



中枢肾素 - 血管紧张素系统与阿尔茨海默病

王超 项国卿 洪浩

中国药科大学药理教研室, 南京, 210009, 中国

【摘要】 阿尔茨海默病 (Alzheimer's disease, AD) 是全球共同关注的重大公共卫生课题和日益严重的社会问题, 发掘防治 AD 的新靶标和新药物是当今医药领域亟待破解的难题。越来越多的研究显示, 中枢肾素 - 血管紧张素系统 (central rennin-angiotensin system, CRAS) 与 AD 密切相关。根据相关文献报道, 综述 CRAS 中血管紧张素 II (angiotensin II, Ang II) 及其受体 (angiotensin II type 1 receptor, AT₁R; angiotensin II type 2 receptor, AT₂R), 血管紧张素 IV (angiotensin IV, Ang IV) 及其受体 (angiotensin II type 4 receptor, AT₄R) 以及血管紧张素转化酶 (angiotensin converting enzyme, ACE) 在 AD 发生发展中的作用, 有可能成为防治 AD 的新靶标, 提出新型抗 AD 药物开发的新思路。

【关键词】 阿尔茨海默病; 血管紧张素 1 型受体; 血管紧张素 2 型受体; 血管紧张素 4 型受体; 血管紧张素转化酶

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Central Rennin-angiotensin System and Alzheimer's Disease

WANG Chao, XIANG Guo-qing, HONG Hao

Department of Pharmacology, China Pharmaceutical University, Nanjing, 210009, China

【ABSTRACT】 Alzheimer's disease (AD) is not only a global major public health issue of common concern, but also an increasingly serious social problem. Developing novel targets and drugs in preventing or treating AD is an arduous task that remains to be overcome. More and more studies show that central rennin-angiotensin system (CRAS) is closely associated with AD. Based on related literatures, we reviewed the roles of Ang II and its receptors (AT₁R and AT₂R), Ang IV and its receptor (AT₄R) as well as ACE in AD, and revealed potential targets, and indicated new directions to developing drugs for AD.

【KEY WORDS】 Alzheimer's disease (AD); angiotensin II type 1 receptor (AT₁R); angiotensin II type 2 receptor (AT₂R); angiotensin II type 4 receptor (AT₄R); angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE)

阿尔茨海默病 (Alzheimer's disease, AD) 是一种以认知和记忆功能进行性减退为主要临床表现的神经退行性疾病, 主要病理特征是大脑萎缩、神经细胞外 β 淀粉样蛋白 (β -amyloid protein, A β) 沉积 (老年斑) 和神经细胞内微管相关蛋白质 tau 高度磷酸化聚集 (神经纤维缠结)。AD 发病率随着人类现代化和老龄化进程

的加速而逐年攀高, 并且有不断年轻化的趋势, 是继心脏病、肿瘤和脑卒中之后死亡率排在第四位的疾病, 给家庭和社会带来沉重的负担^[1]。目前临床治疗 AD 的药物主要有两类: 一类是通过提高胆碱能神经功能的胆碱酯酶抑制剂, 如多奈哌齐、利斯的明、他克林、加兰他敏等; 另一类是调控谷氨酸神经元突触活性的 N-甲

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作者简介: 王超, 男, 硕士研究生

通讯作者: 洪浩, 男, 副教授, 博士, 硕士生导师; 研究方向: 神经药理; Tel: +86-025-86185227, E-mail: haohongchina@hotmail.com

基-D-天冬氨酸(N-methyl-D-aspartic acid,NMDA)受体拮抗剂美金刚。但这两类药物只能改善或部分改善AD患者认知损害,且不良反应较多,不能阻止或逆转AD病理进程^[2]。因此,发掘防治AD的新靶标和新药物,已成为当今医药领域亟待破解的难题。

