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YAP1调控间质成纤维细胞活化的研究进展

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[摘要] 间质成纤维细胞位于实质细胞周围, 参与细胞外基质(extracellular matrix, ECM)分泌。该细胞通常处于静止状态, 但在炎症和肿瘤等疾病发生时异常活化。成纤维细胞活化受多种基因调控, 这些基因通过促进细胞增殖、促进胶原蛋白和纤维蛋白等ECM分泌, 导致局部组织过度纤维化, 促进疾病进展。Yes相关蛋白1(Yes-associated protein 1, YAP1)是一种转录因子共刺激分子, 同时也是多种信号通路的效应分子。YAP1在活化状态成纤维细胞内表达水平较高。且该蛋白通过调控包含生长因子在内的活化相关的基因表达, 可促进成纤维细胞活化。因此, YAP1可能是成纤维细胞活化的关键调控因子, 下调YAP1表达有望成为纤维化疾病的潜在治疗方式。

[关键词] Yes相关蛋白1; 成纤维细胞; 活化; 纤维化; 细胞微环境

Research progress in regulation of activating stromal fibroblasts by YAP1

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Abstract Stromal fibroblasts are located in the surrounding of parenchyma cells and involved in secretion of extracellular matrix (ECM). The cells are quiescent in general state, but abnormally activated when diseases such as inflammation and tumors occur. The activation of fibroblasts is regulated by various genes, which can promote cell proliferation and secretion of ECM like collagen and fibrin, thus leading to disease progression induced by excessive local fibrosis. Yes-associated protein 1 (YAP1) is not only a coactivator of transcription factor, but also an effector in multiple signaling pathways. The expression level of YAP1 is up-regulated in activated fibroblast. Moreover, the protein could contribute to activation of fibroblasts through regulating the expression of activation-related genes like growth factors. As a result, YAP1 may be a key regulator in fibroblast activation, and inhibition of YAP is expected to be a potential treatment of fibrosis.

Keywords Yes-associated protein 1; fibroblast; activation; fibrosis; cellular microenvironment

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成纤维细胞位于实质细胞周围的结缔组织中,产生并分泌胶原蛋白和细胞因子等多种ECM成分。生理状态下,成纤维细胞呈静止状态,其正常的结构和生理功能是维持细胞微环境稳态的必要条件。但在炎症和肿瘤等疾病中,在细胞因子和活化介质如趋化因子、生长因子、TGF- β 、金属基质蛋白酶(matrix metalloproteinase, MMP)的诱导下,成纤维细胞通过TGF- β /SMAD, Wnt/ β -catenin, JNK/STAT3, 丝裂原激活的蛋白激酶(mitogen-activated protein kinase, MAPK)和RhoA/ROCK等信号通路发生活化,其结构及功能发生改变^[1-5]。随着成纤维细胞活化,大量胶原蛋白产生并聚集在实质细胞周围,使细胞微环境稳态遭到破坏,导致局部组织过度纤维化、组织功能异常,并阻碍药物到达效应细胞^[6]。另外,受活化成纤维细胞的影响,细胞微环境中趋化因子和生长因子被大量释放,促进了炎症反应及肿瘤细胞增殖,进一步破坏局部组织结构和功能,进而导致疾病进展。临床一般通过去除有害刺激、抑制炎症反应、促进基质降解来延缓纤维化进展。近年来随着细胞因子抑制剂及酪氨酸激酶抑制剂的临床应用,抑制成纤维细胞活化及靶向促纤维化介质成为纤维化疾病治疗的主要研究方向^[7-8]。但是由于成纤维细胞活化机制尚不完全明确,深入研究细胞活化关键调节分子十分必要。近年来,研究^[9]发现Yes相关蛋白1(Yes-associated protein 1, YAP1)与成纤维细胞活化密切相关。YAP1作为转录因子共刺激分子,通过与转录因子特异性结合,调控转录因子活性,从而对细胞生物学特性进行多方面调控,其中包括对成纤维细胞活化的调控。本文就YAP1调控间质成纤维细胞活化的研究做一综述。

