

血管内皮生长因子家族在冠心病发生发展中的作用及研究现状

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摘 要

血管内皮生长因子(Vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)是一类发现较早且作用广泛的细胞因子, 作为一种促血管内皮细胞生长的细胞因子, VEGF (Vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)可增加血管通透性, 促进血管内皮细胞增生及血管形成, 是血管和淋巴管的调节因子。过去有关VEGF (Vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)的研究主要集中在肿瘤和眼科领域。近年来, 随着心血管领域研究的进一步深入, 越来越多的研究发现, 它参与了动脉粥样硬化和其他心血管疾病的发展, 尤其是在冠状动脉粥样硬化性心脏病的发生发展过程中发挥着重要的作用。目前的研究发现, 在人类中, VEGF家族 (Vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)由5个独立的基因产物组成: 调节血管生长的VEGF-A (Vascular endothelial growth factor A, VEGF-A)、VEGF-B (Vascular endothelial growth factor B, VEGF-B)、胎盘生长因子(placental growth factor, PlGF)以及调节淋巴管生成的VEGF-C (Vascular endothelial growth factor C, VEGF-C)和VEGF-D (Vascular endothelial growth factor D, VEGF-D)。它们在冠心病发生发展过程中展现出各自的抗炎及促炎作用。本文将对血管内皮生长因子家族在冠心病发生发展中的作用及研究现状进行综述, 为以后的基础研究或者临床实践提供一些参考。

关键词

血管内皮生长因子, 冠心病, 细胞因子

The Role of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Family in the Development of Coronary Heart Disease

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Abstract

Vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) is a kind of cytokines discovered earlier and widely used. As a cytokine that promotes the growth of vascular endothelial cells, VEGF can increase vascular permeability, promote vascular endothelial cell proliferation and angiogenesis, and is a regulator of blood vessels and lymphatic vessels. In the past, studies on VEGF mainly focused on the fields of tumor and ophthalmology. In recent years, with the further research in the field of cardiovascular, more and more studies have found that it is involved in the development of atherosclerosis and other cardiovascular diseases, especially in the occurrence and development of coronary atherosclerotic heart disease plays an important role. Current studies have found that in humans, the VEGF family consists of five independent genetic products: VEGF-A, VEGF-B, placental growth factor regulating vascular growth, and VEGF-C and VEGF-D regulating lymphangiogenesis. They show their anti-inflammatory and pro-inflammatory effects in the development of coronary heart disease. This article will review the role and research status of vascular endothelial growth factor family in the development of coronary heart disease, and provide some reference for future basic research or clinical practice.

Keywords

Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor, Coronary Heart Disease, Cytokines

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1. 引言

冠心病(coronary heart disease, CHD)是威胁人类安全的主要疾病之一, 在一些西方国家, 冠心病的发病率已超过 10%。65 岁以上的老年人更易患冠心病, 全球高危人群中冠心病的中位发病率为 19.34% [1]。中国冠心病患者已达 1100 万, 且发病率仍在持续上升。冠心病的病理基础是动脉粥样硬化(atherosclerosis, AS), 脂质代谢紊乱、血管内皮细胞(vascular endothelial cell, VEC)损伤、炎症和免疫功能障碍可促进 AS 的发生和发展, 进而导致冠心病[2]。炎症理论是 AS 的经典理论之一, 因此, 在临床实践过程中减轻炎症反应对冠心病的预防和控制起着至关重要的作用。研究证实, VEGF 家族具有调节炎症反应、促进血管生成、抗氧化应激等功能, 具有调节动脉硬化进展及防治冠心病的潜在作用, 且近期有研究发现 VEGF 在心肌成纤维细胞中表达, 提示其在心肌梗死后组织修复和重塑中可能也发挥着重要作用[3]。本文将对 VEGF 家族参与冠心病发生发展的机制及研究现状进行综述, 为以后的基础研究或者临床实践提供一些参考。

