

黄连素治疗类风湿关节炎作用机制研究进展

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摘要:类风湿关节炎作为一种临床常见的风湿免疫性疾病,发病机制错综复杂,现阶段临床尚无法实现彻底治愈。目前治疗药物主要有非甾体类抗炎药、糖皮质激素、免疫调节剂等,能控制病情但不良反应明显。黄连素是从毛茛科黄连属植物黄连的根皮中提取的异喹啉类生物碱,具有镇痛、抗炎、促进骨再生等作用,可有效改善类风湿关节炎的持续性炎症、关节结构的破坏和功能障碍。然而,黄连素对于类风湿关节炎的治疗机制尚未阐明。作者查阅大量国内外文献发现,黄连素在改善类风湿患者临床症状及治疗关节炎动物模型等方面均展现显著疗效。文章主要分类综述黄连素治疗类风湿关节炎的作用机制,旨在为类风湿关节炎的研究及临床治疗提供理论依据,为中医药临床治疗疾病及新药挖掘提供思路及参考。

关键词:黄连素;类风湿关节炎;作用机制;研究进展

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Research Progress on the Mechanism of Berberine in the Treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis

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Abstract: As a common rheumatic immune disease, rheumatoid arthritis, has an intricate pathogenesis and cannot be completely cured at this stage. Current therapeutic drugs mainly include non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), glucocorticoids, and immunomodulators, which can control the disease but have significant side effects. Berberine is an isoquinoline alkaloid extracted from the root and bark of berberis vulgaris, a plant in the family of brassicaceae, with analgesic, anti-inflammatory and bone regeneration effects, which can effectively improve the persistent inflammation, destruction of joint structure and dysfunction of rheumatoid arthritis. However, the therapeutic mechanism of safranin for rheumatoid arthritis has not been elucidated. The authors reviewed a large number of domestic and international literature and found that safranin showed significant efficacy in improving clinical symptoms of rheumatoid patients and treating animal models of arthritis. This paper summarizes the mechanism of berberine in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and aims to provide a theoretical basis for the research and clinical treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, as well as ideas and references for the clinical treatment of traditional Chinese medicine and the excavation of new drugs development.

Keywords: berberine; rheumatoid arthritis; mechanism of action; review

类风湿关节炎(rheumatoid arthritis, RA)是一种以对称性外周多关节炎为主要表现的慢性自身免

疫性疾病^[1],其临床特点为慢性炎性关节炎、进行性残疾、全身性并发症、疾病后期致残率较高及过早死

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亡^[2]。RA病理特征为关节滑膜炎及增生、血管翳形成、灶性骨侵蚀和关节软骨变薄,血清抗环瓜氨酸抗体(抗-CCPs)与类风湿因子(RF)为RA生物标志物^[3]。因RA属系统性疾病,故可造成多种关节外其他组织和器官的损害,包括皮下结节、心包炎、肺部受累、周围神经病变、血管炎等^[4]。在世界范围内,RA占有所有残疾(YLDs)的0.28%,是造成人口肢体残疾主要疾病之一,是关节炎预防和治疗的焦点。目前中国有500多万人患有RA,而女性患RA的可能性是男性的2~3倍^[5],据统计,女性成人患RA的终生累积风险为3.6%^[6],男性为1.7%^[7]。类风湿关节炎发病机制复杂,临床无法治愈^[8],目前临床治疗的重点是缓解疼痛、控制症状、维持关节功能。临床上治疗药物主要包括非甾体类抗炎药(NSAIDs)、糖皮质激素、传统抗风湿药(DMARDs)及一些新型生物制剂等^[8],尽管在一定程度上可缓解疾病进展,但长期服用会引起胃肠道反应、肝肾损害等不良反应^[9]。因此,迫切需要开发治疗关节炎的天然药物。

中药是新药研发的天然宝库,在治疗关节炎方面具有极高医用价值^[10]。黄连素(berberine, BBR)又名小檗碱,是从清热解毒类中药黄连、黄柏中分离出的一类生物碱,呈淡黄色针状结晶,常见醛式、醇式、季铵式三种存在形式,其分子式为 $[C_{20}H_{18}NO_4]^+$,分子量为336.36 Da,广泛存在于毛茛科、芸香科和小檗科等药用植物的根茎和茎皮中^[11]。BBR具有镇痛、抗炎、促进骨再生等药理作用^[12],可以从调节免疫反应、调节多种炎症信号通路、改善氧化应激、抑制血管生成、减轻骨破坏、调节机体细胞凋亡、调节细胞自噬、维持肠道菌群平衡等方面防治类风湿关节炎^[13]。故笔者对BBR治疗类风湿关节炎的作用机制进行综述,旨在为类风湿关节炎的研究及治疗提供理论依据,为类风湿关节炎的临床治疗及传统中药开发提供思路及参考。

