

TRAIL 基因修饰间充质干细胞治疗恶性肿瘤研究进展

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摘要: 间充质干细胞 (mesenchymal stem cells, MSCs) 是一种具有自我更新及多向分化潜能的干细胞。MSCs 具有对多种肿瘤组织归巢及定向迁移的特性, 可以将其作为治疗肿瘤药物的载体, 用来治疗无法通过手术去除的肿瘤; 同时, MSCs 自身参与重塑肿瘤微环境, 影响其侵袭、增殖和转移等生物学行为, 并且具有抗炎及损伤组织修复的能力。肿瘤坏死因子相关凋亡配体 (TRAIL/Apo2L) 作为诱导细胞凋亡的肿瘤坏死因子家族成员之一, 可通过结合肿瘤细胞表面两个特异性死亡受体 (DR4、DR5), 特异激活肿瘤细胞凋亡。TRAIL 基因修饰的 MSCs (TRAIL-MSCs) 可定位至肿瘤组织并抑制原发肿瘤及转移瘤的增殖、促进其凋亡, 有望用于多种实体肿瘤及血液肿瘤的靶向治疗。综述了 TRAIL-MSCs 治疗肿瘤的研究进展, 并讨论了 TRAIL-MSCs 联合放化疗对肿瘤的治疗效果, 为该疗法在肿瘤治疗领域的应用提供理论依据。

关键词: 间充质干细胞; 基因修饰; TRAIL; 细胞凋亡; 死亡受体; 放化疗; 耐药性

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Research progress of TRAIL gene modified mesenchymal stem cells in treatment of malignant tumors

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Abstract: Mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) is one of adult stem cells with self-renewal and multi-differentiation potential. MSCs also possess other characteristics including homing and directional migration to a variety of tumor tissues, which can be used as a vehicle for anti-tumor drug to treat the tumors which cannot be removed by surgery. Meanwhile, MSCs participate in reshaping the tumor microenvironment, affecting their biological behaviors such as invasion, proliferation and metastasis, and have the ability to anti inflammation and repair damaged tissues, thus laying the foundation for development of tumor drug. Tumor necrosis factor-related apoptosis ligand (TRAIL/Apo2L), as one of the tumor necrosis factor family, which can specifically induces tumor cells apoptosis by binding with two specific death receptors (DR4, DR5) on the surface of tumor cells. Studies have found that engineered mesenchymal stem cells over-expressing TRAIL (TRAIL-MSCs) migrate to tumor tissue to reduce the growth of primary cancers and metastases, and promote the tumor cells apoptosis. So TRAIL-MSCs can be used as to treat a variety of solid tumors and hematological tumors. This paper reviewed the research progress of TRAIL-MSCs in the treatment of tumor, and discussed the therapeutic effect of TRAIL-MSCs combined with radiotherapy and chemotherapy on tumor, providing theoretical basis for the application of TRAIL-MSCs in the field of tumor treatment.

Key words: mesenchymal stem cells; gene modification; TRAIL; apoptosis; death receptor; radiation and chemotherapy; drug resistance

世界卫生组织国际癌症研究机构(IARC)发布的 Global Cancer Statistics 2020 报告估计, 2020 年全球新发癌症病例 1 929 万例, 癌症死亡病例 996 万例^[1]。尽管在癌症治疗方面的知识和经验有了长足

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的进步,但有效对抗和治疗恶性肿瘤的能力仍然有限^[2],需要更有效和创新的方法来提高癌症的治疗效果。间充质干细胞(MSCs)可以定位至肿瘤部位,作为载体提供靶向治疗,通过基因工程方法体外基因修饰 MSCs,使其表达如肿瘤坏死因子(TNF)相关的凋亡诱导配体(TRAIL)等抗肿瘤蛋白,已成为恶性肿瘤的细胞治疗途径之一。此外,使用小分子抑制剂来增强肿瘤细胞对 TRAIL 或 TRAIL 基因修饰 MSCs(TRAIL-MSCs)的敏感性,可以获得更好的治疗效果。本文综述了 TRAIL-MSCs 治疗肿瘤的研究进展,并讨论了 TRAIL-MSCs 联合放化疗对肿瘤的治疗效果,为该疗法在肿瘤治疗领域的应用提供理论依据。