1 YAP1 蛋白结构及其活性调控

YAP1蛋白主要分布于体内各种细胞的胞浆和胞核中,其结构域包括一个富含脯氨酸的结构域、转录激活结构域、TEAD结合区、src同源结构域3(src homology domain 3, SH3)结合区、PDZ结合区和两个WW结构域,这些结构域的存在赋予YAP1与其他蛋白质相互作用的能力。其中,TEAD, SH3和PDZ结合区分别与包含相应结构域的蛋白质结合,WW结构域与含PPXY结构域的蛋白质结合^[10-11]。由于YAP1可与多种转录因子结合,其对体内生物功能的调节是多方面的。大量研究^[12-14]已证明YAP1是一个功能强大的转录

调节器,参与调控多种与发育和肿瘤相关的基因表达。但因YAP1不存在DNA结合区,所以必须通过与转录因子结合才能发挥对DNA的间接调节作用。

YAP1活性的调控发生在蛋白质磷酸化修饰水平,主要受Hippo信号通路的调节。当Hippo信号通路开启时,上游哺乳动物STE20激酶1/2(the mammalian Sterile-20-like kinase 1/2, MST1/2)、大肿瘤抑制基因1/2 (large tumor suppressor kinase 1/2, LATS1/2)的磷酸激酶级联反应导致YAP1磷酸化,磷酸化的YAP1与细胞骨架蛋白14-3-3结合,从而滞留在胞浆内,并逐渐被 β -转导重复相容蛋白(beta-transducin repeats-containing proteins, β -TRCP)依赖性蛋白酶体降解^[15]。当Hippo信号通路受到抑制时,YAP1磷酸化水平降低,去磷酸化的YAP1进入细胞核,与TEAD等转录因子结合,发挥其生物学活性。除Hippo信号通路外,TGF- β , MAPK, WNT, AKT等其他信号通路也参与调控YAP1的磷酸化过程^[16]。

2 YAP1 在活化成纤维细胞中的表达状态

在炎症、肿瘤的病变组织中,成纤维细胞增殖能力旺盛、 α -平滑肌肌动蛋白(alpha-smooth muscle actin, α -SMA)高表达、细胞脂滴消失、ECM分泌增多。这一过程被认为是成纤维细胞向肌纤维母细胞的转化,也称为成纤维细胞的活化^[1]。与静止状态成纤维细胞相比,活化状态的成纤维细胞具有更高的YAP1表达水平。Liu等^[17]利用免疫组织化学方法发现人特发性肺纤维化的肺组织较正常肺组织具有更明显的YAP1着色,且主要集中于梭形的成纤维细胞。Morvaridi等^[18]通过免疫组织化学技术观察到:在人胰腺炎、胰腺上皮内瘤变、胰腺癌以及KRAS突变诱发的急慢性胰腺炎小鼠模型的胰腺间质细胞中,YAP1表达水平较正常胰腺组织间质细胞均升高,该研究还借助免疫荧光染色技术发现YAP1与 α -SMA共表达,从而证明间质细胞中活化的成纤维细胞高表达YAP1。

YAP1在活化成纤维细胞中表达水平高,其亚细胞定位为细胞核内。此现象在上述特发性肺纤维病、胰腺炎和胰腺癌研究中均有报道^[17-18]。另外,Mannaerts等^[9]诱导小鼠肝损伤,并在肝损伤形成的不同时期对肝组织进行免疫组织化学染色,发现YAP1在肝损伤早期即发生核转位,说明YAP1核转位是肝成纤维细胞活化的早期改变。Dupuytren挛缩病是由皮肤真皮层成纤维细胞活

化、肌纤维母细胞富集引起的一种常染色体显性遗传病,患者表现为局部筋膜挛缩进而关节活动受限。Piersma等^[19]在对Dupuytren挛缩病的体外细胞研究时发现:YAP1的核转位与成纤维细胞活化过程相伴,表现为细胞逐渐活化的同时细胞核内YAP1的聚集量增多。

