

·综述·

动脉粥样硬化斑块内出血的研究进展

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摘要 动脉粥样硬化易损斑块破裂可导致严重的急性脑血管疾病发生。斑块内出血(IPH)可加速斑块的进展破裂,是易损斑块的重要特征之一。研究发现,斑块内新生血管的渗漏或破裂出血与IPH形成密切相关。运用高分辨磁共振的2D和3D序列识别IPH,对判断斑块破裂风险有重要临床意义。目前IPH尚无特异性治疗,但抑制新生血管生成可能为治疗提供新靶点。本文主要从斑块内新生血管、高分辨磁共振及抗血管治疗三个方面对IPH进行综述。

关键词 动脉粥样硬化;易损斑块;斑块内出血;综述

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动脉粥样硬化易损斑块破裂可导致严重的急性脑血管疾病发生^[1]。作为易损斑块的重要特征的斑块内出血(intraplaque hemorrhage, IPH)^[2],不仅可加重斑块的不稳定性,促进动脉粥样硬化疾病的进展,而且与复发性卒中中独立相关^[3-6]。据估计,IPH发生在大约1/3的无症状患者身上,可使缺血性事件的风险增加约6倍,在狭窄率≥50%的有症状患者中风险更高^[7-9]。因此,了解IPH的发病机制、识别方法及治疗策略具有重要的临床意义^[10,11]。尽管IPH的具体机制尚不明确,但大量研究发现斑块内新生血管与IPH的形成密切相关^[12]。磁共振技术多种序列可用于无创性识别斑块特征^[13,14],且经组织学验证具有较高的敏感性和特异度。理论上,抑制新生血管可减少IPH形成及斑块进展,可能是未来治疗动脉粥样硬化疾病的重要靶点。在此,本文主要就IPH与新生血管的关系、高分辨磁共振特点及抗血管治疗进行概述,帮助读者早期识别IPH并及时治疗降低卒中风险。

1 斑块新生血管与IPH的形成

在动脉粥样硬化斑块形成过程中,在缺血、缺氧、炎症反应等条件刺激下,斑块内可见新生血管形成。新生血管形成是为动脉粥样硬化提供足够的氧气和营养物质的一种代偿性反应^[15]。斑块新生血管的来源尚未完全确定,一般认为是内皮细胞(endothelial cells, ECs)从现有的外膜血管生长,因血管内皮生长因子(vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)浓度梯度触发,向斑块中心生长^[12]。研究发现这种新生血管系统具有不成熟、脆弱、完整性差等特点^[16]。血管成熟依赖于VEGF及其受体和血管生成素系统的成员。VEGF和其主要受体VEGFR-1和VEGFR-2在新生血管成熟过程中促进内皮细胞增殖和成管,以及周细胞的附着和脱离^[17]。血管生成素-1(angiotensin-1, Ang-1)和血管生成素-2(Ang-2)是内皮受体Tie-2的配体,两者在新生血管的最终成熟阶段起主要作用,功能相反。缺氧诱导因子1a

(hypoxia inducible factor-1a, HIF-1a)和VEGF-A可诱导Ang-2破坏周细胞与内皮细胞之间的相互作用,从而使血管生长。Ang-1与血小板源性生长因子(platelet-derived growth factor, PDGF)共同作为主要的稳定因子,增加内皮细胞间连接的稳定性,从而促进血管的成熟和稳定^[18]。由于血管生成因子和抗血管生成因子之间的不平衡导致内皮细胞损伤及其周围支持细胞的功能障碍。这些新生血管结构脆弱,基底膜不连续,内皮细胞之间的紧密连接较少^[19],在周细胞覆盖率方面相对较差^[20]。

研究发现在新生血管周围可见到红细胞及含铁血黄素等物质沉积^[21]。通过对未破裂的动脉粥样斑块研究发现,在动脉内膜完整情况下仍可见新生血管周围有红细胞沉积,而无纤维蛋白及血小板沉积。另外,有研究发现新生血管分布与IPH的位置重叠^[22]。因此,这些研究间接证实IPH的形成与新生血管相关,并非由于动脉血管内膜破裂后红细胞进入斑块内形成。新生血管导致IPH形成可能有两种原因:一是因为新生血管结构不完整、通透性增加,红细胞漏出血管外形成IPH^[23]。另一方面当血流动力学改变,脆弱的微小新生血管收到机械力的作用容易发生破裂出血^[24]。一项分析血压与IPH关系的研究发现,脉压差及脉压分数增加与IPH风险增加显著相关^[25]。就斑块整体而言,除了受到血流对斑块壁的压力,还受到血液流动形成的剪切力的影响。研究发现高剪切力可通过VEGF促进新生血管生成,促进IPH的形成^[25]。另外一项研究结果显示与低剪切力组相比,高剪切力组的IPH发生率更高^[26]。因此,斑块受到高剪切力可能是IPH形成的促进因素^[27]。

