

# 细胞因子在糖尿病黄斑水肿发病机制中的作用

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## 摘要

糖尿病性黄斑水肿(Diabetic Macular Edema, DME)是糖尿病患者视力丧失的最常见原因,其产生机制复杂,主要是血-视网膜屏障被破坏,导致血管通透性增高所致。近年来,人们尝试通过各种方法治疗DME,包括激光光凝、类固醇曲安奈德和玻璃体切除术等多种治疗方式。然而,治疗效果并不理想,直到研究发现血管内皮生长因子(VEGF)在DME发病过程中的重要作用,DME的治疗有了里程碑式的进展。眼内抗VEGF药物在DME中疗效良好,使许多DME患者的视力得到提升。然而临床医生在工作中逐渐发现,部分患者对抗VEGF药物低应答甚至不应答,这表明可能有其他因素参与。现有研究显示,DME发病与炎症反应有关。本文对DME的发病机制中VEGF因子、炎症因子等细胞因子的作用进行概述,并描述了与细胞因子相关的新型药物。

## 关键词

细胞因子, 糖尿病黄斑水肿, 黄斑水肿, 发病机制

# The Role of Cytokines in the Pathogenesis of Diabetic Macular Edema

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## Abstract

Diabetes macular edema (DME) is the most common cause of vision loss in diabetes patients. Its

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mechanism is complex, mainly due to the destruction of the blood retinal barrier, leading to increased vascular permeability. For many years, people have tried to treat DME by various methods, including laser photocoagulation, steroid triamcinolone acetonide and vitrectomy. However, the treatment effect was not ideal until the study found that vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) played an important role in the pathogenesis of DME, and the treatment of DME made a landmark progress. Intraocular anti-VEGF drugs have been shown to be effective in DME and have improved vision in many DME patients. Nevertheless, clinicians gradually find that some patients have low or no response to anti-VEGF drugs in their work, which indicates that other factors may be involved. Current research shows that inflammatory reaction plays an important role in the occurrence of DME. This article summarizes the role of cytokines such as VEGF and inflammatory factors in the pathogenesis of DME, and describes new drugs related to cytokines.

## Keywords

Cytokines, Diabetic Macular Edema, Macular Edema, Pathogenesis

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## 1. 引言

糖尿病是一种能引起各种血管并发症的慢性代谢病。近年来,由于人们的生活习惯改变,这种疾病在世界各地的流行程度不断增加,根据国际糖尿病联合会(IDF)糖尿病地图集第十版的估计,2030年全球预计有6.43亿成年人患糖尿病,到2045年,这一数字将达到7.83亿。有研究表明,大约4.2%~7.9%的1型糖尿病患者和4%~12.8%的2型糖尿病患者可能发展为DME [1]。糖尿病黄斑水肿是指在糖尿病状态下,黄斑区液体的异常积聚及或接近中央凹,导致视网膜中央/黄斑厚度增加[2]。它的病因非常复杂,到目前为止还没有得到充分的解释。血-视网膜屏障(Blood-Retinal Barrier, BRB)功能的损害,从而引起液体渗漏、聚集,这是DME发病的重要因素[3]。近年的研究中,已有学者对血管内皮生长因子(VEGF)在DME [4]中的作用进行了阐述,并由此研发了抗VEGF药物的问世,成为DME治疗历史上具有里程碑意义的一步,提高了DME患者的视力。然而临床医生在工作中逐渐发现,部分患者使用抗VEGF药物后病情仍难以控制或复发。有研究表明炎症因子等细胞因子可能在DME中起作用。本文综述了DME的发病机制中VEGF因子、炎症因子等其他细胞因子的作用,并描述了与细胞因子相关的新型药物,以期DME的治疗提供新的思路。