1 中枢肾素-血管紧张素系统

1971年Detlev Ganten证实脑内存在独立的肾素-血管紧张素系统(rennin-angiotensin system,RAS),并在脑内发现了几乎所有的外周RAS成份。脑内的血管紧张素合成始于血管紧张素原被肾素裂解生成血管紧张素I(angiotensin I,Ang I),Ang I经血管紧张素转换酶(angiotensin converting enzyme,ACE)裂解产生Ang II,Ang II经其它肽酶作用后代谢产生Ang III、Ang IV及Ang(5~7)等其它活性物质。Ang I被认为是尚不具有生理学活性的肽,而Ang II和Ang III是血管紧张素1型受体(angiotensin II type 1 receptor,AT₁R)和血管紧张素2型受体(angiotensin II type 2 receptor,AT₂R)的配体。Ang IV与AT₁R和AT₂R的亲合力较低,与血管紧张素4型受体(angiotensin II type 4 receptor,AT₄R)亲合力较高,两者特异性结合后产生广泛的生理作用,尤其是在促进学习记忆功能方面引起了科学家们极大的关注^[3]。现已发现,脑内血管紧张素受体有4种亚型,它们分别是AT₁R、AT₂R、AT₃R和AT₄R。AT₁R主要分布在垂体前叶、外侧膝状体、腹前侧第三脑室部位、室旁核、腹内侧核、视上核、孤束核等脑区;AT₂R主要分布在杏仁核、内侧膝状体、舌下神经核、下橄榄核、尾状核、苍白球、丘脑、下丘等脑区^[4];AT₃R分布和功能目前尚不清楚;AT₄R主要分布于在垂体前叶、尾状核、梨状皮质、外侧膝状体、松果体、海马、下橄榄核、中脑中央灰质、丘脑等部位。肾素在脑垂体、松果体、脉络丛、下丘脑、小脑、杏仁核等部位浓度较高,而在视上核、室旁核、脑干、脊髓浓度较低^[5-6]。在神经胶质细胞和神经元中均可检测到血管紧张素原的表达^[7-9],其裂解产物即不同大小的血管紧张素肽与其受体在脑内平行分布。血管紧张素转化酶在脑内分布也很广泛,其中脑室、脉络丛、室管膜细胞、血管、穹窿下器、终板脉络丛表达最多,其次为基底节、下丘脑神经内分泌核、正中隆起及垂体后叶^[10]。目前所知,中枢肾素-血管紧张素系统(central rennin-angiotensin system,CRAS)主要功能有:①调节自主神经系统活性;②刺激饥渴和压力反射,调节体液与血压平衡;③维持血脑屏障稳定性;④调节机体体温;⑤调节下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺轴,影响生殖和妊娠功能;⑥调节行为和情绪活动。近些年来,人们开始关注CRAS病理生理学意义。

2 Ang II及其受体与AD

Ang II及其受体AT₁R是目前临床上使用的沙坦类抗高血压药物作用的分子靶标,沙坦类药物由于疗效确切,不良反应小,且有多器官保护作用,深受医生和病人的青睐。有趣的是,在AD患者大脑皮质中,Ang II水平及AT₁R表达显著增加^[11-12],体外研究发现,Ang II可抑制大鼠海马齿状回突触传递,且抑制作用能被AT₁R拮抗剂洛沙坦阻断。在体内研究显示,大鼠双侧海马区注射Ang II可剂量依赖性和时间依赖性地抑制海马齿状回长时程增强(long term potentiation,LTP),这种作用也能被双侧海马区注射AT₁R拮抗剂洛沙坦阻断^[13]。最新研究报道,单侧脑室灌注1周Ang II能剂量依赖性地增加大鼠脑内AT₁R的表达,升高A β 水平,导致大鼠认知功能障碍,同时脑室灌注AT₁R阻断剂洛沙坦可阻断这些效应^[14]。这些研究提示,脑内AT₁R参与调节A β 水平及认知功能,但调节机制目前尚不清楚,其调节A β 水平可能与抑制A β 降解酶的活性有关^[15-17]。AT₂R是能被Ang II激活的另一个受体,在啮齿类动物海马和皮层也有表达^[18-19]。据报道,激活AT₂R可促进轴突生长^[20],AT₂R缺失小鼠中枢神经系统发生紊乱^[21-22]。这些结果初步显示,AT₂R与AT₁R反向调节认知功能,其机制值得进一步探究。

近年来,关于AT₁R拮抗剂防治AD的研究屡见文献报道。在转基因AD模型小鼠中,给予AT₁R拮抗剂缬沙坦(10 mg·kg⁻¹)5个月可抑制APP/PS1小鼠脑内A β 寡聚化,改善记忆损害,且对血压没有明显影响^[23];给予AT₁R拮抗剂奥美沙坦(1.0 mg·kg⁻¹)4周也能改善APP23小鼠的神经血管功能损害。预防性给予替米沙坦(0.35 mg·kg⁻¹)2周或治疗性给予奥美沙坦(1.0 mg·kg⁻¹)4周均能改善脑室注射A β ₄₀所致的小鼠学习和记忆功能损害。临床研究显示,坎地沙坦能有效地降低高血压病人患AD的风险^[24]。此外,Tedesco等报道,持续服用洛沙坦26个月能显著改善老年(60~73岁)和中年(30~59岁)轻中度高血压患者的学习和记忆功能^[25]。Fogari等的研究也发现洛沙坦对老年(75~89岁)轻中度高血压患者的认知功能有改善作用^[26]。这些研究报道显示,AT₁R拮抗剂可能成为一类临床上防治AD的药物,尤其对于治疗伴随轻中度高血压的AD患者有巨大的潜力。AT₁R拮抗剂临床上被用于治疗高血压,安全性评价和药动学参数齐全,若使用AT₁R拮抗剂防治AD,不仅可以降低研发成本,而且可以缩减研发周期,但此类药物需满足两个条件:①能透过血脑屏障;②给予的剂量要低于抗高血压所用的剂量,以保证长期应用不引发低血压反应。有人将AD动物鼻腔给予洛沙坦,不仅减少低血压的发生,而且使药物更易