3 YAP1 对成纤维细胞活化的影响

YAP1在活化成纤维细胞较静止成纤维细胞中表达水平更高,且集中表达于YAP1发挥转录调控作用的场所——细胞核,提示YAP1可能对成纤维细胞的活化过程具有一定影响。Alexeyenko等^[20]将成纤维细胞与前列腺癌细胞共培养后,通过基因芯片对成纤维细胞转录组进行分析,结果发现表达水平异常上调的基因中有19个富集在Hippo-YAP1信号通路,提示YAP1在成纤维细胞活化的过程中有重要作用。同时,YAP1小分子抑制剂不仅可促使Dupuytren挛缩病的原代成纤维细胞发生去活化^[19],还可抑制体内及体外静止肝脏成纤维细胞的活化诱导^[9],说明YAP1不仅影响成纤维细胞活化,并且是成纤维细胞活化的必要条件。因此推断,YAP1对成纤维细胞活化的影响是多方面的,包括促进细胞增殖、上调 α -SMA表达、促进ECM形成以及抑制ECM降解。

YAP1是经典的细胞增殖调控分子,YAP1进入细胞核后与TEAD结合,从而调节下游靶基因的表达,如结缔组织生长因子(connective tissue growth factor, CTGF)、cyclin D1、双调蛋白(amphiregulin, AREG)等,以达到促进细胞增殖的目的^[21]。抑制活化的成纤维细胞中YAP1的表达会导致间质细胞增殖能力减弱^[19]。

细胞内 α -SMA的表达是成纤维细胞活化的标志之一。抑制间质细胞YAP1的表达会导致 α -SMA表达降低^[9,19,22]。在上皮细胞和大脑胶质细胞中已证实,YAP1可与Smad蛋白形成复合物,促进两者的核转运^[23-26]。此外,Hu等^[27]利用荧光素酶报告基因技术证实成纤维细胞核内Smad3可直接与 α -SMA启动子区结合,从而促进其表达。推测YAP1可能通过促进Smad3的核转运来调控 α -SMA的表达。Smad3同时也是TGF- β 信号通路中的重要转录因子。研究^[28]证明:YAP1的经典下游分子CTGF可在ECM中通过CR结构域直接与TGF- β 结合,增强TGF- β 与受体的结合作用,从而促进TGF- β 信号通路的激活。故YAP1也有可能通过激活TGF- β 通路上调Smad3活性,最终促进 α -SMA表达。

ECM是由上皮细胞或间质细胞合成并分泌到胞外分布在细胞表面或细胞之间的大分子,其重要成分之一为胶原蛋白。胶原蛋白合成增多也是成纤维细胞活化的表现。Piersma等^[19]利用小干扰RNA抑制成纤维细胞YAP1表达,从而导致I型胶原蛋白合成减少。Liu等^[17]过表达成纤维细胞系NIH3T3中YAP1后,I型胶原蛋白RNA水平升高,但其作用机制尚不明确。Makino等^[29]发现:在皮肤成纤维细胞中,miR-let7抑制剂可以增加I型胶原蛋白3'UTR报告基因活性,从而增加I型胶原蛋白表达。而在乳腺上皮细胞系MCF 10A中,YAP1可通过转录后水平上调Lin28抑制miR-let7的表达和功能^[30]。提示YAP1可通过对microRNA的调节影响ECM胶原蛋白表达。

此外,Liu等^[17]利用小干扰RNA抑制成纤维细胞系IMR-90中YAP1表达,发现纤溶酶原激活物抑制剂-1(plasminogen activator inhibitor-1, PAI-1)表达受抑制,从而促进ECM的降解。但YAP1调控PAI-1的具体机制尚不清楚。

4 调节 YAP1 活性的刺激因素

YAP1可以影响成纤维细胞的活化,然而其自身只是复杂调控网络中的一个重要节点,YAP1因受细胞微环境中物理、化学等因素影响而呈现出不同的状态。目前已确定的通过调节YAP1活性从而影响成纤维细胞活化的刺激因素包括生长环境的硬度、细胞微环境pH值以及TGF- β 。

