

·综述·

食管鳞癌基因组DNA甲基化的研究进展

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【摘要】 基因组DNA甲基化异常是恶性肿瘤重要的表观遗传学改变。食管鳞癌是我国常见的恶性肿瘤之一,本文从全基因组DNA甲基化水平、高频甲基化异常改变基因、甲基化标志物和潜在靶点等方面,总结讨论了食管鳞癌中基因组DNA甲基化的研究进展,为深入研究其发生发展机制、以及为食管鳞癌的临床应用提供候选标志物和靶点。

【关键词】 食管癌; 甲基化; 基因组; 标志物

基金项目:国家重点研发计划(2017YFE0112100);中国医学科学院医学与健康科技创新工程(CIFMS2016-I2M-1-001);北京市科技新星(Z171100001117017)

DOI:10.3760/cma.j.issn.0253-9624.2019.11.021

Progress in genomic DNA methylation of esophageal squamous cell carcinoma

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【Abstract】 Abnormal genomic DNA methylation is an important epigenetic change in malignant tumors. Esophageal squamous cell cancer is one of common malignant tumors in our country. In this paper summarized and discussed the progress of genomic DNA methylation in the esophageal squamouscell cancer, including the level of genomic DNA methylation, frequent abnormally methylated genes, methylation markers and potential targets, etc. This paper might provide candidate biomarkers and targets for further studies on the mechanism of the tumorigenesis and development of the esophagealsquamouscell cancer, as well as for the clinical application of esophageal cancer.

【Key words】 Esophageal neoplasms; Methylation; Genome; Biomarkers

Fund program: National Key Research and Development Program of China (2017YFE0112100); CAMS Innovation Fund for Medical Sciences (CIFMS, 2016-I2M-001); Beijing Nova Program (Z171100001117017)

DOI:10.3760/cma.j.issn.0253-9624.2019.11.021

食管癌是我国常见的恶性肿瘤之一,我国食管癌的主要类型是食管鳞癌(以下简称“鳞癌”)。近年来,多学科综合治疗在一定程度上改善了鳞癌的治疗效果,但其整体疗效仍有待提高,5年生存率依然较低。因此,深入揭示鳞癌的发生发展机制,研发新的生物标志物,对于食管癌辅助诊断和分型、以及改善食管癌患者治疗具有重要意义。

基因组DNA甲基化水平和模式的改变是肿瘤发生发展的重要因素之一^[1]。大量证据显示,在恶性肿瘤细胞中,抑癌基因启动子区CpG岛发生高甲基化,染色质构象改变,导致抑癌基因的表达降低,引起细胞周期异常、凋亡抵抗、DNA修复缺陷、血管生成以及细胞黏附功能缺失等;另一方

面,正常处于高甲基化的基因和重复序列,当甲基化水平降低时,将导致这些基因的表达升高以及重复序列的激活,进而引起基因印迹丢失、细胞过度生长、基因组脆性增加等;这些基因组DNA甲基化的改变均可能影响肿瘤的发生或进展^[2]。最初,DNA甲基化研究侧重于识别疾病中单个候选基因的变化。随着基因组DNA甲基化芯片、全基因组亚硫酸氢盐测序等技术的发展,DNA甲基化在恶性肿瘤发生发展中的作用逐渐被人们所认知,并且发现DNA甲基化改变可能用于恶性肿瘤的临床检测,包括高危人群筛查、肿瘤辅助诊断、治疗敏感性检测等。本文总结讨论了基因组DNA甲基化在食管鳞癌中的作用、DNA甲基化标志物及其

在食管鳞癌中的应用。

一、鳞癌的全基因组甲基化水平

二十多年前,首次发现恶性肿瘤全基因组DNA低甲基化,一些研究通过评估组成人类基因组大约17%的LINE-1的甲基化水平作为全基因组DNA甲基化的替代标记物。在来自不同群组的鳞癌中观察到一致的全基因组低甲基化,且LINE-1低甲基化与染色体不稳定性增加、TP53突变、淋巴结转移、以及患者的生存期较短相关^[3-4]。然而,LINE-1的改变不能反映甲基化变化对功能基因组结构域(如增强子、绝缘子或沉默子)影响的信息。