1 MSCs及其向肿瘤趋化作用

MSCs 是一种具有自我更新及多向分化潜能的干细胞,与其他潜在的细胞疗法相比, MSCs 低表达 MHC-I 类分子,不表达 Fas 基因蛋白配体(FasL)和 MHC-II 类分子及其共刺激分子(CD86、CD40 等),从而降低移植风险,并克服了移植细胞引起的免疫排斥,已成为最具临床前景的细胞治疗产品^[3-5]。

MSCs 可以作为治疗肿瘤的药物载体,通过插入治疗基因,可以追踪、归巢至肿瘤组织中,用来治疗无法通过手术去除的肿瘤^[6]。大量报告表明, MSCs 能够渗透至肿瘤基质及其微环境中,并有助于基质组织损伤修复^[7]。MSCs 迁移到肿瘤微环境的确切机制尚不完全清楚,研究普遍认为,肿瘤微环境中大量分泌的趋化因子和炎症细胞因子充当了 MSCs 表面趋化因子受体的配体,从而招募 MSCs 迁移至肿瘤部位。研究发现,肿瘤细胞可通过分泌趋化因子 CXCL-12[基质细胞衍生因子(SDF-1)],结合 MSCs 细胞表面受体 CXCR-4,驱动 MSCs 的肿瘤归巢作用^[8]; CXCL12/CXCR4 通路在血管生成和造血干细胞动员过程发挥重要作用^[9],并在 MSCs 迁移的信号传导与肿瘤归巢能力之间存在很强的联系,加入 CXCR4 的阻断剂后, MSCs 的迁移能力较对照组显著降低^[10]。另外,血管黏附因子及肿瘤组织分泌的炎症因子也对 MSCs 的归巢存在重要介导作用^[11]。多项研究表明改变骨形态发生蛋白 2(BMP-2)、B 细胞淋巴瘤 2(BCL-2)和促红细胞生成素(EPO)等基因的外源表达可增强 MSCs 在目标部位的归巢及治疗效果^[12-13]。以上结果为 MSCs 作为载体直接递送抗肿瘤剂至肿瘤微环境提供了充分的理论依据。

MSCs 通过多种因素趋化进入肿瘤间质后,与肿瘤细胞交互作用,通过分泌多种细胞因子、生长

因子、免疫调节因子调节肿瘤的生物行为^[14], MSCs 一方面可抑制肿瘤局部炎症反应、并促进血管和脉管组织形成,另一方面则通过抑制靶细胞 PI3K/Akt 信号通路中 Akt 蛋白激酶活性,改变肿瘤细胞周期,抑制肿瘤细胞的生长^[15-16]。

综上所述, MSCs 可趋化至肿瘤组织并发挥复杂的生物学功能,其对肿瘤生物学行为还有待深入研究及确证。

2 TRAIL 及其受体

TRAIL,也称凋亡素 2 配体(Apo2L),是 TNF 超家族的成员,通过与其受体结合介导肿瘤细胞的凋亡,而对正常细胞没有毒性。人 TRAIL 基因定位在染色体 3q26,该蛋白是一种 II 型跨膜蛋白,其胞外域与 FasL(28%)和 TNF- α (23%)具有最高的序列同源性^[17]。TRAIL 的主要生理功能表现为参与 T 细胞及 NK 细胞介导的因病毒感染或转染、肿瘤恶变等导致的细胞凋亡^[18-19]。TRAIL 的受体主要包括 4 种: TRAIL-R1[也称死亡受体 4(DR4)]、TRAIL-R2[也称死亡受体 5(DR5)]、TRAIL-R3(DcR1)和 TRAIL-R4(DcR2)^[20-21]。其中 DR4 和 DR5 都包含 1 个保留的死亡域(DD)序列,并在信号凋亡传导中发挥重要作用^[22-23]。TRAIL-R3/DcR1 和 TRAIL-R4/DcR2 与 DR4 和 DR5 细胞外域具有同源性,可作为诱饵与 TRAIL 结合并抑制其对细胞凋亡的诱导作用^[24]。

