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## 动脉粥样硬化的分子核医学研究进展

黄代娟 张永学

**【摘要】** 动脉粥样硬化涉及到全身多处重要的动脉,是导致成人死亡的主要原因之一。早期诊断动脉粥样硬化斑块尤其是不稳定斑块具有重要的临床意义。该疾病病理生理学的不断发展,显示出包括“金标准”X射线血管造影在内的常用显像方法的一些不足以及对更加完善的显像技术的需求。分子核医学技术利用核素标记参与动脉粥样硬化形成的中间物质或其表面的血栓进行显像,无创性地检测斑块的数量、进展程度、分布和组成,为早期发现动脉粥样硬化提供了可靠依据。

**【关键词】** 动脉硬化;放射性核素显像;分子诊断技术

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### The development of molecular nuclear medicine in atherosclerosis

HUANG Dai-juan, ZHANG Yong-xue

(Department of Nuclear Medicine, Union Hospital, Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Hubei Key Laboratory of Molecular Imaging, Wuhan 430022, China)

**【Abstract】** Atherosclerosis involves many essential arteries of whole body and it is one of the main diseases that lead adults to death. So it has clinical significance to diagnose atherosclerosis in early stage and to judge its instability. Recent advances in the pathobiology of atherosclerosis have highlighted the inadequacies of the current techniques including the gold standard of X-ray angiography and the need for better imaging approaches. Molecular nuclear medicine can noninvasively detect the number, extent, distribution and component of atherosclerotic plaque, through nuclide imaging with the middle substances during the atherosclerotic process or thrombus on the surface of plaque, and thus can diagnose atherosclerosis in time.

**【Key words】** Atherosclerosis; Radionuclide imaging; Molecular diagnostic techniques

动脉粥样硬化是以脂质、炎性细胞和结缔组织在动脉壁的沉积为特征的一种慢性渐进性疾病。其发展缓慢,初期通常无任何症状,直到出现以下两

种情况时才表现出临床症状:①病变扩展限制血流产生;②纤维帽被侵蚀或破裂最终导致血栓形成。多数患者第一次发病时表现为心肌梗死、中风或心源性死亡。因此,早期发现粥样硬化斑块尤其是不稳定斑块,具有重要的临床意义。

分子核医学是利用放射性核素标记参与动脉粥

作者单位: 430022 武汉, 华中科技大学同济医学院附属协和医院核医学科, 湖北省分子影像学重点实验室

通讯作者: 张永学(E-mail: zhyx1229@163.com)

样硬化的中间物质进行显像,从分子水平阐明动脉粥样硬化病变组织基因表达的异常、受体密度和功能的变化、生化代谢变化及细胞信息转导等,为临床诊断、治疗和对疾病的研究提供分子水平信息<sup>[1]</sup>。

## 1 代谢显像

PET的高分辨率为动脉粥样硬化斑块显像提供了优越的技术条件,而放射性核素<sup>11</sup>C和<sup>18</sup>F,可以标记多种生化和代谢物质。因此,PET显像剂能更好地进行动脉粥样硬化斑块的功能显像。Kubota等首次提到肿瘤中巨噬细胞对<sup>18</sup>F-氟脱氧葡萄糖(<sup>18</sup>F-fluorodeoxyglucose,<sup>18</sup>F-FDG)的摄取,这个发现也提示了应用<sup>18</sup>F-FDG显示动脉粥样硬化斑块中巨噬细胞的可能性。

最初将其用于动脉粥样硬化的研究是高脂饮食兔模型的主动脉弓富含巨噬细胞的动脉粥样硬化病变部位的<sup>18</sup>F-FDG摄取。Lederman等<sup>[2]</sup>的研究发现,髂动脉病变部位<sup>18</sup>F-FDG的摄取是正常的4倍;组织分析证实病变血管的巨噬细胞和平滑肌细胞密度明显高于正常血管。研究表明,<sup>18</sup>F-FDG PET具有体内监测斑块的潜力。