Li等^[5]采用微阵列对鳞癌进行全基因组DNA甲基化分析,发现鳞癌和正常组织具有不同的DNA甲基化特征。Hao等^[6]利用上述微阵列对鳞癌同一肿瘤不同区域样本进行了分析,并绘制了鳞癌进化树;同时发现ASXL1等基因在同一病例全部肿瘤细胞中均存在甲基化,表明这些改变可能是鳞癌发生发展过程中的早期事件,而EPHA7等基因甲基化在肿瘤不同区域之间存在明显的异质性,表明它们在不同肿瘤区域的表达可能受到不同程度的抑制。随着测序技术的发展,已有越来越多的鳞癌甲基化的报道。基于重亚硫酸氢盐处理的测序数据表明,DNA甲基水平在不同样本和组织之间存在差异性和特异性^[7]。有研究小组利用甲基化DNA免疫共沉淀测序技术分析了鳞癌全基因组甲基化模式,发现异常的DNA甲基化主要调节鳞癌细胞周期、细胞黏附、增殖、凋亡等表型^[8]。

二、鳞癌的甲基化异常改变基因

鳞癌基因组DNA异常甲基化基因包括DNA损伤修复、细胞周期调控、细胞黏附、增殖等多种生命活动相关的基因。

1.DNA修复基因:鳞癌中甲基化频率最高的基因是MGMT。MGMT是一种DNA修复酶,可从鸟嘌呤中去除甲基或烷基,从而保护细胞免受鸟嘌呤到腺嘌呤的突变^[9]。MGMT启动子甲基化是导致其沉默的关键机制。在表观遗传学上,MGMT已成为众多癌症中失活频率最高的DNA修复基因,其启动子甲基化与烷化剂类药物治疗恶性神经胶质瘤相关^[10]。在鳞癌中,MGMT启动子甲基化已有多篇文献报道^[11-13]。MGMT的异常高甲基化与鳞癌患者的淋巴结转移有关,并且与叶酸代谢酶基因MTHFR C677T多态性相关^[14]。在鳞癌细胞系中,DNA甲基转移酶DNMT的抑制剂处理可部分逆转CpG高甲基化状态,并恢复MGMT基因的mRNA表达,表明MGMT高甲基化是其沉默的关键机制。这种表观遗传事件可利用抑制剂进行干预,有助于预防肿瘤发生^[15]。MLH1和MSH2是两个关键的DNA错配修复基因。MSH2启动子高甲基化在鳞癌中的频率约为30%,并且与鳞癌患者年龄和晚期相关,而在正常食管上皮中完全检测不到该高甲基化^[13, 16]。MLH1启动子高甲基化可能是MLH1沉默的主要原因,从而导致微卫星不稳定性。多项研究显示,MLH1启动子在鳞癌中存在高甲基化^[11, 14, 17]和微卫星不稳定性^[18-19]。而且,在鳞癌中发现,MLH1蛋白的丢失

与其启动子高甲基化呈负相关^[17]。

2.细胞周期相关基因:在鳞癌中,一些细胞周期调控基因的启动子高甲基化,从而使其表达沉默,包括CDKN2A和CDKN2B^[20]。这两个基因都属于细胞周期蛋白依赖性激酶的抑制因子,在G1/S期转换中起负调节作用。CDKN2A甲基化常发于鳞癌中,而CDKN2B的甲基化在鳞癌中相对较少^[11]。CDKN2A和CDKN2B在鳞癌发生的早期阶段即出现高甲基化,因此可能作为鳞癌早期诊断的标志物^[21]。RASSF10属于Ras家族基因,抑制细胞增殖并诱导G2/M期阻滞。Lu等^[22]发现,RASSF10在44%的鳞癌中存在甲基化。CHFR是参与调控有丝分裂检验点的一种蛋白质,诱导鳞癌细胞G2/M期阻滞^[23]。CHFR在多种癌症中显示高甲基化状态,包括胃癌^[24]、非小细胞肺癌^[25]等。Yun等^[26]研究表明,CHFR在45%的鳞癌中显示高甲基化,并且在食管早期病变中甲基化频率较低,表明CHFR甲基化可能作为晚期鳞癌的标志物,且CHFR的甲基化与鳞癌细胞对紫杉烷的敏感性相关。

