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Toll 样受体 4 与肾纤维化的关系研究进展

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[摘要] 肾纤维化是大多数慢性肾脏疾病进展至终末期肾病的基本病理改变, 其发病过程受到多种信号通路的调节。肾纤维化过程以持续炎症为特征, 包括炎症细胞浸润和细胞因子分泌。Toll样受体4(Toll-like receptor-4, TLR4)信号分子是介导肾脏炎症及纤维化的重要桥梁, 可通过核因子- κ B(nuclear factor-kappa B, NF- κ B)激活炎症因子大量释放而造成肾纤维化。TLR4在肾纤维化中发挥重要作用。

[关键词] Toll样受体4; 肾纤维化; 核因子- κ B

Research progress on the relationship between Toll-like receptor 4 and renal fibrosis

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Abstract Renal fibrosis is the basic pathological change of most chronic kidney diseases progression to end-stage renal disease. The pathogenesis is regulated by various signaling pathways. The renal fibrosis process is characterized by persistent inflammation, including inflammatory cell infiltration and cytokine secretion. Toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4) signaling molecule is an important bridge mediating renal inflammation and fibrosis, which can cause renal fibrosis by activating the release of inflammatory factors by nuclear factor-kappa B (NF- κ B). TLR4 plays an important role in renal fibrosis.

Keywords Toll-like receptor4; renal fibrosis; nuclear factor-kappa B

肾纤维化是大多数肾脏疾病进展至中后期的基本病理改变, 主要表现为间质炎症细胞的浸润和炎性介质的释放, 成纤维细胞的活化和增殖, 以及过量细胞外基质(extracellular matrix, ECM)的沉积^[1]。慢性炎症反应促进肾纤维化的发生发展^[2]。肾纤维化过程以持续炎症为特征, 包括炎症细胞浸润和细胞因子分泌^[3]。Toll

样受体4(Toll-like receptor-4, TLR4)属于 I 型跨膜蛋白受体, 是先天免疫和适应性免疫系统的关键调节因子, 能够直接介导机体与病原体反应。TLR4信号分子是介导肾脏炎症及纤维化的重要桥梁, 可通过核因子- κ B(nuclear factor-kappa B, NF- κ B)激活炎症因子大量释放而造成肾纤维化。

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1 TLR4的结构、配体及信号转导通路

1.1 TLR4的结构及配体

TLR4属于富含亮氨酸的受体家族,参与模式识别、信号转导和细胞周期的调节。TLR4结构由胞外区、跨膜区和胞内区3部分组成。胞外区包括24个亮氨酸的受体模块,是TLRs介导病原识别的重要部位;胞内区与白介素-1(interleukin-1, IL-1)受体胞内段有很高的同源性,因此又称为Toll-白介素1受体(Toll-interleukin-1 receptor, TIR)结构域;跨膜区则是富含半胱氨酸的区域^[4-5]。

TLR4是最早发现的TLRs家族成员,是参与感染性和自身免疫疾病的模式识别受体,按其配体来源可分为外源性病原相关分子模式(pathogen-associated molecular patterns, PAMPs)和内源性损伤相关分子模式(damage associated molecular patterns, DAMPs)^[6]。TLR4在感染反应中识别PAMPs,进而通过细胞内信号转导途径激活先天免疫防御,最终释放促炎细胞因子和趋化因子,PAMPs是指病原微生物进化过程中的保守成分,主要包括革兰氏阴性菌细胞壁的主要成分脂多糖(lipopolysaccharides, LPS)、革兰氏阳性菌的胞壁酸和肽聚糖、分枝杆菌、螺旋体中的脂蛋白以及细菌和病毒的核酸等^[7]。TLR4还可以识别DAMPs, DAMPs是指宿主细胞体内的“危险信号”,来源于受损或坏死组织激活的免疫细胞,主要包括热激蛋白、细胞外基质降解产物、透明质酸、高速迁移族蛋白1等^[8]。

1.2 TLR4的信号转导通路

TLR4既能激活髓样分化蛋白88(myeloid differentiation protein 88, MyD88)依赖性通路,诱导炎性细胞因子和辅助刺激因子的释放,又能激活MyD88非依赖性通路产生I型干扰素(interferon, IFN)。

MyD88依赖性信号转导途径:TLR4通过与相应的配体结合,将信号转导至细胞内部。TLR4首先通过接头蛋白分子和MyD88羧基端结合,MyD88的氨基端与IL-1受体相关激酶(IL-1 receptor-associated kinase, IRAK)结合,导致IRAK自身磷酸化,进而激活IRAK,激活后的IRAK进一步激活肿瘤坏死因子受体相关因子-6(TNF-receptor associated factor 6, TRAF-6),活化NF- κ B和活化子蛋白1(activator protein 1, AP-1)转录因子,然后这些因子转位到细胞核诱导特定基因的表达,进