Yun等<sup>[3]</sup>报道了行PET检查肿瘤患者时偶然发现血管<sup>18</sup>F-FDG的摄取,之后分析报道了具有血管源性危险因子的患者和无危险因子的患者摄取<sup>18</sup>F-FDG有显著性差异,这些危险因子中包括高脂血症。近期Hanif等<sup>[4]</sup>的研究也发现了同样的问题,8例出现症状的颈总动脉粥样硬化的患者行<sup>18</sup>F-FDG PET,注射显像剂后3 h内可见<sup>18</sup>F-FDG摄取,结果也被CT血管造影证实<sup>[5]</sup>。斑块巨噬细胞的活性同时也是引起斑块破裂的主要成分,因此可以用<sup>18</sup>F-FDG PET定量显示不稳定斑块<sup>[5,6]</sup>。Davies等<sup>[7]</sup>报道,联合<sup>18</sup>F-FDG PET和高分辨率磁共振可以半定量评价狭窄和非狭窄斑块的炎性改变程度,并有可能用来预测栓塞发生的概率。

## 2 受体显像

### 2.1 低密度脂蛋白(low-density lipoprotein, LDL)

LDL的沉积是粥样硬化斑块形成、发展和易损过程中的重要因素。巨噬细胞可以通过清道夫受体更快地摄取氧化型LDL,<sup>99m</sup>Tc标记的氧化型LDL与核素标记的LDL相比,灵敏度和血浆清除率都高,可于注射显像剂后1 h显像。

### 2.2 多肽

肽类与脂蛋白相比,血浆清除更快,在理论上也能提高靶/本底比值,因此更容易显示斑块。基于LDL上载脂蛋白B(apolipoprotein B, ApoB)的多肽是最早应用的,合成肽-4(synthetic peptide-4, SP-4)是ApoB的类似物,用<sup>99m</sup>Tc标记后注射入LDL受体缺损的渡边遗传性高脂血症的大白兔,显像迅速,并获得较高的靶/非靶比值,经放射自显影证实,SP-4可与斑块内的泡沫细胞结合<sup>[8]</sup>。

内皮细胞功能不全是动脉粥样硬化早期可探测到的病理学变化,内皮细胞功能缺失会导致血管内皮素合成上调,为斑块的探测提供了潜在的靶点<sup>[9]</sup>。应用核素标记的内皮素衍生物在实验动物模型上15 min即可清晰成像,并且其聚集量与平滑肌细胞数量有良好的相关性<sup>[10]</sup>。

斑块的破裂可导致血栓的形成,血栓有可能被限制于增大的粥样斑块中而不产生致命性,因此探测粥样硬化病变表面或其中的栓子也可帮助诊断不稳定性斑块,并对可以结合血栓的合成多肽进行标记。大多数多肽能够以活化的血小板表面的GPIIb/IIIa受体为靶点。因为其分子小,具有从血液循环中快速清除的优点,引起免疫反应的可能性比免疫球蛋白小。Sakuma等<sup>[11]</sup>用<sup>99m</sup>Tc标记GPIIb/IIIa抑制剂DMP-444,犬模型冠状动脉核素显像显示,富含血小板的血栓得到非常明显的阳性结果,解剖后的研究证实了富含血小板的血栓放射性活性的存在;摄取DMP-444很低的犬,其核素计数和血栓质量也较低,两组结果在统计学上有显著性差异。

### 2.3 免疫球蛋白

动脉粥样硬化斑块中的巨噬细胞表面表达特异性Fc受体,后者能与IgG的Fc亚单位结合。但由于IgG为大分子物质,血液清除和向组织渗透缓慢,不能较快达到成像所需的靶/本底比值,并且特异性不高,因此核素标记IgG并不适宜动脉粥样硬化。近年来,应用噬菌体肽库技术可以在体外大量制备所需要的人单链抗体,从而使IgG显像所面临的难题有望得以解决。

### 2.4 二磷酸腺苷(adenosine diphosphate, ADP)类似物

斑块中大量的巨噬细胞、单核细胞、平滑肌细胞表面都有P2嘌呤受体,核素标记的ADP竞争性类似物四磷酸二腺苷(diadenosine tetraphosphate,

AP4A) 能与粥样硬化斑块中的 P2 嘌呤受体特异性结合, 其制备简便, 产出率和纯度高, 而且实验动物模型注射显像剂后 15~30 min 即可显示斑块, 靶/非靶比值达 7.4<sup>[12]</sup>。