3.Wnt信号通路基因:激活的Wnt/β-catenin信号通路可诱导MYC、细胞周期蛋白D1和其他下游基因的表达,促进细胞增殖,导致细胞癌变。多个Wnt信号通路组分,包括Wnt、SFRP和β-catenin,在Wnt信号转导的激活/抑制中起重要作用。APC基因定位于5号染色体长臂,其蛋白通过与转录因子β-catenin相互作用参与调控Wnt信号通路,间接调节与细胞增殖相关的许多重要基因的转录。高甲基化可能是鳞癌中APC失活的机制之一。据报道,27%~46%的鳞癌存在APC启动子高甲基化,这些患者的转移淋巴结数量较少且预后较好^[27-29]。鳞癌中存在APC基因的高频杂合性丢失(55%~80%),而APC的突变在鳞癌中很少见^[30-31]。WIF1是最重要的Wnt通路抑制因子之一,在多种癌症中由于启动子区高甲基化而导致表达下调^[32-33]。Yang等^[34]发现,WIF1的启动子区在46%(23/50)的鳞癌组织和50%(2/4)的鳞癌细胞系中存在高甲基化。利用甲基化抑制剂5-氮杂-2-脱氧胞苷处理鳞癌细胞系EC109,可回复升高WIF1的表达,抑制细胞增殖和迁移。Wnt-5a也是Wnt通路抑制因子之一,通过促进GSK-3非依赖性β-catenin降解,抑制Wnt信号传导。已有研究发现,Wnt-5a在鳞癌中存在高甲基化^[35]。

4.转化生长因子-β(Transforming growth factor-β,TGF-β)通路基因:TGF-β信号可调节肿瘤的发生发展^[36-37]。RUNX3是TGF-β信号传导途径的重要组成部分,包括鳞癌在内的多种人类癌症中RUNX3基因发生缺失,且其经常在鳞癌中存在甲基化^[38]。DACH1是视网膜基因调控网络的主要组分,在乳腺癌、前列腺癌、肺癌、子宫内膜癌、结肠直肠癌和肝细胞癌中存在表达下调。在鳞癌中,DACH1的表达受启动子区高甲基化的调节,并且与肿瘤分化差相关。同时,在食管异型增生组织中也可检测到DACH1基因高甲基化,且其甲基化频率随食管病变程度的升高而增加。体内体外研究证实,DACH1通过激活TGF-β通路抑制鳞癌细

胞的生长^[39]。FBXO32最近被鉴定为TGF-β/Smad的靶基因^[40]。Guo等^[24]发现,FBXO32在52%的鳞癌中存在甲基化,且其甲基化水平与5年生存率差相关。

5.其他基因:CDH1基因编码的E-钙黏蛋白在维持正常上皮细胞的细胞间连接中起关键作用^[41]。在鳞癌中,CDH1表达的丧失与肿瘤的侵袭、转移和预后不良有关^[42]。多个研究组在鳞癌中检测到CDH1高甲基化,并且与早期鳞癌的复发相关^[11, 43-45]。RASSF1基因编码与RAS效应蛋白类似的蛋白质(即含有Ras结合结构域的蛋白质1)。RASSF1在多种人类癌症中低表达,具有抑癌基因功能。研究发现,RASSF1的失活与RASSF1启动子高甲基化有关^[46]。多项研究报道了鳞癌RASSF1启动子的异常高甲基化^[28, 47]。

RASSF1高甲基化也与鳞癌分化较低和分期较晚显著相关。此外,利用去甲基化剂处理高甲基化的鳞癌细胞系,可部分逆转RASSF1基因CpG岛甲基化,导致其mRNA表达的回复和细胞生长抑制^[48]。RARB基因编码视黄酸受体β,其是核转录调节因子甲状腺-类固醇激素受体超家族的成员,被认为是一种肿瘤抑制因子,可诱导癌细胞生长停滞和凋亡。在鳞癌细胞系中,RARB蛋白表达的下调与RARB的异常甲基化相关^[49]。RARB在鳞癌组织中存在异常甲基化^[50],且Kuroki等^[46]发现67%的早期鳞癌中存在甲基化。FHIT是一种抑癌基因。在鳞癌中,FHIT启动子区的高甲基化是调节FHIT蛋白质表达的主要机制,据报道FHIT启动子区高甲基化发生于33%~45%的鳞癌组织中,且该基因异常甲基

