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## 糖尿病性视网膜病中血 – 视网膜屏障损伤的研究进展

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**[摘要]** 糖尿病视网膜病(diabetic retinopathy, DR)病理过程与血-视网膜屏障(blood-retinal barrier, BRB)损伤密切相关, BRB损伤和渗透性增加, 导致黄斑水肿, 是2型糖尿病患者视力丢失的主要原因。BRB主要包括内屏障(iBRB)和外屏障(oBRB), 其功能及生理作用不同, 对环境刺激的敏感性也不同。

**[关键词]** 糖尿病视网膜病; 血-视网膜屏障; 血管内皮生长因子; 糖尿病黄斑水肿

## Research progress of blood-retinal barrier injure in diabetic retinopathy

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**Abstract** The pathological process of diabetic retinopathy (DR) is closely related to the damage to blood-retinal barrier (BRB). The increase of BRB damages and permeability lead to macular edema, which is the main cause of visual loss in type 2 diabetic patients. BRB mainly includes inner barrier and outer barrier, which have physiological functions, and have different sensitivities to environmental stimuli.

**Keywords** diabetic retinopathy; blood-retinal barrier; vascular endothelial growth factor; diabetic macular edema

糖尿病视网膜病(diabetic retinopathy, DR)是最严重的糖尿病性微血管病变之一, 是西方国家工作年龄人群主要的致盲原因。根据病程的不同, DR可分为非增殖性糖尿病性视网膜病(non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy, NPDR)和

增殖性糖尿病性视网膜病(proliferative diabetic retinopathy, PDR)。DR的具体致病机制目前尚未明确, 可能涉及多种因素, 主要有多元醇通路激活、高级糖基化终末产物(advanced glycation end products, AGEs)形成、蛋白激酶C通路激活、炎

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症、氧化应激, 细胞因子如血管内皮生长因子(vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)及表观遗传学变化等<sup>[1-3]</sup>。DR主要临床表现为动脉瘤、出血斑点、硬性渗出、棉绒斑、黄斑水肿, 视网膜内微血管异常以及新生血管等。DR病理过程与血-视网膜屏障(blood-retinal barrier, BRB)损伤密切相关。BRB渗漏临床上可分为弥漫型和局部型, 后期大量渗漏导致NPDR出现黄斑水肿, 是糖尿病患者视力丢失的主要原因。BRB存在于视网膜神经组织及血液之间, 为视网膜提供营养支持, 并对物质吸收有高度选择性, 物理屏障能隔离血液中有毒物质对神经组织的损伤, 维持视网膜内部微环境的动态平衡, 以及其他对视网膜生理活动的支持功能。

BRB主要包括内屏障(iBRB)和外屏障(oBRB), iBRB主要由视网膜毛细血管内皮细胞及其紧密连接(tight junction, TJ)构成, 周细胞、Müller细胞、星形胶质细胞对其起支持作用<sup>[4]</sup>。视网膜毛细血管由视网膜中央动脉发出, 浅层部分位于神经纤维层和神经节细胞层, 深层部分位于内核层和外网层。oBRB主要由视网膜色素上皮细胞(retinal pigment epithelium, RPE)及其紧密连接构成, RPE位于视网膜的最外层, 并与脉络膜相连。以往对DR的研究<sup>[5-8]</sup>主要集中在iBRB, 一般认为DR的关键病变机制在于视网膜毛细血管内皮细胞对缺氧环境非常敏感, 缺氧诱导VEGF高表达, VEGF是血管内皮的强渗透因子, 其渗透性是组胺的5万倍, VEGF的高表达使iBRB通透性增加, 引起黄斑水肿及血管新生, 是DR病理发展过程关键因素(图1)。临床上使用VEGF单克隆抗体贝伐单抗或雷珠单抗等, 对DR能取得良好的治疗效果<sup>[9]</sup>。而基于RPE对视网膜生理活动的重要性, DR病理发展过程漫长, oBRB在DR病理发展中的重要性也不可忽视。BRB屏障破坏机制包括: 1) 跨细胞运输通道开放, 如VEGF作用内皮细胞囊泡运输增加; 2) 细胞旁运输通道开放, 主要通过紧密连接蛋白下调及磷酸化途径; 3) 内皮细胞受损及凋亡; 4) 周细胞丢失和功能障碍。