而激活IL-1、白介素6(interleukin-6, IL-6)、白介素-8(interleukin-8, IL-8)等炎症介质的释放^[9]。

MyD88非依赖性信号转导途径:TIR结构域的衔接子诱导干扰素- β 相关适配子与TIR结合并激活 β 干扰素TIR结构域衔接蛋白(TIR-domain-containing adapter-inducing interferon- β , TRIF)。TRIF作为适配子蛋白磷酸化TNF受体相关蛋白因子3和受体相互作用蛋白1,导致NF- κ B活化因子结合激酶1和丝裂原活化蛋白激酶(mitogen-activated protein kinases, MAPK)激活,MAPK进而激活AP-1分子,而NF- κ B活化因子结合激酶1募集干扰素调节因子3(interferon regulatory factor, IRF3)和其家族其他因子,包括干扰素调节因子7(interferon regulatory factor, IRF7)。转录因子AP-1, IRF3和IRF7进入细胞核并触发干扰素调节因子(interferon regulatory factor, IRF)及其他促炎细胞因子的产生^[10]。

2 TLR4与肾纤维化的关系

众多TLRs受体种类中关于TLR4与肾纤维化的关系研究得最多,TLR4主要由内质网产生并分泌,表达于细胞膜表面。据报道^[11],肾中TLR4主要表达于肾小管上皮细胞、系膜细胞、血管内皮细胞,参与多种病因所致的肾纤维化。许多研究都证实TLR4是慢性肾脏病伴随进行性肾纤维化的重要调节因子,无论是慢性肾病患者的肾组织、还是动物肾脏纤维化模型中,TLR4的表达量都有大幅的上调^[12]。

2.1 TLR4是介导肾纤维化的重要位点

研究^[13]表明:叶酸注射小鼠致肾纤维化模型中,与野生型(wild type, WT)小鼠相比,TLR4突变型小鼠肾纤维化明显减轻;在5/6肾切除血管紧张素II输注小鼠肾纤维化模型中,与WT小鼠相比,TLR4突变小鼠未发生肾小球硬化和间质纤维化。有研究^[14]表明:腺嘌呤诱导的小鼠肾小管间质纤维化模型中,与WT小鼠相比,TLR4缺陷小鼠肾间质纤维化明显减轻。研究^[15]发现:单侧输尿管梗阻术后7 d,与WT小鼠相比,TLR4缺陷小鼠成纤维细胞聚集减少,肾纤维化明显减轻。Xu等^[16]研究发现Ang II可通过结合TLR4激活肾上皮细胞中的信号转导转录激活因子3,促进肾纤维化进程,而TLR4缺乏可减轻Ang II引起的小鼠肾纤维化和肾功能障碍。Ma等^[17]研究发现:与糖尿病野生型小鼠对照相比,TLR4缺陷小鼠中,肌成纤维细胞标志物 α -平滑肌肌动蛋白(α -smooth

muscle actin, α -SMA)和转化生长因子(transforming growth factor beta, TGF- β)、纤连蛋白的表达显著减少,提示TLR4在促进糖尿病肾病(diabetic nephropathy, DN)肾纤维化中起重要作用,阻断TLR4信号通路将会延缓DN肾纤维化进展。研究^[18]发现TLR4分子介导HK-2细胞与U937细胞相互作用,激活TBK/IRF3信号通路,导致U937细胞发生M1型转化,进一步诱导炎症因子产生,促进肾纤维化。

以上研究证明了TLR4在各种肾纤维化模型中十分重要,抑制TLR4活性或敲除TLR4基因可以减轻肾纤维化,TLR4可能是肾纤维化损伤的重要介质,是肾纤维化发生机制中不容忽视的一部分。

2.2 干预 TLR4 表达对肾纤维化的影响

Bo等^[19]研究表明人脐带间充质干细胞在体内外通过抑制TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路减轻炎症和老鼠肾小管上皮细胞转分化(epithelial-mesenchymal transition, EMT),进而减轻肾纤维化。Chen等^[20]发现松弛素主要通过下调TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路,使巨噬细胞极化向M2表型转移发挥抗纤维化作用。另有研究^[21]表明尿酸主要通过激活TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路诱导肾小管上皮细胞向间充质细胞转化,肾小管上皮细胞EMT是肾纤维化发生发展的重要步骤和中心环节,提示尿酸可通过激活TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路导致肾间质纤维化;Slit2(神经胶质细胞分泌的细胞外基质蛋白)通过抑制TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路减轻LPS和缺氧诱导的肾脏上皮细胞损伤引起的炎症和纤维化^[22]。环孢菌素肾毒性以慢性进行性纤维化为特征,与对照组小鼠相比,环孢素治疗10 d后小鼠肾TLR4和Myd88的mRNA水平升高,骨I型胶原(collagen-I, COL-I),纤连蛋白(fibronectin, FN-1),纤溶酶原激活物抑制剂1(plasminogen activator inhibitor-1, PAI-1)和TGF β 1明显升高;TLR4抑制剂TAK242处理小鼠后,TLR4活性被抑制,TLR4和Myd88基因表达下调,纤维化因子(COL-1, FN-1), PAI-1和TGF- β 1表达下降^[23],表明TLR4信号通路在CsA诱导的肾脏纤维化中起重要作用,TLR4介导的炎症可能是CsA引起肾损伤和纤维化的重要原因。Zhang等^[24]研究表明TLR4在慢性间歇性缺氧肾损伤中起重要作用,与正常对照组相比,敲除TLR4基因可以明显减轻肾纤维化。Li等^[25]最近的一项研究表明红景天甙通过抑制TLR4/NF- κ B信号转导途径显著抑制肾小管上皮细胞EMT,改善肾小管损伤和细胞外基质的沉积,发挥保护肾脏的作用。杨茹茜等^[26]