当 TRAIL 与 DR5 或 DR4 的受体分子结合形成三聚体时,与带有死亡受体的 Fas 相关蛋白(FADD)和 caspase-8 结合形成称为死亡诱导信号复合物的功能性凋亡介导信号复合物(DISC)^[25]。接头分子 FADD 被募集后,结合并激活 caspase-8 和 caspase-10,而活化的 caspase-8 和 10 激活天冬氨酸蛋白水解酶并促进 pro-caspase-3 转化为其活性形式,从而导致死亡底物的裂解并最终导致细胞凋亡^[25-26]。另一方面, Caspase-8 的裂解及活化可激活 BH-3 依赖蛋白 Bid(促凋亡 Bcl-2 家族的一个成员),该蛋白与线粒体中的 Bax 和 Bak 相互作用以破坏线粒体外膜的稳定性及通透性,从而释放细胞色素-C^[27]。在细胞质中,细胞色素-C 与接头蛋白 APAF-1 以及 pro-caspase-9 等结合形成凋亡体,从而激活 caspase-9,并活化 caspase-3、6 和 7 等“凋亡执行者”蛋白酶,引起细胞凋亡^[28]。

3 TRAIL-MSCs 治疗恶性肿瘤

3.1 TRAIL-MSCs 对恶性实体肿瘤的治疗作用

多项研究已经证明, TRAIL 可单独作为一种有

效的抗肿瘤药物^[29], TRAIL对结直肠癌、乳腺癌、胶质母细胞瘤和非小细胞肺癌等多种实体肿瘤均具有抑制肿瘤细胞增殖和诱导细胞凋亡的作用^[30-31]。然而, TRAIL在动物体内半衰期短, 可被肾脏快速清除, 最终导致其生物利用度较差^[32]。因此, 利用MSCs向肿瘤的归巢作用, 采用分子生物学手段基因修饰MSCs使其在肿瘤病灶部位持续表达TRAIL, 从而定向杀伤肿瘤细胞已成为具有临床前景的肿瘤细胞疗法。

研究证实, 表达分泌TRAIL的基因修饰MSCs有抑制肿瘤生长的特性^[33-36], 并且这种治疗优于重组TRAIL蛋白及抗DR5抗体等传统治疗方法^[37-40]; 体外迁移实验证实, TRAIL-MSCs能够向肿瘤迁移, 而瘤内注射及颅内对侧注射 2×10^5 个TRAIL-MSCs均表现出显著抑制小鼠颅内肿瘤的生长及显著延长荷瘤小鼠生存时间的作用, 其治疗效果明显优于腺病毒介导的胶质瘤原位TRAIL基因治疗^[41]。此外, 研究证明表达TRAIL的骨髓来源的MSCs通过iv可归巢至乳腺癌肺转移的小鼠模型的肿瘤组织中, 通过连续4周给予TRAIL-MSCs(7.5×10^5 /周)可发挥显著的治疗肺转移癌的作用^[42]; 最近的研究发现, 过表达TRAIL的基因修饰脂肪来源MSCs同样可定位于肿瘤组织, 通过iv可抑制人肺癌H460细胞异种移植小鼠模型的肿瘤细胞增殖, 而对正常组织没有明显的毒副作用^[35]。MSCs表达的TRAIL可显著抑制非小细胞肺癌来源的CD133⁺肿瘤干细胞增殖, 并促进细胞凋亡^[43]。这些研究表明, TRAIL-MSCs可以选择性地定位至肿瘤组织中并对肿瘤细胞起到抑制增殖、促进凋亡的作用。