## 1 DR致病因素与BRB损伤

一般认为, DR多种致病因素并不是独立的, 而是多种因素相互作用和影响的结果, iBRB和oBRB对这些致病因素的应激反应也不同。

### 1.1 缺氧缺血

缺氧环境与高血糖被认为是DR两个最主要的刺激因素<sup>[10]</sup>。视网膜毛细血管内皮细胞对缺氧非常敏感, 缺氧诱导因子HIF-1 $\alpha$ -VEGF通路被认为主要参与缺氧缺血环境血管新生; 在正常生理状态下, HIF-1 $\alpha$ 蛋白合成后迅速被降解, 而缺氧环境中HIF-1 $\alpha$ 蛋白降解途径被抑制而呈指数级增长<sup>[11]</sup>。HIF-1 $\alpha$ 蛋白复合物入核调控指导下游VEGF蛋白合成增加, 并激活诱导型一氧化氮合酶(iNOS)使NO产生增多, 血管内皮通透性大大增加<sup>[12-13]</sup>。iBRB损伤会进一步导致血管源性水肿, 使用HIF抑制剂能减少BRB血管渗漏。胶质纤维酸性蛋白(glial fibrillary acidic protein, GFAP)是星型胶质细胞特异性标志物, 活化的星型胶质细胞GFAP蛋白表达上调, 血脑屏障破坏导致星型胶质细胞活化, 而在视网膜缺氧大鼠实验<sup>[14]</sup>中发现星型胶质细胞GFAP表达上调, 且细胞形态呈现活化样改变, 同样Müller细胞在缺氧环境中GFAP的表达增加及形态活化, 热休克蛋白及细胞骨架蛋白重构。神经胶质细胞的激活也进一步提示血-视网膜屏障损伤与缺氧环境有关。正常情况下Müller细胞分泌色素上皮源性生长因子(pigment epithelium derived growth factor, PEDF)来拮抗VEGF的作用<sup>[15-16]</sup>。缺氧状态下Müller细胞的PEDF分泌降低, 而VEGF增加<sup>[17]</sup>。RPE对缺氧不敏感, 在7%低氧大鼠实验模型<sup>[14]</sup>中, 2 h后并未发现oBRB及紧密连接异常, 从视网膜剥离的RPE表现出一定的离体存活能力。实验中激光损伤RPE细胞, 临近的RPE细胞迁移, 对损伤部位进行修复, 并重新形成紧密连接, 证明RPE细胞及oBRB具有较好的自我修复能力。视网膜缺氧环境同时能使NO, 活性氧(ROS)生成增加, 激活相关炎症因子, 这些因素都与BRB破坏相关。