新生血管异常对斑块失稳的定量影响,包括微血管密度和微血管壁通透性。血管密度和血管通透性的降低均可减少IPH的面积和范围,从而延缓斑块的失稳过程^[28-31]。与无IPH的病变区域相比,IPH病变中Ang-2表达增加,新生血管密度较高。在构建

ApoE^{-/-}小鼠斑块出血模型中,胰蛋白酶可通过促进新生血管生成来促使动脉粥样硬化斑块出血^[32]。血小板反应蛋白I型(thrombospondin type-1 domain, THSD1)是血管发育过程中内皮屏障功能的一种新的调节因子,当THSD1过表达时可恢复斑块内新血管内皮屏障功能,保护斑块不发生广泛出血和进一步的疾病进展^[33]。另一项研究发现,阿西替尼可阻断VEGF受体,诱导新生血管成熟,从而降低了IPH的发生率^[34]。在利用多物理的数字模型探讨动脉粥样硬化斑块对微环境动态变化的病理生理反应的研究中,比较有和没有新生血管生成两种情况,结果显示血管壁渗漏可导致血源性成分积累,进而促进脂质核心的形成和炎症微环境^[35],而减少炎症反应可抑制IPH,增加斑块的稳定性^[21]。新生血管渗漏与及局部炎症反应的协同作用在促使动脉狭窄患者IPH形成和症状表现中发挥重要作用^[36]。另有研究发现,进展期斑块有非常高的斑块出血率(约占78%),而且免疫组化结果显示这些出血性斑块的微血管渗漏发生率极高(约占86%)^[37]。此外,Crombag等^[38]利用动态增强对比心血管磁共振的Ktrans值定量评估微血管流动、密度和渗漏等情况,发现IPH与血管壁的Ktrans值有相关性。因此,虽然IPH形成机制尚未完全明确,但越来越多证据表明斑块内新生血管可能是IPH形成的重要条件。

2 IPH的高分辨磁共振

高分辨率磁共振(high-resolution magnetic resonance imaging, HR-MRI)是目前诊断IPH的主要影像检查方法。利用高场磁共振系统及专门的线圈成像,抑制血液信号,显示背景组织信号,突出血管腔与血管壁交界,利用多对比图像对比分析动脉粥样硬化斑块的形态、成分、表面情况以及血管腔情况。目前,临床上常用的成像序列:三维时间飞跃法磁共振血管成像(three-dimensional time-of-flight magnetic resonance angiography, 3D-TOF MRA)、增强前后T₁加权成像(T₁-weighted imaging, T₁WI)和CE-T₁WI、T₂加权成像(T₂-weighted imaging, T₂WI)、质子加权成像(proton density-weighted imaging, PDWI)等。由于正铁血红蛋白可以缩短T₁弛豫时间,影响其在T₁WI上的信号,因此是决定斑块信号特点的主要成分^[39-41]。不同出血时期IPH信号不同:新鲜出血(<1周)在3D TOF及T₁WI上呈高信号,T₂WI呈等或低信号;近期出血(1~6周)在3D TOF、T₁WI及T₂WI序列呈明显的高信号;陈旧出血(>6周)在3D TOF、T₁WI及T₂WI均呈低信号^[42]。HR-MRI的常规序列在临床中广泛应用,对斑块出血具有重要诊断价值^[43]。但其在技术上仍有一定局限性^[44],例如IPH的诊断标准相对复杂也耗费时间。随着MRI技术的发展,出现了多种针对血管壁斑块的3D序列,这些序列对诊断IPH敏感性更高。

磁化准备快速梯度回波序列(magnetization prepared rapid acquisition gradient Echo, MPRAGE)是利用反转恢复预备技术抑制脂肪的坏死核心和纤维组织的相对长T₁信号,使IPH和背景结构之间具有最高的组织对比度,能准确地检测斑块内出血中的正铁血红蛋白。MPRAGE图像上IPH呈明显高信号,强度

高于周围肌肉的信号2倍以上^[45,46]。目前MPRAGE对IPH的诊断已得到临床的广泛认可^[47,48],其对颈动脉IPH的特异性高达97%、敏感性为80%^[8]。Noguchi等^[49]通过MRRAGE序列诊断IPH,发现IPH与心脏缺血事件增加显著相关,这一结果在一定程度上证实MRRAGE序列的诊断可靠性。

