

三阴性乳腺癌雄激素受体研究进展

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[摘要] 三阴性乳腺癌(triple-negative breast cancer, TNBC)是一组异质性疾病, 缺乏有效的靶向治疗, 预后差。近年来研究证实, 雄激素受体(androgen receptor, AR)在TNBC的发生、发展中起重要作用。AR成为TNBC中研究的热点, 并可能成为TNBC靶向治疗的新选择。该研究将对三阴乳腺癌与AR表达进行相关阐述, 并提供在TNBC中靶向AR信号通路的新视野。

[关键词] 三阴性乳腺癌; 雄激素受体; 表达

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[Abstract] Triple-negative breast cancers (TNBC) comprise a heterogeneous group of tumors characterized by poor survival and lack of targeted therapeutics. In recent years, androgen receptor (AR) has been demonstrated to play an important role in the genesis and development of TNBC. There has been increased interest in the role of AR in TNBC and AR-targeting has been introduced as a novel therapeutic option for TNBC. This review offers an overview of the relationship between AR expression and TNBC, and provides insights into the novel drugs in the development for targeting this signaling pathway.

[Key words] Triple-negative breast cancer; Androgen receptor; Expression

三阴性乳腺癌(triple-negative breast cancer, TNBC)是指雌激素受体(estrogen receptor, ER)、孕激素受体(progesterone receptor, PR)和人表皮生长因子受体-2(human epidermal growth factor receptor-2, HER-2)均为阴性的一类特殊乳腺癌。TNBC侵袭性强、预后差。目前, TNBC因缺乏有效的抗雌激素治疗及抗HER-2靶向药物, 治疗方式仍以化疗为主。但TNBC是一类具有很强异质性的疾病, Lehmann等^[1]通过基因集群序列表达法将TNBC分为基底细胞样1型(basal-like 1, BL1)、基底细胞样2型(basal-like 2, BL2)、免疫调节亚型(immunomodulatory, IM)、间质型(mesenchymal, M)、间质干细胞样亚型(mesenchymal stem-like, MSL)和管腔雄激素受体亚型(luminal androgen receptor, LAR)6种

亚型。其中LAR亚型高表达雄激素受体(androgen receptor, AR)DNA及AR蛋白, 对抗雄激素治疗敏感^[2]。本研究将对TNBC的AR研究热点进行综述。

1 AR表达

1.1 AR在TNBC中的表达

与ER和PR相比, AR是乳腺癌中表达最广泛的雄激素受体, 研究显示乳腺癌中AR表达率达到70%~90%^[2-4]。不同分子分型的乳腺癌中AR表达差异性较大。目前一致认为, AR表达与ER α 阳性强相关, AR在ER阳性乳腺癌患者的表达率更高^[2,4-7]。综合国外报道, AR在非三阴乳腺癌中的表达率超过70%, 而有10%~43%的TNBC患者表达AR^[6,8-14]。Luo等^[9]及He等^[15]研究了中国的TNBC患者中AR表达率情况, 分别为27.7%和26%, 与国外报道一致。来自中山大学Zhang

等^[4]的Meta分析显示,对比高加索人,AR表达在亚洲人中偏高;AR在TNBC中的表达较非TNBC低。Qi等^[5]对980例中国乳腺癌患者的AR表达进行了研究,结果显示,AR在浸润性导管乳腺癌中的表达率为77%,这与国外报道一致,而超过50%的TNBC表达AR,略高于国外的报道。

1.2 TNBC原发灶及转移灶中AR的表达

有研究显示,ER、PR和HER-2的状态在原发灶及转移灶中存在不一致性,激素受体由阳性转变为阴性的比例较高,并影响患者预后及相应治疗的疗效^[16]。但在原发灶及转移灶中AR差异性报道相对较少^[12,17]。目前认为,AR状态在TNBC原发灶与淋巴结转移灶中基本一致。McGhan等^[17]的研究显示,在同一例患者身上,对比正常乳腺组织,原位导管癌及浸润性乳腺癌中AR表达降低;在AR阳性的TNBC患者的淋巴结及远端转移病灶中,AR表达仍为阳性;在AR阴性的TNBC患者中未发现淋巴结转移病灶表达AR,这与Gasparini等^[12]的研究结论一致。对比正常的乳腺组织,TNBC中原发灶及转移灶的AR mRNA下降,而整体转移灶AR mRNA水平高于原发灶,且差异均有统计学意义;配对分析表明,原发灶与转移灶AR表达水平一致。Sutton等^[10]研究也得出了上述结论,在AR阳性的TNBC患者中,病理分期pM₁的患者对比pM₀的患者,AR低表达,提示在AR阳性的TNBC患者中,AR低表达促进肿瘤的转移。Rakha等^[18]认为,在TNBC中,尤其淋巴结阳性的患者,因AR表达的缺失,导致细胞分级增高,促进了肿瘤的复发及远处转移的发生、发展。而AR在原发灶及转移灶的不一致率,可能影响AR靶向治疗的效果,需要更多的大样本及配对样本分析。