表1 食管鳞癌中的异常甲基化基因

基因名	基因全称	作用	甲基化频率	检测方法	参考文献
<i>MGMT</i>	O-6-methylguanine-DNA methyltransferase	DNA修复	39% (46/119)	MSP	[12]
			40% (95/235)	MSP	[13]
<i>APC</i>	Adenomatous polyposis coli	负调控Wnt信号通路	44% (20/45)	MSP	[27]
<i>CDKN2A</i>	cyclin dependent kinase inhibitor 2A	细胞周期调节,负调控细胞增殖	40% (16/40)	MSP	[53]
			52% (36/69)	MSP	[54]
<i>CDKN2B</i>	cyclin dependent kinase inhibitor 2B	与CDK4/6互作调节细胞周期	12% (5/40)	MSP	[53]
<i>MLH1</i>	mutL homolog 1	DNA错配修复	23% (9/42)	MSP	[11]
			43% (102/235)	qMSP	[13]
<i>MSH2</i>	mutS homolog 2	DNA错配修复	29% (68/235)	qMSP	[13]
			32% (11/32)	MSP	[16]
<i>CDH1</i>	cadherin 1	调控细胞黏附	43% (108/251)	MSP	[43]
<i>FHIT</i>	fragile histidine triad diadenosine triphosphatase	负调控Src/ERK/Slug通路,抑制EMT	33% (85/257)	MSP	[46]
			45% (21/47)	qMSP	[13]
<i>RASSF1A</i>	Ras association domain family member 1A	调节细胞周期进程	14% (7/50)	MSP	[28]
<i>VHL</i>	von Hippel-Lindau tumor suppressor	缺氧应答	13% (6/47)	MSP	[46]
<i>UCHL1</i>	ubiquitin C-terminal hydrolase L1	调节泛素蛋白酶系统	42% (21/50)	qMSP	[55]
<i>SST</i>	Somatostatin	抑制垂体激素的分泌	42% (14/26)	qMSP	[56]
<i>SCGB3A1</i>	secretoglobin family 3A member 1	负调控细胞生长、增殖	50% (22/45)	MSP	[57]
<i>DAB2</i>	DAB adaptor protein 2	衔接蛋白,用于网格蛋白介导的特定蛋白的内吞作用	68% (34/50)	MSP	[58]
<i>GNG7</i>	G protein subunit gamma 7	跨膜信号系统的调节和转导	33% (14/42)	Pyrosequencing	[59]
<i>RARB</i>	retinoic acid receptor beta	调控细胞生长、分化	24% (10/42)	MSP	[11]
<i>RASSF10</i>	Ras association domain-containing protein 10	调节胚胎神经发育	44% (39/88)	MSP	[22]
<i>ZNF331</i>	zinc finger protein 331	转录调节	57% (56/99)	MSP	[60]
<i>ITGA4</i>	integrin subunit alpha 4	纤连蛋白的受体	21% (52/251)	MSP	[43]
<i>WIF1</i>	Wnt inhibitory factor 1	Wnt通路抑制因子	35% (87/251)	MSP	[59]
<i>DACH1</i>	dachshund family transcription factor 1	参与调节器官发育的转录因子	62% (64/104)	MSP	[39]
<i>DAPK1</i>	death associated protein kinase 1	调控细胞生存、凋亡、自噬	24% (10/42)	MSP	[11]
			38% (95/251)	MSP	[43]
<i>CHFR</i>	checkpoint with forkhead and ring finger domains	细胞周期检查点调控	45% (49/109)	MSP	[26]
<i>TFPI2</i>	tissue factor pathway inhibitor 2	参与调节纤溶酶介导的基质重塑	67% (71/106)	MSP	[61]
<i>ECRG4</i>	ECRG4 augurin precursor	负调控细胞增殖	80% (12/15)	DHPLC	[62]
<i>SOX17</i>	SRY-box transcription factor 17	负调控Wnt信号通路	65% (109/169)	MSP	[63]

