

# PI3K/AKT信号通路在椎间盘退变中的研究进展

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## 摘要

下腰痛已成为一个全球关注的公共卫生问题, 而椎间盘退行性变被公认为是引起下腰痛的主要原因之一。目前对下腰痛的治疗仅限于在减轻症状, 而不能针对椎间盘内潜在的病理生理变化进行根本性治疗。PI3K/AKT通路的激活可以延缓椎间盘退变的进展。本文综述了PI3K/AKT信号通路的激活和负调控的最新研究进展, 并着重介绍了不同的治疗方式通过PI3K/AKT信号通路对椎间盘退变产生的积极作用。相信在不久的将来, 干预该信号通路有望成为一种有吸引力的治疗策略。

## 关键词

下腰痛, 椎间盘退变, PI3K/AKT信号通路, 分子机制

# Research Progress of PI3K/AKT Signaling Pathway in Intervertebral Disc Degeneration

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## Abstract

Low back pain has become a global public health problem, and intervertebral disc degeneration is

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recognized as one of the main causes of low back pain. At present, the treatment of low back pain is limited to relieving symptoms, but cannot fundamentally treat the underlying pathophysiological changes in intervertebral discs. The activation of PI3K/AKT pathway can delay the progression of intervertebral disc degeneration. This article reviews the latest research progress in the activation and negative regulation of PI3K/AKT signal pathway, and focuses on the positive effects of different treatments on intervertebral disc degeneration through PI3K/AKT signal pathway. It is believed that intervention in this signaling pathway is expected to become an attractive therapeutic strategy in the near future.

## Keywords

Low Back Pain, Intervertebral Disc Degeneration, PI3K/AKT Signaling Pathway, Molecular Mechanism

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## 1. 引言

椎间盘退行性变(Intervertebral disc degeneration, IDD)可引起下腰痛(Low Back Pain, LBP),是导致患者生活质量下降、残疾的最重要病因之一[1],通常伴随着椎间盘基质金属蛋白酶(MMP)上调、氧化应激加剧、功能性髓核细胞(NPCs)数量减少、髓核组织纤维化等[2]。椎间盘由髓核(Nucleus pulposus, NP)、纤维环(Annulus fibrosus, AF)和上下软骨终板(Cartilaginous endplates, CEPs)组成,是人类脊柱的主要组成部分,为日常活动提供机械支撑和脊柱运动[3]。在IDD的发展过程中,椎间盘组织的解剖和形态学特征也会发生变化,某一结构的损伤均可导致椎间盘内环境的改变,从而进一步加速退变的进程[4][5]。Pi3k/akt信号通路可调节多种生物学过程,包括细胞凋亡、自噬和氧化应激等,作为细胞内主要的信号传导通路,干预椎间盘组织的PI3K/AKT信号通路作用于下游靶蛋白,或可有效地预防或逆转IDD。本文汇总了近5年的相关研究进展,通过总结与PI3K/AKT信号通路有关的IDD的最新治疗措施,进一步加深对IDD的认识[6]。

## 2. PI3K/AKT 信号通路

作为细胞内主要的信号传导通路,正常状态下的PI3K可通过酪氨酸激酶RTK、G蛋白偶联受体、整合素及细胞因子等方式激活[7]。下游的AKT是一种丝氨酸/苏氨酸激酶[8]。激活的PI3K将膜结合的磷脂酰肌醇4,5-二磷酸转化为磷脂酰肌醇3,4,5-三磷酸[9],使AKT第308处苏氨酸(Thr308)磷酸化。同时,mTOR复合物2使AKT的473处丝氨酸磷酸化,导致AKT的完全激活[10][11]。激活的AKT与下游靶蛋白相互作用,调节多种生物学过程。

## 3. PI3K/akt 信号通路在 IDD 治疗中的研究进展

### 3.1. 药物通过 PI3K/akt 信号通路治疗 IDD

右美托咪定(dexmedetomidine, DEX)是一种强大且高度选择性的 $\alpha_2$ 肾上腺素能受体激动剂,可通过激活PI3K/AKT信号通路发挥抗炎和抗氧化作用[12]。超氧化物歧化酶(Superoxide Dismutase, SOD)是生物体内存在的一种抗氧化金属酶,它能够催化超氧阴离子自由基歧化生成氧和过氧化氢,在机体氧化与

