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间充质干细胞源外泌体治疗类风湿性关节炎动物模型和临床研究进展

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【摘要】 目前,临床治疗类风湿性关节炎(RA)可选的药物有限,治疗效果仍不容乐观。间充质干细胞(MSCs)治疗RA具有较好的应用前景,但也存在一定的潜在治疗风险。MSCs可排泌多种功能性外泌体(MSCs-Exos),MSCs-Exos不但具备MSCs的疗效,且可显著降低MSCs的治疗风险。随着Exos研究技术的成熟,以及更多的动物模型和大规模的临床研究, MSCs-Exos有望为RA的治疗提供新的策略。

【关键词】 自身免疫性疾病;类风湿性关节炎;间充质干细胞;外泌体;治疗

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Current progress in the application of mesenchymal stem cell-derived exosomes in the treatment of clinical rheumatoid arthritis and related animal models

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【Abstract】 Drugs for the effective treatment of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) are currently lacking. While there is growing interest in the potential application of mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) in the treatment of RA, there are potential risks associated with cell-based therapies. MSCs secrete functional exosomes (MSC-Exos) that can mediate many of the functions of MSCs and, consequently, these extracellular vesicles provide an attractive alternative that may circumvent many of the risks associated with cell-based strategies. With current advances in exosomal technology, including on-going studies in animal models and findings from large-scale clinical trials, there is great expectation that MSC-Exos will provide a new and exciting strategy for the treatment of RA.

【Keywords】 autoimmune diseases; rheumatoid arthritis; mesenchymal stem cells; exosomes; treatment

自身免疫性疾病(autoimmune diseases, AD)是指机体对自身抗原产生免疫反应,进而导致自身组

织损害所引起的疾病。其中,类风湿性关节炎(rheumatoid arthritis, RA)较常见。RA的常见病理

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改变为关节的肿胀、滑膜关节的破坏和慢性炎症^[1-2],并高表达多种炎症因子,如白细胞介素27(interleukin 27, IL-27)、白细胞介素35(IL-35)、肿瘤坏死因子α(tumor necrosis factor α, TNF-α)等促炎因子已被证实与RA的发病有关^[3-4]。目前,其临床治疗可选的药物有限,治疗效果仍不容乐观。

间充质干细胞(mesenchymal stem cells, MSCs)指具有多谱系分化能力潜能的细胞,近年来,其在自身免疫性疾病发病中的免疫调节功能备受关注^[5]。外泌体(exosomes, Exos)是一类直径约30至150纳米的细胞外囊泡,由细胞内部的胞内体与细胞膜融合释放到细胞外形成^[6],其内富含蛋白质、核酸、脂质等物质,作为细胞间传递信息的载体,可发挥多种生物学功能。研究发现,间充质干细胞可排泌多中外泌体^[7],其对RA可能具有潜在的治疗作用,本文对此作一综述。

1 间充质干细胞与类风湿性关节炎

MSCs可对参与先天性和适应性免疫应答的多种细胞发挥免疫调节作用。自体MSCs可通过IFN-γ、TNF-α、IL-1α或β等促炎性细胞因子显著抑制活化的淋巴细胞的增殖^[8]。已报道从健康受试者中提取的滑膜间充质干细胞(synovial MSCs, S-MSCs)能够在体外抑制混合淋巴细胞反应中的T细胞的增殖^[9]。机制方面,MSCs对T细胞的作用包括抑制CD4⁺T细胞在对有丝分裂原或抗体(抗CD2/CD3/CD28)活化反应中的增殖^[10-12]。此外,MSCs还能抑制T细胞分泌IL-2、TNF-α等炎症因子^[13]。

MSCs治疗RA具有潜在的疗效,但也存在一定的问题。基于患者自体MSCs的数量和功能的缺陷,同种异体的MSCs治疗方案表现出来更大的优势。RA的动物模型研究发现,同种异体的MSCs在体外表现出较差的免疫原性^[14]。在胶原诱导的关节炎动物模型(collagen induced arthritis, CIA)中发现,腹腔注射同种异体MSCs反应良好^[15]。临床研究发现,给RA患者静脉输注同种异体的MSCs或脐带来源的MSCs,抗TNF的耐药患者会出现短暂的临床改善^[16],同种异体的MSCs在RA治疗中具有安全性和潜在的有效性^[17]。除单独输注MSCs外,同种异体的MSCs与常规药物相结合的治疗方法,可使RA的患者在临床指标和血清学上得到显著的改善^[18]。另对15例难治性系统性红斑狼疮(systemic lupus erythematosus, SLE)患者的治疗发

现,同种异体的MSCs治疗后,患者的肾功能得到稳定的改善^[18]。另一方面,同种异体的MSCs治疗RA也存在一定的负面影响。有报道发现,CIA动物模型在注射使用MSCs后,所有动物的跖趾关节和趾间关节都出现了明显的关节炎症状^[19]。此外,由于MSCs可以抑制抗肿瘤免疫反应,存在的隐性或低活性的肿瘤可能被激活的风险^[20]。进一步研究发现,局部的MSCs输注治疗,如关节内注射MSCs,一定程度上可能降低风险并获益。一项SCID小鼠关节炎模型的研究发现关节内注射脂肪组织来源的MSCs治疗风湿性疾病,具有实用性和安全性^[21]。但在RA的临床病例研究中,关节内注射MSCs作为治疗手段,仍需要更多实验与评估。