2 AR表达与TNBC的预后关系

体外研究证明,ER α 的状态对雄激素依赖细胞的生长有重要影响^[3,13,19-20]。雄激素抑制AR和ER阳性的乳腺癌细胞生长,却促进AR阳性、ER阴性的乳腺癌细胞生长。进一步的体内研究也证实,在ER阳性乳腺癌患者中,AR

信号抑制肿瘤细胞生长,但是在ER阴性乳腺癌患者中,AR信号促进肿瘤细胞生长^[21-25]。临床的回顾性数据也证实,在ER阳性乳腺癌中,AR阳性患者预后较好^[14,25]。然而,AR表达在ER阴性乳腺癌中的意义仍不明确,特别是AR与TNBC预后关系争议很大。多数研究认为,在TNBC中,AR阳性患者的无病生存期(disease-free survival, DFS)及总生存期(overall survival, OS)更长^[9-11,13,15,26-28]。而Hu等^[29]对211例绝经后TNBC患者AR表达与预后关系研究显示,AR阳性患者的总死亡率较AR阴性患者增加了83%,认为在TNBC中,AR阳性预后差。Luo等^[9]的研究显示,AR表达与绝经状态相关,Ogawa等^[14]的研究显示,月经状态可能影响激素受体的表达。所以,结合上述研究,Hu等^[29]的研究结果可能受到研究对象均为绝经后患者的影响。Cheang等^[30]根据免疫组织化学方法检测表皮生长因子受体(epidermal growth factor receptor, EGFR)及CK5/6的状态,将TNBC分成Core Basal(EGFR及CK5/6二者中有表达)和五阴乳腺癌两个亚组。多项研究认为,AR表达与TNBC预后不相关^[12,25,31-32]。进一步研究AR表达与TNBC预后的关系需精心确定研究对象。

然而,这些分析数据均为回顾性研究,样本量相对较少,以下因素可能导致研究结果的差异性。

① AR测定中的差异:各实验室中测定AR的环境、标准和抗体的种类不同,检测技术上存在偏差,结果判读上也存在偏差;② Cut-off值的不同:上述研究中主要选用大于等于10%作为判定AR阳性指标,而一些研究为了增大AR阳性样本量采用更低的cut-off值,部分采用5%^[12,15],部分采用1%^[9-10,29],还有学者认为免疫组织化学存在核染色即为AR阳性^[18];③ AR通路本身的复杂性:根据McNamara等^[28]分析评估AR的状态需联合检测雄激素合成酶5 α -还原酶1和17 β -氢化类固醇脱氢酶5。如果要了解AR表达对预后的影响,仅仅评估受体表达是不够的,还需要评估其配体。

3 TNBC中针对AR的靶向治疗药物研究

3.1 AR拮抗剂

目前研究较多的AR拮抗剂主要有比卡鲁胺和恩杂鲁胺。比卡鲁胺为非甾体类抗雄激素药物, 通过与AR结合, 抑制了雄激素的刺激作用。Ni等^[24]发现, 比卡鲁胺能够抑制HER-3和p-AKT的表达, 促进细胞死亡, 还在体内实验中证实了比卡鲁胺能够抑制雄激素相关的HER-2/HER-3的信号, 并抑制AR阳性、ER阴性和HER-2阴性的癌细胞生长。一项II期的临床实验^[33]共筛查了424例ER和PR均为阴性的转移性乳腺癌患者, 12%为AR阳性(AR大于10%), 在26例可评估的雄激素受体阳性患者中, 应用最低毒性剂量比卡鲁胺每日150 mg治疗直至疾病进展, 19%的患者临床受益率(clinical benefit rate, CBR)达到6个月。Arce-Salinas等^[34]的报道更显示出了比卡鲁胺在AR阳性的TNBC中的突出疗效。一位转移性TNBC女性患者, 经免疫组织化学检测, AR为100%, 在6次的化疗后疾病进展, 经过4个月的比卡鲁胺治疗获得完全缓解, 且DFS大于12个月。这些数据提示, 在某些情况下, 雄激素可能驱动肿瘤的增殖, 患者从AR靶向治疗中收益。