3.2 TRAIL-MSCs对血液系统恶性肿瘤的治疗作用

血液系统恶性肿瘤(hematological malignancies, 又称血液肿瘤)包括各种类型的白血病、淋巴瘤和骨髓瘤等; 血液肿瘤细胞对TRAIL的敏感性存在较大差异: 一方面, 不同血液肿瘤细胞DR4/DR5受体表达水平不同; 另一方面, 异常的骨髓微环境为部分肿瘤细胞提供了一个保护环境, 能够降低血液肿瘤细胞对化疗的敏感性^[44]。研究发现, TRAIL对T细胞淋巴白血病有显著的杀伤作用, 而对其他血液肿瘤细胞杀伤效果不显著^[45]。而针对复发惰性B细胞滤泡性非霍奇金淋巴瘤患者的Ib/II期临床试验研究发现, 将TRAIL添加到标准治疗中时并没有更好的有效性结果^[46]。

将TRAIL基因修饰MSCs后, 对部分血液系统

肿瘤具有较为显著的治疗作用。1项研究表明携带TRAIL的脂肪来源MSCs(AD-MSCs)在体外具有迁移到多发性骨髓瘤(MM)细胞并杀死MM细胞的作用, 发现尽管MM细胞对rhTRAIL具有中等敏感性, 但TRAIL-MSCs仍可显著诱导MM细胞死亡, 值得注意的是, 该作用与caspase-8激活有关, 并被caspase抑制剂消除^[47]。本课题组的研究也发现, 经TRAIL基因修饰的脐带来源MSCs对B、T细胞淋巴瘤白血病均具有显著的细胞增殖抑制及促进凋亡作用, 且该效应与肿瘤细胞分泌的DR4/DR5密切相关。

4 放化疗提高TRAIL-MSCs抗肿瘤效果

尽管TRAIL在某些肿瘤细胞类型中是一种有效的凋亡诱导剂, 然而, 肿瘤干细胞(CSC)可通过诱饵受体DcR1、DcR2和细胞凋亡抑制剂(如cFLIP)的过度表达, 增强对TRAIL的耐药性或抗性^[48]; 同时, 肿瘤细胞可通过细胞保护性自噬等方式阻断TRAIL介导的细胞死亡^[49]; 而外周血中的循环肿瘤细胞(CTC)可能通过下调DR4、DR5的表达进一步降低对TRAIL的敏感性^[50]。

研究发现, 联合放化疗等肿瘤常规治疗可能克服TRAIL的耐药性, 并可能增强TRAIL/Apo2L在各种肿瘤中的凋亡活性^[50]。放射疗法可显著上调神经胶质瘤细胞的DR-5表达水平并诱导caspase激活, 协调增强肿瘤细胞对TRAIL敏感性, 增强TRAIL-MSCs杀伤肿瘤细胞的能力, 同时放射疗法还可增加IL-8表达, 从而提高TRAIL-MSC的迁移能力^[51]。

而顺铂、硼替佐米等化疗药物或辛二酰苯胺异羟肟酸(SAHA)、AT406、MK886等小分子抑制剂对肿瘤细胞的预处理已被证明可以增加TRAIL诱导细胞凋亡的敏感性^[47, 52-55]。硼替佐米等化疗药物可显著增强胶质瘤细胞对TRAIL的敏感性, 从而对TRAIL基因修饰的神经干细胞(NSC)治疗脑胶质瘤小鼠具有协同或敏化作用^[56]。凋亡抑制因子(inhibitor of apoptosis proteins, IAPs)抑制剂AT406和c-FLIP表达抑制剂rocaglamide分别通过克服IAP对caspase-3/6/7/9竞争抑制和阻断c-FLIP对procaspase-8竞争抑制增强肿瘤细胞对TRAIL的敏感性; 体外研究发现, TRAIL、AT406和rocaglamide的三联组合, 通过激活外在细胞凋亡途径, 显著改善17种不同实体癌细胞系中TRAIL诱导的细胞凋亡作用^[55]。对于神经胶质瘤细胞, 研究发现脂氧合酶抑制剂MK886可通过上调DR5的表