抗氧化平衡中起到至关重要的作用。Ji 等发现用 DEX 刺激 NPCs 后, SOD1 和 SOD2 显著增加, 而 ROS 水平也显著降低。过量的 ROS 会引起线粒体氧化应激, 降低线粒体膜电位(Mitochondrial membrane potential, MMP), 诱导细胞凋亡[13]。

酪醇是主要多酚化合物之一, 主要存在于特级初榨橄榄油、白葡萄酒和其他植物衍生产品中。据报道, 酪醇具有广泛的生物活性, 包括抗骨质疏松、心脏保护、抗氧化、抗凋亡和抗炎作用。通过上调 Sirt1 (sirtuin 1, Sirt1) 激活 PI3K/AKT 通路从而影响 SOX9 的表达促进蛋白聚糖的合成以缓解 IDD 的同时, 还可抑制髓核细胞中 IL-1 $\beta$ , TNF- $\alpha$  等炎症因子的表达[14]。然而, 在 Qi 等的研究中, 并未进行动物实验, 该药物治疗 IDD 的效果仍需进一步研究。

6-姜酚(6-gingerol, 6-GIN)是生姜中的主要药物活性成分, 可通过抑制 PI3K/AKT 信号通路增加自噬通量减少 NPMSCs 的凋亡延缓 IDD 的进展[15]。PI3K/AKT 通路与自噬的发生密切相关, 但由于刺激条件、细胞类型和下游效应器的不同, PI3K/AKT 信号通路在自噬中发挥的调节作用是复杂的。压力刺激通过抑制 PI3K/AKT/mTOR 信号通路诱导 NP 细胞自噬使椎间盘退变的进展加速[16]。IL-17A 却通过激活 PI3K/AKT/Bcl-2 信号通路抑制 NP 细胞的自噬加速椎间盘组织的退变[17]。Pi3k/akt 信号通路对于自噬的调控在 IDD 的病理生理过程中的作用十分复杂, 待进一步研究。除激活 NPMSCs 自噬外, 6-GIN 还可以在降低 H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 诱导的 NPMSCs 的 ROS 水平升高的同时, 增加 Bcl-2、降低 Bax 和 caspase-3 的表达, 提示 6GIN 能够抑制细胞凋亡是通过降低 NPMSCs 氧化应激实现的[15]。

### 3.2. 生物制剂通过 PI3K/akt 信号通路治疗 IDD

近些年, 关于外泌体治疗 IDD 的报道逐渐增加。外泌体是由脂质双层膜组成的直径范围为 30~150 nm 的纳米级细胞外囊泡, 可通过其各种生物活性分子的转移影响细胞间通讯[18]。Cheng 等发现骨髓间充质来源外泌体(bone marrow mesenchymal stem cell derived exosome, BMSC-EXO)富含 miR-21。当与 BMSC-EXO 一起孵育时, NPCs 可以吸收外泌体, 并且外泌体中的 miR-21 可以内化到受体 NPCs 中, 通过抑制人第 10 号染色体缺失的磷酸酶(phosphatase and tensin homolog deleted on chromosome ten, PTEN), 从而激活 NPC 中的 PI3K/AKT 通路抑制其凋亡, 实现对大鼠针刺尾椎退变间盘的治疗作用[19]。

CEP 是位于椎间盘上下两侧的透明软骨。研究表明, CEP 组织中的祖细胞可分化为成骨细胞、脂肪细胞和软骨细胞[4]。这些祖细胞被定义为软骨终板干细胞, 它们在维持 CEPs 结构和功能的完整性方面非常重要。雌激素受体分布在所有 IVD 结构中, 包括 NP 细胞和 CEPs 等[20]。随着 IDD 的加重, 退化的 CEP 组织中雌激素受体数量下降, 炎症因子水平上升[21]。而 CEP 炎症可能进一步加速 IDD 的进展, Luo 等通过 TBHP 诱导 CEP 炎症, 提取正常软骨终板干细胞(Cartilage endplate stem cells, CESC)外泌体(N-exo)与退化 CESC 外泌体(D-exo), 发现 N-Exos 比 D-Exos 更能有效地抑制 NPCs 凋亡、减缓椎间盘退变。PI3K/AKT 抑制剂 LY294002 可以逆转 N-EXOs 的治疗作用表明 N-EXOs 可能通过激活 PI3K/AKT 信号通路发挥作用[4]。