## 2. 细胞因子的生成和释放

细胞因子(Cytokine, CK)是一种小分子多肽或糖蛋白,可由多种细胞产生,能调节细胞生长、分化成熟、维持细胞功能,且在调节免疫反应、参与炎症反应、创伤愈合、肿瘤消长等方面起到重要作用。有研究发现,DME的发生是由于慢性高血糖引起生化途径的异常,这些异常的生化通路会增加VEGF等细胞因子的释放。例如:长期高血糖状态下,诱导多元醇途径激活,造成晚期糖基化终产物(Advanced Glycation End Products, AGEs)的不断堆积,AGEs的积累会增加蛋白激酶C(PKC)的活性,PKC的活性又会导致VEGF等因子的上调,进而损伤视网膜细胞,诱发DME [5]。炎症因子和炎症介质,如VEGF、胎盘生长因子(PIGF)、肿瘤坏死因子- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ )、IL-6、IL-8等[6],可被视网膜色素上皮(Retinal Pigment

Epithelial, RPE)细胞、小胶质细胞、单核/巨噬细胞、Müller 细胞等激活, 进一步增加其表达, 从而导致 BRB 的降解。细胞因子在这些异常的生化通路中发挥了重要作用。

## 2.1. 白细胞介素(Interleukin, IL)

### 2.1.1. 白介素(IL)-6

IL-6 是一种重要的多效性炎症因子, 参与细胞免疫和体液免疫。可由单核细胞、巨噬细胞和小胶质细胞等产生, 无论是在急慢性炎症中, IL-6 均起到了关键作用。目前已有体外实验表明, 低氧条件下内皮细胞 IL-6 mRNA 的表达逐渐增加[7], 这说明 IL-6 极可能与低氧诱导的 DR 和 DME 相关。有动物实验发现, IL-6 通过 PKC 介导的信使作用, 重新排列肌动蛋白丝, 改变内皮细胞紧密连接的超微结构分布和细胞形态, 使内皮细胞通透性增加[8], 直接使视网膜毛细血管内皮细胞的屏障作用受到破坏。实验发现, 在过表达 IL-6 的转基因小鼠中, 星形胶质细胞增生和微胶质细胞增生; IL-6 能改变星形胶质细胞的功能[9], 星形胶质细胞是视网膜内屏障的重要组成部分, 由此, IL-6 破坏了视网膜内屏障。此外, IL-6 能通过上调 VEGF 水平增加血管通透性[8], 并且, IL-6 与视网膜黄斑层的厚度增加有显著的相关性[10]。

### 2.1.2. 白介素(IL)-8

IL-8 是一种具有趋化效应的因子, 能活化中性粒细胞和 T 淋巴细胞, 刺激炎症反应。在体外研究中, 给予缺氧和氧化应激的条件下, 血管内皮细胞产生 IL-8 增加[11]。另外, IL-8 在细胞间的紧密联系中起着重要的作用, 它可以降低细胞间的紧密联系从而提高血管的通透性[12]。针对 DME 患者的研究发现, 在对 DME 患者进行抗 VEGF 药物治疗后, 在对治疗有反应的患者中, IL-8 的平均水平低于那些没有反应的患者; 多因素 logistic 回归分析发现, 只有 IL-8 与治疗反应相关, 因此房水中的 IL-8 水平可能与 DME 患者对抗 VEGF 药物的治疗反应相关。

### 2.1.3. 白介素(IL)-10

IL-10 是一种抗炎细胞因子, 其在特异性免疫系统和非特异性免疫系统的大多数细胞中均有表达, 包括树突状细胞、白细胞和巨噬细胞, 具有强效失活特性。我国的一项临床研究发现, IL-10 基因 rs1800896 多态性可降低汉族人群 PDR 的发病风险[13]。此外, 国外研究发现 IL10 基因中的-1082A > G 多态性与 2 型糖尿病 NPDR 的发病独立相关[14]。