研究表明黄芪甲苷通过抑制TLR4/MyD88依赖性信号通路,抑制炎症细胞因子(TNF- α , IL-6, IFN- γ)的释放,改善缺血再灌注损伤后小鼠肾间质纤维化。以上研究均提示TLR4与肾纤维化密切相关。TLR4可能是预防肾纤维化进展的治疗靶点。

3 TLR4 介导肾纤维化的可能机制

3.1 激活 NF- κ B 转位至细胞核诱导特定基因的表达

TLR4可通过激活NF- κ B后转位到细胞核诱导特定基因的表达,进而激活炎症因子大量释放而造成肾纤维化^[15]。慢性炎症与肾纤维化密切相关,TLR4是炎症反应的重要上游调控因子,在慢性炎症过程中起致病作用。TLR4作为肾组织中促炎和促纤维化信号之间的分子联系,增强肾脏中的炎症信号转导导致肾纤维化。TLR4经配体刺激后,通过转接分子连接及转导TLR4下游信号,活化转录调节因子NF- κ B, NF- κ B广泛表达于肾小球细胞和肾小管上皮细胞, NF- κ B激活后转位到细胞核诱导特定基因的表达,促进肾小管上皮细胞转化为成纤维细胞,上调IL-6, IL-1 β 等多种炎症因子和趋化因子的表达,促进免疫炎症反应和肾小管间质纤维化^[27-29]。

3.2 调节肾小管上皮细胞或肌成纤维细胞对 TGF- β 的敏感性

TLR4可能通过调节肾小管上皮细胞或肌成纤维细胞对TGF- β 的敏感性来促进肾纤维化。TGF- β 1是迄今研究最多、最重要的致纤维化细胞因子。Pulskens等^[30]研究表明单侧输尿管梗阻模型中TLR4缺陷小鼠的纤维化减少与Bambi上调有关, Bambi是一种TGF- β 信号转导的负调节因子,能够竞争性抑制TGF- β 1信号通路,TLR4可能通过下调Bambi的表达,增强对TGF- β 的敏感性促进肾纤维化,提示TLR4可能以TGF- β 依赖性方式发挥作用以促进肾纤维化。

3.3 调节成纤维细胞积聚

Campbell等^[15]认为TLR4可能通过调节肾纤维化过程中成纤维细胞的积聚促进肾纤维化。成纤维细胞是分泌细胞外基质的重要细胞,细胞外基质沉积可促进肾纤维化。Pushpakumar等^[31]报道高血压引起的小鼠肾损伤组织中,TLR4可能通过招募骨髓来源的成纤维细胞进入肾进而导致肾纤维化,TLR4缺陷抑制其积聚以减少肾纤维化发生发展。

3.4 TLR4 信号通路与 Notch 信号通路相互调控

Notch信号通路在肾纤维化过程中发挥重要作用, TGF- β 通过Notch转导途径介导 α -SMA, ECM生成, Notch信号通路激活可以促进肾小管上皮细胞EMT^[32]。Rashedi等^[33]研究发现TLR4信号通路与Notch信号通路相互影响, 参与调节TLR4信号转导。国内研究^[34]发现糖尿病大鼠模型中Notch2的活化参与高糖诱导的TLR4炎症信号激活。

4 结语

肾纤维化是多种慢性肾脏疾病最终导致肾功能衰竭的主要病理改变和共同通路, 目前仍缺乏有效性治疗。TLR4信号通路对肾纤维化的发生、发展所起到的重要作用受到人们越来越多的关注。大量实验证明TLR4信号通路对肾纤维化发生发展相关, 对该通路干预可延缓肾纤维化进展, 因此TLR4将会成为治疗肾纤维化的新靶点。虽然目前许多研究仍处于实验阶段, 还不能达到临床应用的程度, 但我们相信, 随着对TLR4在肾纤维化中作用的不断研究, 一定能获得突破性的进展, 为将来的肾纤维化的防治提供新的切入点。

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