注:MSP为甲基化特异性PCR;Pyrosequencing为焦磷酸测序;qMSP为定量甲基化特异性PCR;DHPLC为变性高效液相色谱分析

化的早期鳞癌患者的预后较差^[46, 51]。研究发现,*FHIT*的异常甲基化也与接触烟草有关^[51]。在鳞癌细胞中,尼古丁可通过增加*DNMT3B*的表达诱导*FHIT*高甲基化和蛋白质低表达。*FHIT*低表达或不表达的鳞癌的侵袭和淋巴结转移能力更强,且*FHIT*高甲基化的早期鳞癌患者预后较差^[51-52]。

三、DNA甲基化标志物及其应用

1. 筛查和辅助诊断标志物:Hibi等^[64]发现,在*CDKN2A*启动子高甲基化的鳞癌患者中,23%的患者血清中能够同时检测到与原发肿瘤相同的高甲基化。Li等^[65]发现血清DNA中*RARB*、*DAPK*、*CDH11*、*CDKN2A*和*RASSF1A*基因的甲基化状态用于检测鳞癌的敏感性和特异性分别可达82%和100%,提示分析上述基因启动子甲基化可能用于鳞癌的筛查和辅助诊断。

2. 预后判断和复发风险评估标志物:目前,肿瘤分级、分期、组织学类型等是预测鳞癌预后的最常用临床参数,然而这些参数对于准确预测个体的无病生存率和总体生存率仍有待进一步提高。基因甲基化研究为鳞癌预后判断和复发监测提供了候选分子标志物。*APC*基因在鳞癌中存在高频甲基化。与*APC*非甲基化的患者相比,*APC*高甲基化患者的两年存活率较低^[27]。在一项针对鳞癌患者(257例)的研究中,33%的患者存在*FHIT*基因甲基化,且该基因甲基化与鳞癌术后的疾病复发率相关,并且复发后存活率降低。羧基末端泛素水解酶家族成员*UCHL1*基因甲基化水平较高的鳞癌患者5年生存率较差,淋巴结转移发生率增加^[55]。抑癌基因*TSLC1*在鳞癌中经常发生甲基化,甲基化*TSLC1*与*TSLC1*mRNA表达缺失均与肿瘤的侵袭性行为相关^[66]。在另一项研究中,利用甲基化特异性PCR检测了9个细胞周期相关基因的启动子甲基化状态,发现在鳞癌中*p14ARF*、*p15*、*CDKN2A*、*CDKN1B*、*p27kip1*、*TP53*、*p57*、*p73*和*RBI*基因启动子甲基化频率分别为52%、44%、50%、56%、38%、8%、42%、36%和44%^[67]。在该研究中,如果≥5/9的基因存在甲基化,则肿瘤被定义为具有CpG岛甲基化表型(CPG island methylator phenotype,CIMP),其中54%的鳞癌和8%的食管异型增生组织中具有CIMP,而在所有检测的正常上皮组织中均未观察到CIMP。与不具有CIMP的鳞癌患者相比,具有CIMP的患者的4年生存率较低。另有研究报道了DNA甲基化标志物用于评估鳞癌复发风险的效果。从鳞癌患者血浆中分离的游离DNA中发现,Wnt抑制子*SFRP1*、*DKK3*和*RUNX3*的甲基化与鳞癌复发风险的升高有关。与未检测到甲基化的患者相比,上述三个基因中有发生高甲基化的患者鳞癌复发风险升高^[68]。I期鳞癌患者的复发与*CDH1*基因甲基化相关。II期鳞癌患者的*ITGA4*甲基化与复发风险增加相关^[43]。

3. 治疗敏感性标志物和治疗靶标:基因甲基化状态可用于评估患者对于化疗的敏感性,已在不同的癌症类型中发现了许多化疗敏感性表观遗传标志物^[69]。到目前为止,关于鳞癌中的化疗敏感性甲基化标志物的报道较少。