1 调节免疫反应,抑制炎症

1.1 调节Th17/Treg细胞

RA发病机制的核心是建立在自身反应性T细胞介导的慢性炎症反应^[14]。RA由 CD_4^+ T淋巴细胞驱动, CD_4^+ T细胞通过T细胞受体与Ⅱ类主要组织相容性复合体(MHC)-抗原肽之间的相互作用以及CD28-CD80/86通路的共刺激信号被抗原递呈细胞(antigen-presenting cells, APC)激活^[15],活化的T细胞刺激巨噬细胞(MLS)和成纤维样滑膜细胞(FLS),促使白细胞在关节内聚集,并产生推动滑膜炎反应和破坏骨组织的炎性介质及蛋白酶。 CD_4^+ T辅助细胞(Th)根据其分泌的独特细胞因子分为Th1和Th2亚群^[16],新发现的Th细胞亚群Th17是除Th1、Th2之外的第三群Th细胞,它的发现对认识RA发病机制具有突破性进展^[16]。激活的Th17细胞分泌多种炎症介质如白细胞介素(interleukin, IL)-17、IL-22、TNF- α 、IL-6以及粒细胞-巨噬细胞集落刺激因子(GM-CSF),这些炎症介质诱导促炎细胞因子并刺激多种趋化因子的产生,但现有研究尚不明确广泛的T细胞异常如何引起以滑膜炎为主的全身性疾病^[17]。调节性T细胞(Treg)与自身免疫炎症关系密切,通过与其他免疫细胞的相互作

用和抑制细胞因子的分泌协调整体免疫反应和维持外周免疫耐受的形成^[18]。因此,调节Th17/Treg平衡对控制自身免疫和炎症的发展有至关重要的作用。

体内研究证实口服BBR(150 mg/kg)可调节AIA模型大鼠Th17/Treg细胞平衡,降低IL-17和IL-6的水平,增加血清IL-10和转化生长因子(transforming growth factor, TGF)- β ,抑制抗IL-17抗体的表达,同时促进踝关节滑膜组织抗IL-10抗体,具有优越的抗关节炎作用^[19]。YUE等^[20]研究发现BBR可以通过降低 CD_4^+ T细胞产生IL-17的频率来抑制促炎细胞Th17的功能和分化来抑制IL-17的生成,并通过调节免疫细胞如Tregs、树突状细胞和巨噬细胞等间接减少Th细胞介导的炎症。BBR还能抑制LPS刺激下的RAW 264.7细胞的极化,降低F4/80+CD11c+M1巨噬细胞的比例。抑制T细胞、树突状细胞和巨噬细胞的增殖,抑制促炎因子和抗体的产生,发挥免疫调节作用^[21]。WANG等^[22]最新研究发现BBR可通过影响M1-exo-miR155来抑制 CD_4^+ T细胞的活化和分化,其抗关节炎作用与糖酵解的抑制和 CD_4^+ T细胞亚群平衡的破坏有关,这是通过减少M1-exo-miR155向T细胞的转移来实现的。

1.2 调控炎性细胞因子

促炎细胞因子和炎症介质一直是深入研究RA触发机制的焦点,主要包括肿瘤坏死因子(tumor necrosis factor, TNF)- α 、IL-1 β 、IL-6、IL-8、IL-12、干扰素- γ (IFN- γ)、TGF- β 和GM-CSF等^[23]。BBR可通过调节AIA大鼠M1/M2巨噬细胞的平衡来减轻炎症反应,从而减少TNF- α 、IL-1 β 和IL-6表达,减少Th17细胞生成,增强抗炎因子TGF- β 1和IL-10^[24]。其次,BBR可通过上调miR-23a的表达抑制凋亡信号调节激酶1(as k1)信号通路及其下游成分的激活,减少RAW 264.7巨噬细胞中TNF- α 、IL-6和IL-23的表达^[25]。此外,BBR能通过抑制花生四烯酸或脂多糖(lipopolysaccharide, LPS)诱导的单核细胞中的TNF- α 、单核细胞趋化蛋白-1、IL-6、IL-8和环氧合酶(cyclooxygenase, COX)-2等因子水平,抑制NF- κ B转位从而减弱炎症反应^[26]。