达、下调抗凋亡蛋白 Survivin、显著增强 caspases 活性,从而增强恶性神经胶质瘤细胞对 TRAIL-MSCs 的敏感性而诱导细胞凋亡^[53]。小剂量顺铂能够增加 DR4/DR5 的表达,增强 TRAIL-MSCs 的疗效,进而抑制多形性胶质母细胞的生长^[57];在 1 项使用小鼠恶性胶质瘤异种移植模型的研究中也观察到了类似的结果,小剂量顺铂通过增加 DR5 的表达,提高了肿瘤对 TRAIL-MSCs 的敏感性^[54]。而硼替佐米同样可增强多发性骨髓瘤细胞对 TRAIL 的敏感性,增强 TRAIL-MSCs 对 MM 细胞的杀伤作用^[47]。本课题组研究也发现,地塞米松等可显著增强急性淋巴白血病细胞表达 DR4/DR5,从而增强 TRAIL-MSC 杀伤 B 及 T 急性淋巴细胞白血病肿瘤细胞的能力^[58-59]。而 5-氟尿嘧啶(5-FU)等可增强肺腺癌、脑胶质瘤等实体肿瘤细胞对 TRAIL 的敏感性,从而可协同 TRAIL-MSC 治疗上述恶性肿瘤^[60]。

另外, MSC 可以显著上调肿瘤细胞中的 TRAIL 蛋白的表达,说明 MSC 分泌某些细胞因子和转录因子,导致肿瘤微环境中 TRAIL 基因转录和后续相应蛋白的表达量增加^[61]。这与本课题组的实验结果相类似,使用 MSCs 条件培养上清液处理肿瘤细胞后,胶质瘤细胞 U87MG、U251 等膜表面 TRAIL 受体 DR5 蛋白的表达量升高,虽然不能直接诱导肿瘤细胞的凋亡,但可以间接诱导凋亡相关蛋白的大量表达,进而增强 TRAIL-MSCs 对肿瘤细胞增殖抑制的作用^[62]。

5 结语

MSCs 因其低免疫原性、较高的安全性及肿瘤靶向和归巢作用,已成为具有潜力的肿瘤治疗药物载体。TRAIL-MSCs 对于恶性实体肿瘤及血液肿瘤均具有一定的杀伤作用,已成为具有临床前景的肿瘤细胞疗法,然而肿瘤细胞通过各种调节和保护机制可增强其对 TRAIL 的耐药性(图 1),为该疗法提出了挑战。大量体内外研究表明放疗、化疗等传统疗法与 TRAIL-MSCs 联用可发挥协同效应,为增强肿瘤细胞对 TRAIL 的敏感性提供理论依据,并为 TRAIL-MSC 疗法在肿瘤治疗领域的应用奠定基础。

利益冲突 所有作者均声明不存在利益冲突

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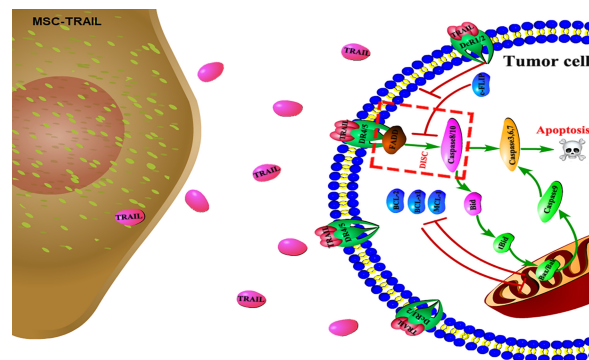


图 1 TRAIL-MSCs 诱导肿瘤细胞凋亡作用及肿瘤细胞对 TRAIL 信号通路的耐药机制

Fig. 1 TRAIL-MSCs induces tumor cells apoptosis and drug resistance mechanism of tumor cells to TRAIL signaling pathways

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