### 2.1.4. 白介素(IL)-1 $\beta$

IL-1 $\beta$  被称为白细胞热原、白细胞内源性介质、单核细胞因子和淋巴细胞活化因子, 参与多种细胞活动, 包括细胞分化和细胞凋亡。周细胞通过维持内皮细胞紧密连接的完整性, 在防止内皮通透性方面发挥着关键作用, 已有研究表明, 在高葡萄糖条件下, IL-1 $\beta$  可通过核因子(NF)- $\kappa$ B 活化诱导周细胞凋亡[15], 同时, 活化的 NF- $\kappa$ B 还可促进人视网膜色素上皮细胞分泌 IL-6、IL-8、细胞间黏附分子-1 (ICAM-1)、单核细胞趋化蛋白-1 (MCP-1) [16], 并诱发炎症反应, 调节视网膜屏障作用, 提高糖尿病视网膜病变的内皮通透性。启示我们阻断 IL-1 $\beta$ /NF- $\kappa$ B 信号传导可能是预防糖尿病视网膜病变周细胞丢失、抑制炎症反应的有希望的治疗靶点。此外, 研究表明高糖状态下, 刺激巨噬细胞通过葡萄糖代谢产生 IL-1 $\beta$ , 其后生产的活性氧类(ROS)导致炎性体的激活[17]。

## 2.2. 肿瘤坏死因子(Tumor Necrosis Factor, TNF)

肿瘤坏死因子- $\alpha$  (Tumor Necrosis Factor- $\alpha$ , TNF- $\alpha$ )是一种抗炎因子, 主要由巨噬细胞和单核细胞分泌, 参与正常的炎症和免疫反应。有研究观察 DME 患者的眼内液, 发现 TNF- $\alpha$  的含量增加, 进一步研究发现 TNF- $\alpha$  和 IL-1 $\beta$  共同诱导细胞间黏附分子(ICAM)-1 的产生[18], 增加白细胞的黏附性, 促进内皮细胞

和周细胞凋亡。TNF $\alpha$  还参与了 BRB 分解[19]和神经元凋亡[20], 其主要机制是增加 caspase-3 的表达。CD40 为 TNF 受体的一种, 已有动物试验表明, CD40 在糖尿病小鼠视网膜 Müller 细胞、内皮细胞和小胶细胞均有较高的表达, 若阻断 CD40, 可阻断 ICAM-1 上调[21], 因此, 破坏 CD40-TRAF2, 3 通路可能成为一种新的方法来抑制参与糖尿病视网膜病变发病机制的炎症反应[22]。

## 2.3. 生长因子(Growth Factor, GF)

### 2.3.1. 血管内皮生长因子(Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor, VEGF)

VEGF 家族是一个巨大的家族, 它的成员主要有 VEGF-A, B, C, D, 以及胎盘生长因子(PIGF), 其中 VEGF-A 是目前最广泛的研究对象, 它与眼部血管性病变的发展关系密切, 是炎症和血管形成的媒介, 对神经元的生长、分化和存活都有重要作用[23]。VEGF 在多种视网膜细胞中均有表达, 例如 Müller 细胞、胶质细胞、视网膜色素细胞、内皮细胞、周细胞等。在低氧状态下, 缺氧诱导因子-1 $\alpha$  (HIF-1 $\alpha$ )水平升高[24], 从而促进 VEGF 的释放。VEGF 能使细胞质肌动蛋白的排列发生变化, 使支架蛋白、粘附蛋白、RPE 细胞紧密连接蛋白、闭锁蛋白等蛋白的磷酸化作用增强[25], 从而改变细胞紧密连接, 增加视网膜血管通透性。因此, VEGF 在 BRB 损伤及黄斑区水肿中扮演重要角色。VEGF 须与 VEGF 受体结合从而激活信号通路。视网膜中表达两种 VEGF 受体, VEGF 受体-1 (VEGFR-1)和 VEGF 受体-2 (VEGFR-2) [26]。VEGFR-1 主要表达于单核细胞和巨噬细胞, 其参与了白细胞的趋化和聚集[27]。如前所述, 胎盘生长因子(PIGF)是 VEGF 家族的成员, 它与 VEGFR-1 特异结合后, 激活钙调磷酸酶依赖性途径[28], 该途径刺激单核细胞和巨噬细胞产生促炎因子和组织因子等, 促使炎症细胞与炎症因子在炎症部位聚集。VEGFR-1 活化可以刺激炎症反应[29]。VEGFR-2 仅由内皮细胞表达。VEGF 与 VEGFR-2 结合后, 不但使血管通透性增加, 而且能促进 B 细胞的核因子  $\kappa$ B (NF- $\kappa$ B)的激活, 增加炎症细胞因子(如单核细胞趋化蛋白(MCP)-1 和细胞间粘附分子 1 (ICAM-1))的表达[30], 引起白细胞趋化, 使炎症细胞附着于血管内皮, 从而使血管更加通透, 引起黄斑水肿。