*PAX5*基因甲基化与其在鳞癌中的低表达有关联。*PAX5*高甲基化抑制鳞癌细胞增殖,增加细胞对于化疗药物顺铂的耐药性,导致无复发生存率和总生存率降低^[70]。*CHFR*是一种早期的有丝分裂检查点基因,调控G2/M检验点的细胞周期进程,参与控制染色体的完整性^[71]。*CHFR*甲基化可提高鳞癌细胞对紫杉烷的敏感性^[26]。DNA甲基化抑制剂5-Aza-CdR是目前最重要的甲基化水平调节分子,已被FDA批准用于治疗骨髓增生异常综合征^[72]。临幊上利用该抑制剂与顺铂联用,提高了鳞癌患者的化疗效果^[73]。

四、展望

目前针对DNA甲基化的检测都是基于重亚硫酸氢盐预处理,但是重亚硫酸氢盐处理不完全可导致假阳性结果,因此对甲基化的检测方法进行改进,将有助于DNA甲基化的研究、标志物的鉴定及应用。甲基化的原位检测和可视化方法学的建立,将有助于在大规模组织样本中更加直观地检测甲基化的状态,有助于甲基化标志物的推广和应用。迄今为止,虽然已有大量的鳞癌甲基化的高通量数据,但是在临幊尚无可用的甲基化标志物。而且,有些基因在不同研究组报道的鳞癌甲基化频率差异较大,有必要进一步研究加以确认。另一方面,提高DNA甲基化分析的分辨率,可能会增加可靠生物标志物的数量。因此,建立成本低且快速检测甲基化标志物的生物学手段,对甲基化标志物在鳞癌的临幊应用具有重要的意义。DNA甲基化抑制剂5-Aza-CdR会导致肿瘤细胞的整体低甲基化,不仅会导致一些沉默基因的再活化,还可能会导致基因组的不稳定,从而影响其敏感性和特异性。因此开发敏感性和特异性较高的靶向药物,用于调节基因的甲基化水平具有重要的临幊价值。另有研究将DNA甲基化抑制剂与常规化学疗法相结合,在临幊前研究中显示出应用前景。综上,建立快速而实用的DNA甲基化标志物检测方法,开发针对鳞癌异常甲基化的特异性药物,或与常规治疗相结合,将有助于改善鳞癌的诊断、分型及治疗。

利益冲突 所有作者均声明不存在利益冲突

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(收稿日期:2019-09-19)

(本文编辑:张振伟)

·文献速览·

成年儿童癌症幸存者生活方式与健康相关生命质量的关系: 圣裘德队列研究

Zhang FF, Hudson MM, Huang IC, et al. Lifestyle factors and health-related quality of life in adult survivors of childhood cancer: a report from the St. Jude lifetime cohort study[J]. Cancer, 2018, 124(19): 3918-3923. DOI: 10.1002/cner.31647

既往研究资料表明,儿童癌症幸存者的健康相关生命质量较差,可通过改变生活方式(如营养和体力活动等)改善其健康相关生命质量。本研究分析了圣裘德队列中2 480名成年儿童癌症幸存者生活方式与健康相关生命质量的关联。通过调查问卷收集膳食摄入、体力活动、吸烟、饮酒等信息,并测量体重和身高,采用简明健康测量量表(MOS SF-36)评价健康相关生命质量,计算生理健康总分(PCS)、心理健康总分(MCS)和8个生命质量维度得分。多元线性回归模型分析结果显示,积极体力活动与生命质量呈正相关(PCS和MCS的 β 值分别为3.10、1.48);吸烟(PCS和MCS的 β 值分别

为-2.30、-6.49)和肥胖($BMI \geq 30 \text{ kg/m}^2$)(PCS和MCS的 β 值分别为-3.29、-1.61)与生命质量呈负相关;膳食较好的者的生理健康得分较高($\beta=1.79$);中度饮酒者的生理健康得分较高($\beta=1.14$),但心理健康得分较低($\beta=-1.13$);健康生活方式的种类越多者,生理健康得分和心理健康得分均越高(PCS和MCS的 β 值分别为7.60、5.76)。可见,健康生活方式与生活质量的相关具有一定累积性,倡导健康生活方式将有助于提高儿童癌症幸存者的健康相关生命质量。

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