2. VEGF 家族概述

目前研究已发现 VEGF 家族(Vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)由以下成员组成: VEGF-A、VEGF-B、VEGF-C、VEGF-D 和胎盘生长因子(PIGF)。这些因子通过与相关受体结合发挥作用。VEGF

受体(VEGFR)包括 VEGFR-1、VEGFR-2 和 VEGFR-3。其中, VEGFR-1 和 VEGFR-2 主要表达于血管内皮细胞(VECs), 而 VEGFR3 主要表达于淋巴管内皮细胞(LECs) [4]。

3. VEGF 家族各成员在冠心病发生发展过程中的作用机制及治疗现状

3.1. VEGF-A

VEGF-A 是一种多肽蛋白, 也是 VEGF 家族中目前研究最为成熟的因子。通过与 VEGFR-1 和 VEGFR-2 结合, VEGF-A 可以介导血管生成、血管通透性和炎症, 因此又称为血管通透性因子(VPF) [5]。研究发现人类 VEGF-A 由八个外显子和七个内含子组成, 在选择性 VEGF mRNA 剪接后呈现不同长度的亚型, 如 VEGF165、VEGF121 和 VEGF206 [6]。VEGF-A 在人体大多数系统中均有表达, 尤其是在心血管系统中。其主要在周细胞、内皮细胞和成血管细胞上表达。研究发现在缺氧和炎症环境下, VEGF-A 也可由血细胞产生, 包括单核细胞、活化 T 细胞、中性粒细胞、树突状细胞和血小板[4]等。一项临床研究表明[7]在 ST 段抬高型心肌梗死(STEMI)患者中, VEGF-A 水平与微血管闭塞(MVO)独立正相关, 并与中期左室射血分数(LVEF)负相关。因此, VEGF-A 可被视为 STEMI 患者 MVO 的生物标志物, 并可用于预后分层。赵永超等[8]研究表明 m7G 甲基转移酶 METTL1 通过促进 VEGFA mRNA 翻译促进缺血后血管生成。唐汉清等[9]研究中 MiR-448-5p/VEGFA 轴通过调节 FAS/FAS-L 信号通路保护心肌细胞免受缺氧。邹江等[10]VEGF-A 通过增加活性氧生成和增强内质网应激介导的自噬来促进急性心肌梗死后的血管生成。刘婷婷等[11]研究发现莫罗尼昔可促进大鼠急性心肌梗死后的血管生成并改善心功能, 莫罗尼昔的促血管生成作用可能由 VEGFA/VEGF 受体 2 信号通路介导。邹江等[12]研究发现羟基黄 A(HSYA)治疗缺血性心血管疾病其发挥作用的机制为核素通过转录后调节 VEGF-A 和(基质金属蛋白, MMP-9)表达介导 HSYA 的促血管生成作用, 这有助于 HSYA 对缺血性心功能不全的保护作用。王虹[13]等人研究证明, 在心肌梗死(MI)模型中, 粉防己碱治疗通过上调 VEGF-A 水平来提高新生血管, 减小急性心肌梗死中梗死面积, 从而改善心脏功能。吕颜霞[14]等人研究发现, 迷走神经刺激(Vagus nerve stimulation, VNS)可以刺激冠状动脉平滑肌细胞(VSMCs)和内皮细胞中 VEGF-A 和 VEGF-B 的表达, 迷走神经递质乙酰胆碱通过 m/nACh-R/PI3K/Akt/Sp1 通路刺激内皮细胞中 VEGF-A/B 的表达。在功能上, 迷走神经刺激(Vagus nerve stimulation, VNS)通过释放乙酰胆碱改善了冠状动脉功能和左心室功能。同时, 通过拮抗剂 AMG706 阻断 VEGF 受体或通过短发夹 RNA (short hairpin RNA, shRNA)敲除 VEGF-A, 显著降低了迷走神经刺激对心室性能的有益作用。