### 2.3.2. 胎盘生长因子(Placental Growth Factor, PIGF)

PLGF 属于 VEGF 家族中的一员[28], 是一种分子结构为糖蛋白同型二聚体的蛋白质, 能够与 VEGFR-1 结合, 且其对该受体的亲和力高于 VEGF [31]。PIGF 是 VEGFR-1 的特异性配体, 能促进血管新生, 且能诱导内皮细胞增殖及迁移[32]。如前所述, PIGF 也可以通过促进单核和巨噬细胞中的组织因子生成和趋化, 从而调控炎症进程[33]。研究发现, 房水中 PIGF 水平与 DME 严重程度之间显著相关[34]。目前已有药物如阿柏西普, 作为一种可与 VEGF-A 和 PIGF 紧密结合的融合蛋白[35]减轻黄斑水肿。

### 2.3.3. 血小板衍生生长因子(Platelet Derived Growth Factor, PDGF)

PDGF 是一种有效的促有丝分裂因子, 能调节结缔组织和发育中神经系统的细胞生长和分裂。由血小板, 平滑肌细胞, 巨噬细胞和内皮细胞在活化后合成, 能调节细胞生长和分裂。PDGF 家族有 A、B、C 和 d 四种配体。除了配体“AB”作为异二聚体外, 其余均作为同型二聚体发挥作用[36]。在 2 型糖尿病患者体内, 血小板过度激活和聚集, PDGF 可以通过 PKC, 核因子- $\kappa$ B (NF- $\kappa$ B), Src/Smad1/Col4, JAK/STAT 等通路[37], 促进炎症和血管生成, 从而损害内皮迁移和增殖。有趣的是, PDGF 在正常葡萄糖浓度下增加能视网膜中的 DNA 合成, 通过激活 PDGF-BB/PDGFR- $\beta$  诱导的 Akt 或 ERK 磷酸化[38]来预防周细胞凋亡。在高糖情况下, 通过激活 PKC $\delta$ -p38MAPK-SHP-1 途径抑制 PDGF-BB/PDGFR- $\beta$  [38]下游信号传导, 引起的 DR 中的周细胞凋亡[39]。另外, PDGF-AB 还能激活 PI3k/Akt 信号途径, 从而对视网膜神经节细胞起到保护作用。然而, 高血糖状态下神经保护剂不足, 导致视网膜缺血和缺氧引起的新血管生成。



### 2.3.4. 胰岛素样生长因子-I (Insulin-Like Growth Factor 1, IGF-1)

IGF-1 是生长激素作用最重要的介质, IGF-I 和 IGF 结合蛋白(IGFBP)在整个视网膜的血管、神经元和神经胶质细胞中表达, 并且在高血糖和缺氧的反应中发生改变[40]。有研究发现, 玻璃体中 IGF-1 水平的升高与糖尿病视网膜新生血管的严重程度相关[41]。然而, 有研究团队利用鸡绒毛膜尿囊膜(CAM)模型, 证实了左旋多巴(L-Dopa)与 IGF-1 联合在增殖性糖尿病视网膜病变(PDR)进展过程中起到了减缓或延迟新生血管形成的可能性[42]。此外, 也有实验表明胰岛素类似物可能导致神经胶质细胞增殖, 并通过刺激 IGF-1 受体在 RPE 和 Müller 细胞中产生牵引力, 在血视网膜内部屏障受损后加速糖尿病视网膜病变的进展[41]。