2 外泌体与类风湿性关节炎

当前,外泌体参与RA发病已被认知。在RA患者的成纤维样滑膜细胞(fibroblast-like synoviocytes, FLSs)中可分离到含TNF-α的外泌体,TNF-α可激活NF-κB,进一步可诱导滑膜组织中T细胞的抗凋亡机制,进而加重炎症反应^[22]。FLSs来源的携带CD13的外泌体可诱导T细胞的趋化作用,进一步激活RA中的FLS增生,并释放多种致炎因子,进而加速RA炎症进程^[23]。研究显示,Wnt信号通路在RA造成的骨侵袭、骨质疏松等改变中发挥着重要作用^[24]。而外泌体也参与了Wnt信号通路的调控,CD9和CD82可通过外泌体分泌形式,将Wnt通路下游分子β-catenin外排到胞外,从而降低自身Wnt信号通路活性^[24]。同时,肿瘤细胞也可通过外泌体介导的方式,将14-3-3蛋白和β-catenin转移至下游靶细胞,激活其Wnt信号通路^[25]。FLS来源的外泌体中的miR-221-3p可影响成骨细胞分化,而在RA模型中,TNF可促进miR-221-3p的表达,上调的miR-221-3p通过抑制Wnt信号通路中的Dkk,最终可阻滞成骨细胞的分化,影响磨损骨质的修复进程^[26]。RA病人的关节液和滑膜组织中可分离到含miR-let-7b的外泌体,而miR-let-7b可激活Toll样受体(Toll-like receptor, TLR),进而促进M1巨噬细胞的增值分化,加重RA的炎症反应^[27]。RA的动物模型研究发现,免疫抑制基因修饰的骨髓来源树突状细胞(dendritic cells, DC)的外泌体,可抑制CIA动物模型中关节炎的严重程度和发生率^[28]。而经白细胞介素10(IL-10)处理的DC来源的外泌体则可抑制CIA动物模型的关节炎的发病,并减轻

已发病的动物模型的关节炎严重程度^[29]。综上,外泌体参与了 RA 发生发展的多个环节。

3 间充质干细胞源的外泌体与类风湿性关节炎

MSCs-Exos 除携带结构蛋白(细胞膜骨架蛋白、微管蛋白、肌动蛋白和肌球蛋白等)外,还携带多种功能性蛋白(CD9、CD63、CD81、CD82、Hspa8、Hsp60、Hsp70 和 Hsp90、ALG-2 相互作用蛋白 X 与肿瘤易感基因 101 蛋白,代谢相关蛋白 GAPDH、LDHA、PGK1 和 PKM,以及特异性的 MHC-I 和 MHC-II 等)^[30]。除蛋白质外,MSCs-Exos 还能转运多种 RNA(mRNA、miRNA 和 siRNA 等),其中 mRNA 可直接在靶细胞中翻译出相应功能蛋白质,发挥再生修复等作用;miRNA 则通过沉默或抑制目标 mRNA 翻译,从而下调蛋白质在靶细胞中的表达;siRNA 则可敲除受体细胞中的目标基因达到基因沉默的作用^[31]。

体外实验发现,MSCs-Exos 可通过减少 T、B 淋巴细胞的增殖,在炎症性关节炎诱导 Treg 细胞群来发挥免疫抑制作用^[32]。动物体内实验发现,MSCs-Exos 可以减轻骨性关节炎动物的骨关节炎症状^[33]。已报道,软骨细胞可在密闭的、处于低氧环境的关节腔内,正常新陈代谢,但极低氧环境可促进促炎因子(IL-1、IL-6 和 MCP-1 等)及趋化因子(CXCL-12、COX-2、血管内皮生长因子和前列腺素 E2)等生成,诱发微环境中慢性炎症反应、软骨下骨硬化与骨赘形成^[34]。已报道,这些骨性关节病理微环境的改变与局部外泌体所携带的多种蛋白和 RNA 转运密切相关^[35]。另外,基质金属蛋白酶(Matrix metalloproteinases, MMP)可介导细胞外基质的降解,炎症因子穿透软骨表面可导致 RA 炎症滑膜局部湿润^[36]。携带 miRNA-150-5p 的 MSCs-Exos 可显著下调了 MMP14 和血管内皮生长因子的表达,减轻了关节炎的严重程度^[37]。

综上,在 RA 中,MSCs-Exos 不但具备 MSCs 的治疗效果,且降低了 MSCs 的潜在治疗风险,有望为 RA 的治疗提供新的策略,但仍需更多的动物模型和临床研究。

4 展望

近年来,MSD 治疗 RA 的研究取得一定的进展,但在动物及临床病例研究中显示其存在一定的治疗风险。但 MSCs 排泌的功能性 Exos 不但具备

MSCs 的疗效,且降低了 MSCs 的潜在治疗风险。然而,这一新疗法仍有一些问题急需解决:(1)如何获取大量的可用于治疗的外泌体;(2)需开发高效外泌体的分离及纯化的技术方法;(3)外泌体组成成分复杂,需进一步研究各效应成分的作用机制。随着 Exos 研究技术的成熟,以及更多的动物模型和大规模的临床研究,MSCs-Exos 有望为 RA 的治疗提供新的策略。

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