1.3 调控多种炎症信号通路

NF- κ B、JAKs/STATs和MAPKs三种主要的炎症信号通路在免疫细胞的活化、增殖、分化和关节炎炎症的启动和促进中起着至关重要的作用^[27]。BBR可通过介导TLR4/NF- κ B、MAPK、NF- κ B/Nrf2等炎症信号通路,调节免疫反应、抑制炎症来防治RA。

核转录因子- κ B(nuclear Factor kappa B, NF- κ B)在许多炎症相关基因的表达中起着至关重要的作用^[28]。在对驱动炎症的各种细胞因子和Toll样受体(toll-like Receptors, TLR)刺激做出反应时,NF- κ B抑制蛋白(inhibitor of nuclear Factor kappa-B, NF- κ B inhibitor, I κ B)被NF- κ B抑制蛋白激酶(inhibitor of NF- κ B, I κ K)激活磷酸化,促使NF- κ B蛋白迁移到细胞核中并结合到其DNA结合位点以诱导目标基因的表达^[29]。现有研究表明,BBR

可通过下调NF- κ B mRNA和蛋白质水平的表达减少I κ B的磷酸化和降解,抑制NF- κ B从细胞质向细胞核的转移,并减弱NF- κ B DNA结合活性。此外,BBR可通过阻断PI3K/Akt通路减少I κ B磷酸化和降解^[30]。ZHOU等^[31]发现BBR可显著上调硝普钠处理的大鼠软骨细胞中炎症和先天免疫的关键调节因子SP-D的表达,降低TRAF6、TLR4、MD-2和髓细胞分化初级反应蛋白88(myeloid differentiation factor 88, MyD88)等蛋白的表达,抑制NF- κ B p65和I κ B α 磷酸化,这表明,BBR通过从MD2/SP-D复合物中释放SP-D并通过抑制TLR4/NF- κ B信号转导来调节免疫反应并减少关节炎大鼠软骨退化。

Janus激酶/信号转导和转录激活子(JAK/STAT)信号通路对于启动固有免疫、协调适应性免疫至关重要,可诱导树突状细胞的激活和成熟,并对T细胞各种亚型如TH1、TH2和来自幼稚T细胞的TH17的分化起至关重要的作用^[32]。因此,JAKs和STATs可以被认为是治疗RA的潜在靶点。YUE等^[33]报道称,BBR可减弱STAT3磷酸化,降低TH17细胞及IL-17的产生,改善胶原诱导性关节炎(CIA)小鼠模型的临床症状和关节破坏。从机制上讲,已有研究发现BBR减少了大鼠中JAK1/2/3和STAT1/3的磷酸化形式,这些发现表明,BBR可能通过靶向STAT信号级联反应重新平衡T细胞亚型,从而有效抑制几种免疫细胞中促炎反应的诱导^[34]。

MAPKs信号级联包括细胞外受体激活激酶(ERK)、p38和C-Jun N末端激酶(JNK)组成,是有助于基因表达和细胞增殖、分化和诱导的重要途径之一^[27]。MAPKs在RA的免疫发病机制中起着重要作用。在角叉菜胶诱导的足爪水肿、二甲苯诱导的耳水肿和乙酸诱导的血管通透性的动物模型中发现,BBR可通过阻断JNK和p38的磷酸化抑制促炎细胞因子的mRNA表达^[35]。除了抗过敏作用外,BBR抗RA活性与其对MAPKs信号通路的调节作用有关。WANG等^[36]研究发现BBR可显著抑制p-JNK、p-ERK和p-p38的活化,抑制下游促炎反应。

1.4 抗氧化应激反应

氧化应激在RA的发病机制中起着至关重要的作用。线粒体功能障碍可引起活性氧(reactive oxygen species, ROS)增加,继而诱发氧化应激、炎症反应及基质降解^[37]。滑膜细胞在炎症因子或缺氧等因素的刺激下会引发线粒体电子传递链(electron transport chain, ETC)生物学功能障碍,导致滑膜组织抗氧化失衡^[38]。控制过度的线粒体氧化应激可以为RA的预防治疗提供新的目标。最近的一项研究表明,在RA患者的滑膜组织中,4-HNE诱导的氧化应激会重新编程能量代谢,降低氧化磷酸化过程中线粒体内酯复合体III和IV的酶活性,促进糖酵解,增加ROS产生并提高线粒体突变,加速炎症过程,从而导致氧化/线粒体应激的恶性循环^[39]。BBR可通过AMPK/HIF-1 α 通路调节巨噬细胞的能量代谢,通过减少乳酸输出、葡萄糖消耗和增加细胞内ATP含量来抑制M1巨噬细胞的糖酵解^[40]。