外泌体具有低免疫原性和易存贮等优点, 有望使其从生物分子水平治疗 IDD, 在 IDD 治疗领域具有极大的应用潜力。除此之外, 体内激素水平的高低对 IDD 的生物学过程产生重要影响。调节 IDD 患者体内激素的水平有望成为预防 IDD 的有效手段。

雌激素对绝经后妇女的下腰痛有治疗作用, 大鼠在去除卵巢后, IDD 的严重程度增加, 提示雌激素减少与 IDD 有关[22]。研究发现, 17 $\beta$ -雌二醇(17 $\beta$ -estradiol, E2)可通过增加 II 型胶原和蛋白聚糖含量, 降低 MMP-3 和 MMP-13 以预防 IDD [23]。MMP-3 的基因多态性已被证实与人椎间盘退变的严重程度有关[24]。FOXO3 属于 FOXO 家族, 细胞核中的 FOXO3 与 MMP-3 启动子区域结合, 调节 MMP-3 的表达。Gao 等发现, 雌二醇(E2)可作用于 PI3K/AKT 通路, 磷酸化 AKT 引发蛋白酶体依赖性降解, 促进 FOXO3

的核外移位,使得髓核细胞核中 FOXO3 含量减少, MMP3 表达下调,从而恢复 IDD 中下调的 II 型胶原和聚集蛋白聚糖[25]。E2 作用于 pi3k/akt 信号通路,除可调节 ECM 代谢外,还能抑制髓核细胞的凋亡。Wang 等发现, E2 可以时间依赖性方式(0~48 小时)增加 p-AKT 的表达,有效保护 NP 细胞免受 TNF- $\alpha$  诱导的细胞凋亡[26]。Yang 等研究进一步证实 E2 可以通过 PI3K/AKT/caspase-3 途径对抗大鼠 NPCs 中 IL-1 $\beta$  诱导的细胞凋亡[27],进一步阐明了雌激素治疗 IDD 的作用机制。

1,25(OH)<sup>2</sup>D3 作为临床上的常用药,通常用来促进患者对 Ca<sup>2+</sup>的吸收。近些年,有学者报道,其对 IDD 同样具有治疗作用。Wang 等报道,1,25(OH)<sup>2</sup>D3 显著抑制了 H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 诱导后大鼠髓核间充质干细胞(nucleus pulposus mesenchymal stem cells, NPMSCs)中 ROS 水平和 MMP-J 聚集体的上调,并且这种治疗作用可被 PI3K 抑制剂 LY294002 阻断。表明 1,25(OH)<sup>2</sup>D3 可能通过活化 PI3K/AKT 信号通路发挥抗氧化应激的作用以保护 NPMSCs [28]。Tong 等发现 1,25(OH)<sup>2</sup>D3 处理 12 小时可有效增加 H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 诱导的大鼠 AFCs 中细胞活力,增加线粒体膜电位,降低 ROS 水平,增加线粒体 ATP 含量,保留氧化呼吸链中关键酶的活性,从而保护线粒体免受 H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 诱导的损伤[5]。进一步阐明了 1,25(OH)<sup>2</sup>D3 的作用机制。

#### 4. 结语

尽管激活的 PI3K/AKT 途径已被证明通过多种机制保护 IVD,但仍有许多问题需要探明和解决。同一种椎间盘组织中信号通路的激活或抑制可能对椎间盘退变产生相同的影响,有两种原因,其一是信号通路并非独立运作的,需要进一步的研究该信号通路如何与其它介质相互作用。其二是在椎间盘退变的不同阶段,组织中同一信号通路激活或抑制的状态可能会发生改变。但不可否认的是,许多对椎间盘退变有治疗效果的药物、生物制剂(外泌体)等都通过 PI3K/AKT 信号通路产生积极的影响。因此,应对椎间盘退变与该信号通路的关系做进一步的研究,有助于开发 IDD 的新型靶向生物治疗方法。

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