Robin综合症患者^[51]等进行基因治疗打下基础。

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