非造影增强血管与斑块内出血同时成像(simultaneous non-contrast angiography and intra-plaque hemorrhage, SNAP)序列是2013年由Wang等^[50]研发出来的,对在层选择的相位敏感反转恢复(slab-selective phase-sensitive inversion-recovery, SPI)序列上进行优化,并缩短成像时间,减少对对比剂对斑块内出血的影响。与MPRAGE相比,SNAP序列提高了IPH、管壁及管腔三者之间的对比度,不仅同样具有较高的特异性及敏感性,且能检测更多、更小的斑块内出血^[49]。研究认为SNAP序列可能是诊断IPH更敏感的工具^[51]。在SNAP序列上,以同层面、同侧胸缩乳突肌为参照,IPH表现为明显的高亮信号^[52]。然而,具体的SNAP量化IPH的标准尚不明确。

除上述序列外,3D反转恢复准备的快速扰相梯度回波序列(3D inversion recovery prepared fast spoiled gradient recalled sequence, 3D IRFSPG)、采用反转恢复和多回波来评估出血的扰相梯度回波脉冲序列(spoiled gradient recalled echo pulse sequence for hemorrhage assessment using inversion recovery and multiple echoes, SHINE)、以及MR单次扫描多组织对比序列(multi-contrast atherosclerosis characterization, MATCH)等3D序列在诊断IPH方面也具有一定的应用前景。总体来说,HR-MRI是一种可以快速、准确、无创地识别IPH的重要方法,对及时发现易损斑块、避免临床缺血事件的发生具有重要意义。

3 IPH的抗血管生成治疗

如前所述,斑块内新生血管破裂可能是动脉粥样硬化IPH的主要原因,因此推测抗血管生成策略可用于抑制IPH形成、斑块进展及稳定现有斑块似乎是合理的。目前血管生成抑制剂包括:直接抗血管生成分子、直接或间接针对VEGF的抑制剂、其他具有不完全特征机制的制剂。

直接抗血管生成化合物通常来自蛋白水解产物,在不影响内皮细胞内信号通路的情况下,抑制内皮细胞和平滑肌细胞的增殖和迁移。最初被认为是肿瘤来源的衍生物,可抑制远处转移的新生血管形成。例如,来自血管内皮瘤的内皮抑素是胶原蛋白水解的一个片段。在动脉粥样硬化小鼠模型中,长期使用内皮抑素可减少内膜新生血管的形成,并抑制斑块85%的进展^[53]。来自肺癌的血管抑制素是纤溶酶原的蛋白水解片段^[54],它通过减少斑块及其周围的巨噬细胞来阻断动脉粥样硬化的血管生成潜能。

VEGF抑制剂为动脉粥样硬化的抗血管生成治疗提供了另一个靶点选择。针对VEGF、VEGFR-1和VEGFR-2的VEGF信号通路的抑制已经得到很好的研究。贝伐珠单抗是一种VEGF特异性抗体,在兔动脉粥样硬化模型中支架局部给药后具有抑制新生滋养血管的能力。在ApoE^{-/-}小鼠中,外源性应用针对

VEGFR-1的抗体可使早期和中期斑块的大小减少50%,使晚期病变的生长减少25%^[55]。此外,研究发现动脉粥样硬化小鼠模型注射抗VEGFR-2单克隆抗体,阻断VEGFR-2可显著减少44%的IPH和80%的红细胞外渗^[56]。其他血管生成因子抑制剂包括人MMP-2和MMP-9抗体,它们也可通过阻断内皮细胞小管形成来减少IPH形成^[57]。传统观点认为他汀类降脂治疗通过减少斑块核心胆固醇晶体来稳定斑块。研究发现他汀能通过抑制MMP-9和环氧合酶-2(cyclooxygenase-2, COX-2)的表达来降低ECs的促血管生成激活^[58]。阿托伐他汀处理的动脉硬化小鼠模型,新生血管数量及IPH明显减少,心血管发病率和死亡率下降,但血浆胆固醇没有明显变化。因此,笔者推测动脉粥样硬化患者可受益于他汀类药物的抗血管生成特性。对颈动脉内膜切除术后的斑块进行分析,发现他汀组的IPH较对照组少^[59]。到目前为止,大多数研究均基于动物模型证实抗血管生成可用于治疗动脉粥样硬化,相关临床研究有限,未来有待进一步研究具体治疗靶点及临床应用价值。

4 结语

IPH被认为是可能改变动脉粥样硬化生物学和自然史的重要特征,作为脑血管事件的强预测因子,IPH的尽早识别及预防如能正确投入临床实践,可望对缺血性卒中中的一级和二级预防起到更有效的作用^[60]。大量研究显示斑块内新生血管形成与IPH和斑块不稳定密切相关。新生血管结构不完整,出现红细胞外渗,或血流动力学改变导致血管破裂出血,从而形成斑块内血肿。高分辨磁共振技术识别斑块特征具有重要的临床应用价值,其中用于识别IPH的MPRAGE、SNAP等特殊序列具有较高的敏感度和特异度。虽然IPH缺乏特异性治疗,但动物模型研究发现,抗血管生成治疗能减缓斑块进展,未来需进一步探究抗血管生成制剂的临床应用价值。

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