## 2.4. 趋化因子家族(Chemokine Family)

### 2.4.1. 单核细胞趋化蛋白-1 (MCP-1)

MCP-1 的主要来源是神经元, 其上调始于 DR 的初始阶段, 并随着疾病进展进一步升高[43]。在缺血诱导因子中, 存在着 MCP-1 等趋化因子, 促进单核细胞聚集, 活化为巨噬细胞, 吸引巨噬细胞进入低灌注区[44], 激活 p38 和 ERK 等途径[45], 从而使巨噬细胞、胶质细胞和小胶质细胞等产生 TNF- $\alpha$ 、IL-6 和其他炎症细胞因子、生长因子, 从而促使内皮细胞进一步释放 MCP-1、IL-6 和 VEGF, 促进血管生成和纤维化。与 IL-8 类似, MCP-1 也可通过促进连接蛋白的磷酸化打开紧密连接[46], 导致血管通透性增加。

### 2.4.2. 炎症蛋白 10 (IP-10)

IP-10 是由巨噬细胞、内皮细胞、成纤维细胞释放的, 它能引起细胞的免疫反应, 并能吸引大量细胞, 如巨噬细胞和 T 细胞。对 DME 患者眼内液进行观察, 发现 IP-10 水平与 MCP-1、IL-6 和 IL-8 含量有关[34], 可通过抑制内皮细胞的增殖, 促进血管内皮细胞的凋亡, 从而抵消 VEGF 相关的内皮细胞活力增加[47]。

## 2.5. 干扰素(IFN)和集落刺激因子(CSF)

内皮细胞极易受 IL-1、TNF- $\alpha$ 、IFN- $\gamma$  等的作用, 从而诱发内皮细胞生成 IL-8、MCP-1, 从而促进 DME 的产生。促红细胞生成素(EPO)通过 Src/Akt/cofilin 信号传导抑制实验性糖尿病视网膜病变中的小胶质细胞吞噬作用, 从而保护血 - 视网膜内屏障[48]。

## 3. 其他因子及产物

### 3.1. 细胞间黏附分子-1 (Intercellular Cell Adhesion Molecule-1, ICAM-1)

又称 CD54, 属于细胞因子受体, 是一种细胞表面糖蛋白和粘附受体, 作为黏附分子中免疫球蛋白超家族(IGSF)中的成员, 参与调节白细胞从循环到炎症部位的募集。此外, 它还与 VEGF 的表达以及椭圆体带和外界膜的破坏[49]密切相关。

### 3.2. 血管细胞间黏附分子(Vascular Cell Adhesion Molecule-1, VCAM-1)

VEGF 能刺激 ICAM-1 和 VCAM-1 的分泌, 促进白细胞与视网膜毛细血管内皮的黏附, 启动炎症反应。

### 3.3. 糖基化终末产物(Advanced Glycation End-Products, AGEs)

AGEs 与周细胞表面的 AGEs 受体结合, 诱导周细胞凋亡。AGEs 降低胶质细胞表达胶质细胞源性神经营养因子, 改变胶质的细胞结构和功能, 刺激 VEGF 分泌, 增加毛细血管通透性[50]。

#### 4. 潜在的与介质相关的新型药物靶点

在 DME 的治疗研究中, 针对靶点精准治疗使目前研究趋势所在, 目前, 全球范围内针对各种靶点的新型药物在不断探索中, 例如 VEGF 设计锚蛋白重复蛋白, 白介素抑制剂如 IL-6 人源化单克隆抗体 (EBI-031), 黏附分子抑制剂如血管粘附蛋白(VAP)-1 抑制剂(ASP8232), 生长因子抑制剂酪氨酸激酶 Tie2 激活剂(AKB-9778) [51]等, 其临床效能也在不断实验中加强。

#### 5. 展望

本文就细胞因子在 DME 发病机制中的作用以及与其靶点相关新药物的研究进行综述。越来越多的证据表明炎症是糖尿病相关视网膜紊乱的一个关键因素, 是糖尿病黄斑水肿发生机制中的重要一环, 然而, 确切的潜在分子机制尚未完全了解。高血糖状态下, 相关细胞因子例如白介素、生长因子等引起异常的生化通路, 促进炎症和视网膜缺氧的发展。炎症细胞因子的表达增加, 炎症恶化。DME 患者对抗 VEGF 治疗产生耐药性, 因此, 提高对细胞因子在 DME 发病中的作用机制的认证, 开发新的治疗策略已刻不容缓。

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