体内成纤维细胞可通过整合素与ECM相连,感受光、力、温度、渗透压等物理状态的改变^[31]。其中,力学作用的刺激影响成纤维细胞活化,这种力学刺激即生长环境的硬度^[32-34]。体外研究^[35-36]发现:从肝组织中分离的成纤维细胞在2 kPa的培养材料上呈现静止状态。当细胞置于24 kPa质硬材料时,细胞形态发生改变、细胞表面积增加,F-actin, α -SMA及YAP1表达均增加,细胞形态与活化成纤维细胞一致。进一步研究^[20]发现:抑制YAP1表达会减弱硬度对成纤维细胞活化的影响。在硬度逐渐增加的过程中,如果抑制F-actin,成纤维细胞核中YAP1表达较对照组明显减少,说明细胞力学可以通过F-actin-YAP1调控成纤维细胞活化^[37-38]。同样有研究^[39]表明:基质硬度通过FAK-RHO轴上调F-actin和肌球蛋白表达,从而促进YAP1核转位,导致成纤维细胞活化。Zhang等^[40]利用小干扰RNA抑制snail表达后,成纤维细胞受硬度影响发生的变化程度减弱,说明snail也参与硬度

对YAP1的调控过程。值得注意的是, 细胞力学对YAP1的调控途径在不同细胞中存在差异, 在成纤维细胞中与Hippo信号通路无关, 而在上皮细胞中则可通过Hippo通路来调控^[41]。

除了体内外物理刺激因素, 化学刺激因素也能促进成纤维细胞活化。Zhu等^[42]研究发现: 肿瘤细胞外环境pH值会影响成纤维细胞活化。根据肿瘤细胞Warburg效应, 肿瘤细胞无氧酵解代谢过程释放大量的酸性物质, 加之周围血管生成有限, 不能及时经过局部循环中和酸性物质, 所以肿瘤外环境被认为是偏酸性的^[43]。Zhu等^[44]进一步研究发现: 酸性培养环境能增强间质细胞YAP1活性, 促进细胞增殖、抑制细胞凋亡, 而抑制YAP1表达将导致低pH诱导成纤维细胞活化失败, 说明这种诱导是YAP1依赖性的。其具体机制为: 酸性环境能激活质子敏感性G蛋白偶联受体68(G-protein-coupled receptor 68, GPR68), 并通过RhoGEF-Rho-ROCK轴抑制LATS1/2磷酸化, 从而增强YAP1活性, 诱导成纤维细胞活化^[44]。

TGF- β 被认为是成纤维细胞最有效的活化分子之一^[45]。Bachem等^[46]利用一些常见生长因子包括TGF- α , TGF- β , 碱性成纤维细胞生长因子(basic fibroblast growth factor, bFGF)、血小板源性生长因子(platelet-derived growth factor, PDGF)孵育胰腺癌相关成纤维细胞, 结果发现: 仅TGF- β 具有明显促纤维蛋白合成的作用。随后大量研究^[47-49]发现: 炎症细胞和肿瘤细胞合成分泌TGF- β 十分旺盛, 通过旁分泌作用刺激成纤维细胞活化。成纤维细胞活化后也产生大量TGF- β , 通过自分泌和旁分泌作用维持并扩大成纤维细胞的活化效应^[50-51]。研究^[19,23]证明: TGF- β 对YAP1核转运有促进作用, 抑制YAP1表达会减弱TGF- β 刺激成纤维细胞的活化效应, 而且这种影响独立于细胞力学作用, 但TGF- β 对YAP1的作用机制尚不明确。Pefani等^[24]证明: TGF- β 通过结合并抑制Ras相关区域家族亚型A(Ras association domain family 1 protein isoform A, RASSF1A), 从而缓解RASSF1A抑制YAP1与p-SMAD2的结合作用, 促进YAP1-Smad复合物的核转运, 这可能是成纤维细胞中TGF- β 调控YAP1核转位的机制。