核因子e2相关因子2(nuclear factor erythroid-2 related factor 2, Nrf2)是参与抗炎、抗氧化等过程的

关键转录因子^[41],调节200多个参与抗氧化防御的基因的表达,它在RA患者的滑膜中被激活,并且在RA滑液中也发现其靶酶HO-1水平升高,激活Nrf2、抗氧化应激是治疗RA炎症的一种重要方式^[41]。BBR可以通过激活包括AMP依赖的蛋白激酶在内的几种细胞信号通路来促进Nrf2的核转位,从而有效抑制细胞内活性氧的水平^[42]。此外,BBR抗RA氧化应激的分子机制还可能与抑制巨噬细胞对LPS导致的炎症反应相关。无细胞模型实验表明,BBR能够以阳离子形式穿透双层磷脂膜,在线粒体中聚集,抑制脂质过氧化,具有明显的抗氧化作用^[43]。

2 抑制滑膜增生

RA病理特征为滑膜增生,而滑膜细胞异常增生和滑膜内新的血管形成会导致纤维肉芽过度生长,侵入软骨和软骨下骨,导致骨侵蚀和关节变形^[44]。现有研究已证明这种病理机制的发生和进展与FLS的快速增殖、凋亡缺陷和异常自噬密切相关,研究与FLS-RA相关的潜在药物治疗已成为对抗该疾病的有效策略^[45]。

BBR可通过多种途径调节细胞周期抑制FLS-RA的增殖,包括减少细胞周期蛋白依赖性激酶CDK2、CDK4、CDK6,细胞周期蛋白D1、D2,诱导CDK抑制剂Cip1/p21和Kip1/p27,导致细胞周期被捕在G0/G1阶段,并诱导凋亡通路等^[46]。BBR可通过阻断MAPK调节血浆溶血磷脂酸(LPA)的功能,该功能已被证明是高表达的在RA患者的滑膜液中,抑制FLS-RA的增殖和炎症^[47]。

3 抑制血管生成

异常的免疫反应导致炎症细胞过度聚集,当细胞因子及IL-1达到一定水平,滑膜细胞大量黏附在关节软骨表面,这导致软骨-骨界面处形成标志性的“血管翳”^[46]。血管翳是RA病变过程中特征性的病理产物,可介导疾病后期的骨侵蚀,新血管生成被认为是形成和维持RA血管翳的重要因素,因此,靶向血管生成被认为是治疗RA的一种新方法。研究表明,BBR具有抗血管生成作用,可抑制各种促炎和促血管生成因子,包括HIF、VEGF、一氧化氮(NO)、COX-2和NF- κ B^[49],其中血管内皮生长因子(VEGF)是最有效的促血管生成生长因子之一^[50]。一项对BBR治疗(口服200 mg/kg)CIA大鼠的研究发现,BBR能够改善滑膜增生和炎症浸润,这些与通过抑制ERK/p38/JNK通路激活来降低TNF- α 、IL-6和VEGF的表达水平相关^[51]。

4 减轻骨破坏

骨吸收过度、骨形成不足及炎症反应所致的骨侵蚀、软骨破坏、骨质疏松是RA典型特征^[3]。BBR除调控炎症因子抑制炎症反应造成的骨损伤外,还可促进成骨活性及成骨细胞增殖、抑制破骨细胞分化及骨吸收、抑制软骨基质降解等。

成骨细胞(osteoblast, OB)是促进骨组织钙化及新骨形成的重要细胞,在骨代谢中发挥着关键作用。MAPK信号通路介导干细胞成骨分化。BBR可增加小鼠胚胎成骨前体细胞p38 MAPK和活化转录因子2(activating transcription factor 2, ATF2)的