3.2. VEGF-B

VEGF-B 是 VEGF-A 的同源物, 与 VEGF 具有高度的序列同源性, VEGF-B 主要表达于心肌、冠状动脉平滑肌细胞、内皮细胞和胰腺, 以及肺、肾、胆囊和脂肪[14]。VEGF-B 只能通过与 VEGFR-1 结合发挥生物学功能。既往研究已经发现了多种物质可影响 VEGF-B 的表达。Zhong S 等人研究发现[14], 迷走神经递质乙酰胆碱可通过 m/nACh-R/PI3K/Akt/Sp1 通路上调内皮细胞 VEGF-B 的表达。在与 VEGF-A 的协同作用下, VEGF-B 诱导血管平滑肌细胞(vascular smooth muscle cell, VSMC)增殖和内皮细胞(endothelial cell, EC)迁移, 最终促进血管生成、动脉生成以修复梗死的心肌组织[14]。VEGF-B 可用于促进缺血性心脏病患者的冠状动脉血管系统重建, 改善心肌代谢, 进而改善心功能[15]。安娜·布里舍瓦等人[16]研究表明 VEGF-B 治疗组的心肌梗死面积明显小于生理盐水对照组。其机制可能是 VEGF-B 通过促进血管生成, 减轻缺血和保护存活的心肌细胞免于死亡, 从而发挥其传统上已知的心脏保护作用。他们还发现 VEGF-B 可进一步恢复受损心肌中的天然心肌细胞, 显著改善心肌梗死后的恢复, 在冠心病患者[15]中, VEGF-B 的表达降低。那么我们是否可以心肌梗死部位的更新和再生提示 pVEGF-B 基因电转

移是心肌梗死的潜在再生治疗。Henna Korpela 等人[17]的研究发现,腺病毒(AD)VEGF-B186 基因转移可显著促进心肌血管生成,增加缺血心脏的心肌灌注储备。AdVEGF-B186 还能抑制心肌细胞凋亡,调节心肌代谢,成为治疗心肌缺血[18] [19]的潜在药物。

3.3. VEGF-C

VEGF-C 是一种分泌性糖蛋白,在成人中,VEGF-C 在许多部位表达,包括心脏、肺、脑、肾、肠和淋巴结[20]。一项前瞻性研究发现,低水平的 VEGF-C 可以独立预测疑似或确诊的冠状动脉疾病(CAD) [21]患者的全因死亡率,VEGF-C 水平与全因死亡和心血管死亡呈显著负相关,而高水平的 VEGF-C 可降低心肌梗死后的炎症反应,有利于损伤心肌的修复。急性心肌梗死后,VEGF-C 可诱导心脏淋巴管的增殖,并通过淋巴管内皮透明质酸受体-1 (LYVE-1)将免疫细胞运输到纵隔淋巴结(MLNs),从而促进急性炎症反应的清除和心脏修复。在心肌缺血再灌注(I/R)损伤模型中,用 VEGF-C 预处理心肌后心肌梗死面积较低,CK-MB、丙二醛、肌钙蛋白和凋亡蛋白 Bax 值较低。其机制在于 VEGFC 通过与 VEGFR-2 结合激活 Akt 信号通路,阻断 Bax 表达和线粒体膜易位,从而抑制心肌细胞在 I/R 损伤后凋亡,发挥心脏保护作用[22]。研究表明[23]心肌梗死后心脏巨噬细胞产生的 VEGFC 直接有效抑制促炎巨噬细胞活化来减轻炎症反应,进一步减轻心肌梗死后心脏损伤。在大鼠心肌梗死模型中,心肌梗死移植细胞和 VEGF-C 加载自组装肽(SAP)水凝胶后 4 周,心脏淋巴管发生增加,心脏水肿和重塑减少,心脏功能得到显著改善。淋巴内皮祖细胞和 VEGF-C 与释放与自组装肽(SAP)的联合递送有效地促进了心脏淋巴管的发生和梗死心肌的修复。YUE Y 等发现在心肌缺血大鼠模型中[24],M2b 巨噬细胞可以上调 VEGFC 表达,促进淋巴管生成,减少心肌纤维化,改善心脏功能,这表明 M2b 巨噬细胞可能用于心肌保护治疗。