进入中枢发挥作用^[27]。但这种给药方式是否适合AD病人长期给药还有待进一步观察。

3 Ang IV及其受体与AD

Ang IV及其受体AT₄R也是CRAS组成成分。1988年Braszko等人发现脑室注射Ang IV能改善大鼠在旷场实验和避暗实验中的记忆行为。随后Ang IV改善记忆作用在多个认知损伤大鼠模型中都得到了证实^[28-29]。进一步研究还发现,Ang IV能增强海马CA1区的基础突触传递和长时程增强效应;在大鼠海马CA3区,注射Ang IV可增强海马神经元的放电频率。AT₄R拮抗剂可阻断Ang IV所产生的电生理效应^[30-31]。激活AT₄R至少可通过三种钙通道增加神经细胞摄取钙离子,神经细胞内钙离子浓度增加能导致基质金属蛋白酶释放至细胞外,而基质金属蛋白酶被认为是A β 降解酶^[32]。因此,Ang IV与AT₄R结合后可能是通过增加基质金属蛋白酶水平促进A β 降解,减少A β 沉积,继而改善学习记忆。虽然Ang IV及其类似物在AD动物模型中能改善认知损害,但它们易被降解,半衰期短,且分子量大,亲水性强,难以穿透血脑屏障,从而限制了它们的实际应用。如果在这些化合物的N末端进行一些修饰,如引入D-氨基酸或使其N末端酰基化,可提高其稳定性,且保留其增强认知的活性。Wright等通过一系列结构修饰得到了能够穿过血脑屏障且性质稳定的Ang IV类似物PNB-0408,已被证实能改善东莨菪碱诱导的记忆缺失,但能否开发成防治AD药物还有待进一步研究^[33]。此外,开发易通过血脑屏障的小分子AT₄R激动剂也是今后防治AD药物开发的一个新方向。

4 ACE与AD

ACE是参与Ang II生成的关键酶,其抑制剂(ACEIs)也是目前临床上一类常用的抗高血压药物。Arregui等人发现,AD病人脑内海马和皮层的ACE活性升高,且ACE活性升高与A β 沉积相关^[34]。在AD动物模型中,脑内ACE活性显著升高,给予能透过血脑屏障的ACEI培哚普利2 d(1 mg·kg⁻¹)即可降低ACE活性,改善AD模型小鼠认知损害^[35]。Dong等人研究发现,可跨越血脑屏障的ACEI培哚普利(1 mg·kg⁻¹)能改善A β 诱导的小鼠认知损害,而不能穿透血脑屏障的ACEI依那普利(10 mg·kg⁻¹)、咪达普利(3 mg·kg⁻¹)均不能改善A β 诱导的小鼠认知损害。临床研究发现,编码ACE的基因突变会增加患AD的风险^[36-38]。ACE活性增强,一方面增加Ang II生成,通过激活AT₁R使A β 水平增加;另一方面作用于P物质,减少A β 降解酶

如脑啡肽酶的释放,导致A β 水平增加^[39]。这可能是ACE促进AD老年斑形成的原因。然而,一些研究结果与此相矛盾。例如,体外实验显示,ACE是一种降解A β ₄₀和A β ₄₂的蛋白酶^[40-41]。在体实验研究发现,ACE能使A β ₄₂转化为A β ₄₀,Tg2576小鼠使用ACEI卡托普利(30 mg·kg⁻¹)7个月后脑内A β ₄₂沉积增加^[42]。此外,在ACE基因敲除AD模型小鼠或给予ACEI卡托普利(40 mg·kg⁻¹)的AD模型小鼠中,脑内A β 水平没有明显减少^[43-44],小规模临床研究没有发现西洛普利能改善AD患者的认知下降^[45],这些矛盾结果需要更多实验研究确证。

综上所述,CRAS组分如Ang II、Ang IV、AT₁R、AT₂R、AT₄R、ACE等与AD发生密切相关,但其分子机制还远未阐明。从目前研究报道来看,在CRAS中,至少存在有4个蛋白质分子如AT₁R、AT₂R、AT₄R和ACE有可能成为防治AD的新靶标。由于外周组织中AT₁R和ACE是两类抗高血压药物(ARBs和ACEIs)作用的分子靶标,因此,从这两类药物中筛选抗AD药物是优先考虑的策略,这不仅可以降低新药研发成本,而且还可以规避由于新药安全隐患所带来的风险。以AT₂R和AT₄R为作用靶标的药物研究是开拓性工作,具有更高的创新性和挑战性。随着CRAS的研究不断深入,将会有更多防治AD的新靶标被发掘,从而促进创新药物的研究。

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