5 YAP1 在纤维化相关疾病中的临床应用

YAP1在体外活化的成纤维细胞核内过表达, 在人纤维化组织的成纤维细胞核中也是如此。研

究者们^[9,17-19,52-53]在肝纤维化、胰腺纤维化、特发性肺间质炎、Dupuytren挛缩病、镉接触性慢性阻塞性肺疾病、多囊肾(细胞外基质异常增生是其特点之一)的组织中均观察到YAP1在成纤维细胞核内过表达。另外, Gurda等^[54]研究发现胆道闭锁纤维化程度严重的患者, 上皮细胞核内YAP1表达水平明显较高, 说明其表达强弱可用于鉴别新生儿胆道闭锁。急性肾损伤中也发现肾纤维化程度与上皮细胞核内YAP1表达水平一致^[55]。因此成纤维细胞或上皮细胞核内YAP1过表达可能成为纤维化疾病诊断及鉴别诊断的依据。在疾病治疗方面, YAP1下游分子CTGF的抑制剂对肺纤维化治疗的作用已完成I期临床试验(NCT00074698)。YAP1抑制剂在临床上作为光动力学疗法的工具仅应用于治疗眼部疾病, 如老年黄斑变性、脉络膜血管病变。其他应用如治疗乳腺癌(NCT02872064)、胰腺癌(NCT03033225)、恶性胸腔积液(NCT02702700)均处于I-II期临床试验阶段。虽然YAP1抑制剂尚未应用于纤维化疾病的治疗, 但可以预见的是, YAP1抑制剂可以阻碍成纤维细胞活化的多条途径, 包括抑制CTGF, 有着广阔的应用前景。

6 结语

YAP1对间质成纤维细胞活化的调控是一个非常复杂的过程, 其核内过表达可能是成纤维细胞活化的标志之一。硬度、酸碱性等细胞外环境因素及细胞外因子均能够抑制YAP1磷酸化、促进YAP1核转位, 主要通过调节FAK/Rho, RhoGEF-Rho-ROCK和TGF- β /SMAD信号通路调控活化相关基因的表达, 促进成纤维细胞活化(图1)。成纤维细胞在活化后增殖并分泌大量ECM, 导致机体局部纤维化, 影响组织器官的功能。尽管在YAP1调控成纤维细胞活化的研究中取得一些进展, 但目前关于YAP1调控成纤维细胞活化的机制研究及YAP1在纤维化疾病中的临床研究仍十分有限。更多有关YAP1调节ECM分泌促进纤维化的分子机制, 以及在治疗纤维化疾病中的潜在价值还需要进一步研究。纤维化可发生于体内各个部位, 不同器官或组织的纤维化会导致不同的临床结局, 早期诊断并干预成纤维细胞活化对纤维化疾病的不良结局意义重大。YAP1核内过表达可能成为纤维化疾病的早期诊断依据, 下调YAP1表达或抑制YAP1核转位可能为改善疾病纤维化提供新的治疗策略。

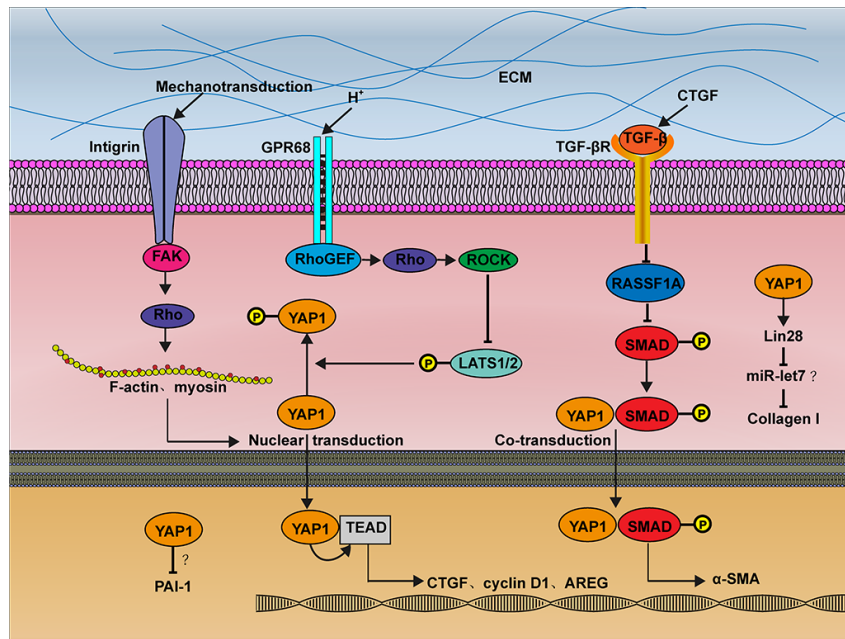


图1 YAP1调控间质成纤维细胞活化机制

Figure 1 Regulation mechanism of activating stromal fibroblasts by YAP1

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