### 3 放射免疫显像

Tsimikas 等<sup>[13]</sup>用 <sup>125</sup>I 和 <sup>99m</sup>Tc 标记丙二醛 2 (malondialdehyde 2, MDA2) 都证实了其摄取与动脉粥样硬化的程度明显相关, 可用于定量测定动脉粥样硬化病变的脂负荷; 应用人源性抗体 1K17 进行体内显像, 与鼠源性的抗体相比, 有更明显的优势。这些研究表明, 斑块对氧化型 LDL 抗体的摄取与粥样硬化病变程度密切相关, 对于早期发现富含脂质的病变、筛查和对高危人群进行连续随访观察具有重要的意义。

外结构域 B (extra-domain B, ED-B) 是在血管生成和细胞组织重建过程中通过选择性剪切插入纤维结合处的分子, 而血管生成和细胞组织修复是斑块进展的重要标志。特异性抗 ED-B 的人抗体 L19 用 <sup>125</sup>I 标记后注射入斑块源性脂蛋白 ApoE 阴性的小鼠和正常野生小鼠, 注射后 4 h、24 h 和 3 d 的离体主动脉显像显示, <sup>125</sup>I 标记的 L19 能稳定地、特异地被摄取; 脂肪染色证实, L19 的结合局限于斑块; 标记后 24 h 的放射性自显影结果与脂肪染色结果有显著的相关性 ( $r=0.89$ ,  $P<0.0001$ )。而注射 <sup>125</sup>I 标记的 L19 的正常野生型鼠和注射阴性对照抗体的 ApoE 阴性鼠血管显像均显示非常低的抗体摄取。免疫组化研究结果显示, ED-B 的表达增加不仅见于鼠的粥样硬化斑块, 也可见于人类的粥样硬化斑块<sup>[14]</sup>。因此, 此类显像剂有望用于监测动脉粥样硬化的进展。

### 4 凋亡显像

Annexin V 是能与纤维帽中活化的血小板和凋亡的平滑肌细胞表面的磷脂酰丝氨酸部分结合的小分子蛋白。Johnson 等<sup>[15]</sup>报道, <sup>99m</sup>Tc-annexin V 在猪动脉粥样硬化模型中显示冠状动脉的斑块, 免疫组化结果提示, 平滑肌细胞凋亡显像显示的病变动脉段的细胞凋亡率明显高于周围正常动脉段及对照组的动脉段。Isobe 等<sup>[16]</sup>对人动脉粥样硬化的转基因小鼠模型的研究证实, <sup>99m</sup>Tc-annexin V SPECT 可无创性地显示粥样硬化斑块。

### 5 基因显像

任何一种疾病都有可能从基因类型找到相应的改变, 这种基因水平上的改变要远远早于功能和形态学上的改变。因此, 只要靶基因或 mRNA 有过度表达, 便可人工合成相应的寡核苷酸, 制成核素标记的分子探针, 利用核素显像早期、特异性地诊断多种疾病。

平滑肌增殖和迁移与动脉粥样硬化的发生密切相关, 而这种增殖与原癌基因 *v-sis*、*c-fos* 和 *c-myc* 等的激活并高水平表达有关系。Qin 等<sup>[17]</sup>研究发现, 增殖期血管平滑肌细胞对原癌基因 *c-myc* 反义探针摄取增高, <sup>99m</sup>Tc 标记 *c-myc* 反义寡核苷酸 (antisense oligonucleotide, ASO) 行斑块显像也获得了阳性结果。Zhang 等<sup>[18]</sup>用 <sup>99m</sup>Tc 标记针对增殖细胞核抗原 mRNA 的 ASO 作为探针, 发现其能被增殖旺盛的血管平滑肌细胞选择性摄取, 为动物模型动脉粥样硬化斑块显像奠定了充分的基础。因此, <sup>99m</sup>Tc 标记 ASO 探针有望成为新的显像剂, 在分子水平上进行动脉粥样硬化病变的早期、特异性诊断。

综上所述, 通过平滑肌细胞增殖、血管生成、血管损伤及炎症等靶点的探测, 细胞死亡、蛋白酶活化的确定, 基因表达的显示, 分子核医学可以显示动脉粥样硬化斑块, 并可判断斑块的不稳定性。心血管核医学将基于新的生物学及临床靶点如干细胞和各种起源细胞等, 利用不断发展的核医学显像技术, 为动脉粥样硬化的分子影像诊断开辟更广阔的研究前景<sup>[19]</sup>。

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