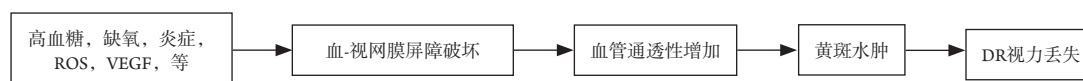


图1 BRB损伤与DR病理发展过程

Figure 1 BRB injury and pathological development of DR

## 1.2 高血糖

高血糖是DR另外一大刺激因素,高血糖环境下蛋白非酶糖基化增加,糖化血红蛋白使红细胞的氧结合能力下降<sup>[18]</sup>,并出现多元醇通路激活<sup>[19]</sup>,PKC蛋白激活,线粒体ROS产生增多<sup>[20-21]</sup>。研究<sup>[22]</sup>发现:AGEs是非增殖型DR过度表达VEGF的一个重要刺激因素,AGEs对DNA合成有抑制作用,引起内皮细胞核心转录因子NF- $\kappa$ B表达上调,周细胞凋亡。高血糖还可引起RPE凋亡<sup>[23]</sup>、水通道蛋白4(aquaporin 4, AQP4)表达过低以及RPE细胞骨架的重构,引起oBRB功能受损<sup>[24]</sup>。视网膜高糖环境是周细胞丢失和基底膜增厚的主要因素,尽管iBRB损伤及DR病程早期存在周细胞丢失,但在正常老年人群中视网膜周细胞及内皮细胞丢失大量存在,而并未见BRB破坏及黄斑水肿<sup>[14]</sup>。严格控制糖尿病患者血糖水平并不能完全消除DR的风险,可能部分患者存在遗传易感性,并与细胞对高血糖的“代谢记忆”有关。

## 1.3 VEGF

VEGF是血管通透性增加的最主要因素,DR患者玻璃体中VEGF含量是正常人群的10倍。正常生理条件,视网膜VEGF分布于神经纤维层,低水平的VEGF有助于维持血管结构稳定性,在糖尿病病理条件下,整个视网膜都可见VEGF分布。VEGF使内皮细胞胞饮性囊泡运输增加,并诱导Occludin 5蛋白Ser490磷酸化,磷酸化蛋白可被泛素化,使紧密连接稳定性降低,对BRB屏障作用有破坏性<sup>[25]</sup>。VEGF处理BREC细胞,发现紧密连接相关蛋白Claudin-5, Occludin等表达异常<sup>[26-27]</sup>。VEGF-VEGFR2通路被认为对DR视网膜血管新生与渗漏起关键作用<sup>[28]</sup>。

## 1.4 ROS

氧化应激诱导细胞凋亡,激活NF- $\kappa$ B通路,前炎症因子如细胞黏附因子ICAM-1表达增加。并使紧密连接蛋白Occludin, ZO-1发生重构<sup>[29]</sup>,从而破坏BRB。在氧化应激实验模型<sup>[30]</sup>中,过氧化氢诱导内皮细胞使Cadherin蛋白内化,VEGF表达上调,细胞骨架蛋白发生重构, ZO-1表达下调。视网膜毛细血管内皮与RPE都对氧化应激敏感。在SD大鼠实验模型<sup>[31]</sup>中,细胞氧化应激信号转导关键因子Nrf2的激活能缓解糖尿病状态下对视网膜的损伤和视力丢失。在湿性老年黄斑变性中,氧化应激被认为可能导致oBRB破坏及黄斑水肿的发展。缺氧缺血、高糖、多元醇激活都是ROS生成增加的因素。

## 1.5 炎症

眼是免疫赦免器官,临床上DR患者PCDR眼部并未发现明显的炎症因子如黏附因子的激活现象,但已可见DR前征象,如周细胞丢失、基底膜增厚、BRB通透性增加等。PDR患者的玻璃体、视网膜及血清中, MCP-1, IL-1 $\beta$ , IL-6, IL-8, TNF- $\alpha$ 含量较正常组高<sup>[32]</sup>。在动物模型早期就可见炎症因子激活,这一点与DR的临床征象不同。DR患者可见TNF- $\alpha$ 上调,视网膜发生白细胞浸润,炎症因子如IL-1 $\beta$ , VEGF表达上调, BRB屏障破坏,内皮细胞凋亡增加<sup>[33]</sup>。TNF- $\alpha$ 处理大鼠发现NF- $\kappa$ B途径激活、Claudin 5及ZO-1蛋白转录和翻译水平下调,引起BRB损伤,这与VEGF作用BRB通透性途径不同<sup>[34-35]</sup>。黏附因子引起白细胞浸润,毛细血管变窄,视网膜内局部液体积累增加,可导致血管内皮的渗透增加,同时白细胞能破坏内皮细胞紧密连接,导致内屏障损伤。趋化因子MCP-1能募集单核细胞,炎症的激活能损伤BRB,使血管通透性增加<sup>[36]</sup>。早期小胶质细胞与补体系统的低水平激活可能引起视网膜慢性炎症,长期慢性炎症对BRB有破坏作用, BRB的破坏改变了视网膜免疫赦免特性,白细胞及炎症因子的浸润进一步损伤视网膜神经元和血管,促进了DR的发展<sup>[37]</sup>。