3.4. VEGF-D

VEGF-D 和 VEGF-C 一样,也是一种分泌性糖蛋白。它们彼此具有结构同源性,并通过与 VEGFR-2 和 VEGFR-3 结合促进淋巴管生成和血管生成。VEGF-D 比 VEGF-C 具有更高的血管生成潜能。一项前瞻性研究得出结论,高水平的 VEGF-D 独立预测可疑或确诊冠心病患者的全因死亡率[25]。血管生成是心肌梗死后心脏修复的核心。另有研究指出,心脏血管紧张素转换酶(ACE) 2 产生血管紧张素(Ang) 1-7,进而刺激心脏中 VEGFD 和基质金属蛋白酶(MMP-9)的表达,促进血管生成,从而促进心脏恢复,改善心室功能[26]。一项临床回顾性研究[27]显示腺病毒心肌内 VEGF-D Δ N Δ C 基因转移增加难治性心绞痛患者的心肌灌注储备。

3.5. PIGF

胎盘生长因子(placental growth factor, PIGF)也是血管内皮细胞生长因子家族的一员,PIGF 最初在人胎盘中发现,在胎盘和内皮细胞中大量表达,并调节胎盘的发育、功能和血管生成。是 fms 样酪氨酸激酶-1 (fms-like tyrosine kinase-1, Flt-1)的特异性配体[28]。既往研究表明,PIGF 通过 Flt-1 信号通路[29]在包括动脉粥样硬化在内的炎症性疾病中发挥多种作用。张亚平等[30]研究中,他们将实验小鼠诱发了一个明显的梗死区域 I/R。与 I/R 组的小鼠相比,接受 PIGF 治疗的小鼠的梗死面积明显更小。PIGF 可降低 I/R 后心肌梗死,改善心功能。外源性 PLGF 通过改善心脏功能和刺激血管生成,在心肌梗死后愈合过程中发挥重要作用。用 PIGF 治疗的小鼠心脏在再灌注后显示炎症反应减轻。这可能是由于 PIGF 的心脏保护作用导致较轻的心肌缺血再灌注损伤。Takeda Y 等[31]研究证实,重组胎盘生长因子(PIGF)治疗可增强血管生成和动脉生成,并提高心肌梗死后的生存率。其机制首先可能是 PIGF 是 VEGF 家族的一员,在体内不仅诱导血管生成,还诱导动脉生成[32]。其次,PIGF 能够动员内皮祖细胞(endothelial progenitor cells, EPCs)从骨髓外周循环[33],最后,我们最近观察到 PIGFmRNA 表达显著上调在冠状动脉内皮细胞和梗

死区间质细胞, 表明 PIGF 参与 AMI 的病理[34]。此外, 血浆中 PIGF 或 sFlt-1 水平单独是确定冠状动脉疾病严重程度的良好标志物, PIGF 与 sFlt-1 的比值被证明与疾病的严重程度呈正相关, 也被认为是心脏预后[35]的良好标志物。另有报道称, 在小鼠和猪模型中使用重组 PIGF 治疗减少了梗死面积, 改善了左心室功能, 增加了血管生成和动脉生成[36]。

4. 总结与展望

综上所述, VEGF 家族通过调节血管生成、淋巴管生成、炎症、细胞凋亡、氧化还原、纤维生成和脂质代谢, 在治疗冠心病方面显示出其一定的潜力。其作为一类重要的炎症细胞因子, 在冠心病中的作用受到了广泛的关注, 部分家族成员的作用已得到临床研究的证实, 但还有一些成员的作用机制及临床应用尚未达成共识。众所周知, 抗 VEGF 靶向治疗已成功地应用于癌症治疗, 大大地提高了肿瘤患者的无病生存期和总生存期, 那么类似的治疗手段是否可以用于冠心病的治疗呢? 假设, 可以通过拮抗 VEGF 家族中其他促炎细胞因子的作用或通过人为途径增加血管内皮生长因子家族中抗炎细胞因子的水平降低冠心病的病死率及并发症, 从而使冠心病患者获益, 未来仍需进一步研究。

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