恩杂鲁胺为新一代口服AR抑制剂。一项II期临床实验(NCT01889238)结果显示, 在26例可评估的患者中, 应用16周获得42%的CBR(11/26), 其中1例完全缓解, 1例部分缓解, 应用24周CRB为35%(9/26)^[35]。如果乳腺癌细胞生长和增殖依赖雌激素, 则可以通过恩杂鲁胺来减少乳腺癌细胞的生长和增殖。以mTOR为靶向的药物依维莫司, 联用恩杂鲁胺也有类似结果。

3.2 靶向AR载体分子

靶向AR分子伴侣是目前正在研究的新的治疗策略。AR未与配体结合时, AR位于细胞质中, 与多种蛋白质分子如热休克蛋白(heat shock protein, HSP)等构成复合物。Hsp90对核内类固醇受体的活性调节起着重要作用。Ganetespib(STA-9090)是一种小分子HSP90抑制剂, 有研究显示, STA-9090在TNBC细胞株中

(MDA-MB-231)抑制肿瘤细胞的生长, 在HER-2阳性型细胞株(BT-474)中敏感性最强, 抑制作用最明显^[36]。

3.3 其他靶向AR药物

醋酸阿比特龙为雄激素合成抑制剂, 通过阻断17 α -羟化酶(CYP17A1)来达到治疗效果, 而此酶对雄激素的产生至关重要。Enobosarm是一种选择性雄激素受体调节剂, 体外实验显示, 在AR阳性的TNBC细胞中具有强效的抑制肿瘤增殖作用^[37]。一项II期实验(NCT01616758)显示, 在转移性AR阳性乳腺癌中获得35%的临床获益率^[38]。组蛋白去乙酰化酶(histone deacetylase, HDAC)被证实, 在前列腺癌细胞中, 调节AR基因的表达。HDAC抑制剂在TNBC的测试中显示低毒性^[39]。

4 联合抑制AR及其他信号通路探索

在TNBC中有着多种信号通路靶点, 单靶点药物对TNBC的疗效可能有限。基于前期临床研究证实多个信号通路之间的交互作用, 而对单通路抑制的靶向治疗可能会激活代偿通路。在研究AR信号通路实验中, 许多其他的信号通路及信号因子表现出对AR下游信号活动的调节作用, 包括磷脂酰肌醇3-激酶(phosphatidyl inositol 3-kinase, PI3K)/ATK/MAPK、PTEN、P53及细胞周期因子^[40]。因而许多学者正在探索联合靶向治疗在TNBC中的效果。在乳腺癌中, AR表达与PI3K基因突变相关。在TNBC中, AR阳性的患者PI3K基因突变率高^[40]。Lehmann等^[1]的研究显示, 对比其他亚型TNBC, LAR亚型对PI3K抑制剂敏感性最高。而一项来自荷兰的报告显示, 野生型PIK3CA患者接受曲妥单抗联合拉帕替尼治疗的整体病理学完全缓解率(pathological complete response, pCR)达53.1%, 而在PIK3CA活化突变患者中pCR降至28.6%^[41]。由此可见, PI3K高突变影响单靶点靶向治疗的疗效。

5 AR对TNBC新辅助化疗的影响

尽管TNBC总体预后较差, 经过标准的联合化疗方案, 新辅助化疗获得pCR的人群存活率与其他类型乳腺癌存活率一致, 未获得pCR的

TNBC患者3年复发率高, 预后差^[42]。Masuda等^[43]回顾性分析了130例TNBC患者AC方案新辅助化疗的疗效, 对比整体的TNBC研究人群, LAR亚型对新辅助化疗反应差(pCR: 10% vs 28%), BL1亚型pCR(52%)最高, BL2型pCR(0)最低。TNBC亚型是预测pCR的独立因素。虽然对比其他亚型, LAR亚型尽管pCR低, 但是复发时间最长, OS并不是最低的, 75%的LAR亚型复发出现在首诊的3年后, LAR亚型与其他TNBC亚型临床发展过程不同, 有必要加以重视区别对待。

6 小结与展望

TNBC仍是乳腺癌治疗领域研究的难点和热点。而随着分子学生物技术的不断发展, 基因分型指导TNBC精准治疗的探索取得了一些成果。特别是在LAR亚型TNBC中, AR可能是雄激素TNBC患者的治疗靶点。虽然AR在TNBC预后中的价值及AR靶向人群仍有待进一步明确, 但是随着研究者对AR信号转导途径研究的深入及基因组学技术的发展, AR信号通路在TNBC治疗、预后等方面会带来新的希望。

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