近年来,随着第三代基因编辑技术的发展成熟,研究人员发现更多的蛋白与BRB功能损伤及黄斑水肿有关,试图寻找新的治疗靶点和开发新药<sup>[38]</sup>。

## 2 RPE 的主要功能作用与 DR

RPE细胞是视网膜的最外层,位于光感受器细胞与脉络膜之间,是视网膜的oBRB组成部分, RPE对光感受器细胞具有重要的支持和营养功能<sup>[39]</sup>。

RPE的主要功能包括: 1)RPE细胞可向前视网膜运输葡萄糖、脂肪酸等营养物质,维持光感受器细胞离子平衡<sup>[40]</sup>及水的运输排出。RPE选择性运输功能和紧密连接主要与Claudins蛋白有关<sup>[41]</sup>。糖尿病动物实验模型可见oBRB破坏并出现渗漏现象<sup>[14]</sup>。视网膜生理活动十分频繁,细胞代谢水平高,代谢需要大量的葡萄糖及氧,并产生大量的水。一部分水由前视网膜的Müller细胞运输,一部分经RPE运出至脉络膜。RPE细胞排列致密,细胞旁通路通过阻力大,水的运输主要通过跨细胞通路排出<sup>[42]</sup>。RPE能表达多种水通道蛋白,缺氧刺激使AQP9表达下调<sup>[43]</sup>。2)RPE细胞含有的色素能吸



收光能量,减少光对视网膜的损伤性。3)在视觉形成过程中,RPE与光感受器细胞维生素A的循环交换,在光传导发生过程,光感受器细胞中的11-顺式视黄醇变为全反式视黄醛,而RPE细胞中的特异性蛋白RPE65将全反式视黄醛异构化为具有光活性的11-顺式视黄醇,再次运输至光感受器细胞继续该过程。DR早期已存在RPE细胞异构能力受损现象<sup>[43]</sup>。4)清除频繁的视网膜活动产生的大量氧化脂质,对不断凋亡的光感受器细胞有吞噬作用,帮助其再生和更新。5)分泌多种细胞因子如PEDF,VEGF,TGF- $\beta$ ,BDNF,促红细胞生成素等,对视网膜完整结构和功能有重要的保护作用。

对于糖尿病如何影响视网膜葡萄糖转运蛋白、紧密连接蛋白、水通道蛋白的改变仍存在争议,这些改变可能是由高血糖等引起的直接损伤,也可能是对DR病理环境的应激保护<sup>[44]</sup>。DR作为一种视网膜血管源性疾病,内屏障的内皮细胞一直都是DR研究的重点方向,但基于RPE在视网膜中的屏障功能及其他重要生理作用,长期糖尿病病理环境下RPE功能受损对DR的发展和视网膜生理活动影响巨大。

### 3 结语

目前仍缺乏理想的动物模型以探索论证DR的具体机制,链脲佐菌素诱导大鼠动物模型只能模仿DR发病的早期,各种动物模型都难复制黄斑水肿与血管增生现象,一些生理指标如炎症激活发生时期也并不一致。DR具体致病机制复杂,病理形成过程长,而实验动物模型建立时间短。多种药物试验,如醛糖还原酶抑制剂Sorbinil<sup>[45]</sup>、AGEs抑制剂<sup>[7]</sup>,在动物实验模型中治疗效果较好,但临床试验并未见疗效。DR多种致病因素对视网膜内外屏障作用敏感性不同,针对具体病理机制及新药研发有待进一步探索。

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