磷酸化,增强骨桥蛋白(osteopontin, OPN)、骨钙素(osteocalcin, OCN)的表达水平,促进OB分化^[52]。Runt相关转录因子2(runt-related transcription factor2, Runx2)可以与启动子区域结合进而调控成骨基因的表达,是OB分化和骨形成相关分子中不可或缺的转录因子之^[52]。BBR可通过p38 MAPK增强Runx2的转录活性,增强成骨标志基因的表达,并调节p300和HDAC1等辅助因子向启动子区域的募集增强成骨基因的表达^[55]。

破骨细胞(osteoclast, OC)是溶解骨盐、促进骨吸收的主要功能细胞,其异常会导致骨代谢障碍^[53]。核因子 κ B受体活化因子配体(receptor Activator for nuclear factor- κ B Ligand, RANKL)可与破骨细胞前体细胞表达的核因子 κ B受体活化因子(receptor of activator of nuclear factor- κ B, RANK)结合,通过肿瘤坏死因子受体相关因子6(TNF receptor-associated factor 6, TRAF6)激活MAPK和NF- κ B信号通路,增加原癌基因c-Fos和活化T细胞核因子1蛋白(nuclear factor of activated T-cells, cytoplasmic 1, NFATc1)等多种破骨转录因子的表达促进OC分化^[54]。BBR可以通过抑制RANKL的表达调控RANKL与RANK之间的结合,进而影响下游的MAPK、NF- κ B等通路抑制OC的分化,从而促进骨再生^[55]。BBR可介导RANK/RANKL/骨保护素(osteoprotegerin, OPG)信号因子,提高大鼠颅骨成骨细胞中OPG和RANKL的蛋白表达比例,从而减少骨吸收^[12]。BBR可抑制RANKL诱导的小鼠骨髓细胞间充质干细胞NF- κ B通路中I κ B激酶(inhibitor of kappa B kinase, IKK)磷酸化,抑制I κ B α 泛素化及降解,抑制NF- κ B二聚体(p50和p65)的释放,使其无法进入细胞核调控OC的基因转录^[59]。HAN等^[57]发现BBR可显著抑制RANKL诱导的TRAP阳性破骨细胞形成,并抑制RANKL诱导的Akt、p38和ERK磷酸化,抑制I κ B降解,并抑制c-Fos和NFATc1的表达,后者是破骨细胞形成的关键转录因子。BBR可降低破骨细胞标志物如抗酒石酸酸性磷酸酶(tartrate Resistant Acid Phosphatase, TRAP)、MMP-9、OSCAR、组织蛋白酶K和ATP6v0d2的mRNA水平抑制OC的形成^[56]。

软骨细胞合成基质成分并生成降解基质的酶,并与滑膜组织合成并释放细胞因子和生长因子以调节基质分子的合成,生理状态下软骨基质合成和分解代谢处于一种动态平衡中^[60]。当炎症发生时,大量炎性细胞因子及基质降解酶产生,软骨分解因子MMPs和崩解蛋白和金属蛋白酶(a disintegrin and metalloproteinase with thrombospondin, ADAMTS)参与软骨细胞及周围基质的降解,最终导致软骨溶解^[61]。蛋白激酶B(Akt)可以通过磷脂酰肌醇3激酶(PI3K)依赖性方式被细胞外因子磷酸化和激活,激活的PI3K/Akt通路可参与调节软骨细胞的存活^[62]。LI等^[63]研究证明BBR可通过激活Akt信号转导触发p70S6K/S6通路并上调IL-1 β 刺激的大鼠软骨细胞中蛋白聚糖和II型胶原蛋白(Collagen II)和p-Akt和p-S6的表达水平,促进软骨细胞存活和基质生成,改善软骨破坏。BBR可显著上调

β -catenin、c-Myc和cyclin D1的mRNA表达,并通过miR-23a下调糖原合成酶激酶-3 β (GSK-3 β)和基质金属蛋白酶(matrix metalloproteinases, MMPs)-7表达抑制骨降解酶的表达及破骨细胞活性,改善骨侵蚀^[64]。

此外,Wnt1/ β -连环蛋白信号通路可调节关节组织中滑膜细胞、成骨细胞和软骨细胞的活性^[58],在组织修复和关节稳态中发挥重要作用,有研究证明,异常的Wnt/ β -catenin通路是RA的主要机制^[62]。ZHOU等^[66]研究发现BBR可通过激活Wnt/ β -catenin信号通路促进SNP硝普钠刺激的大鼠软骨细胞增殖,增加S期细胞数量,减少G0/G1期细胞数量;SUJITHA等^[64]研究发现BBR可通过激活miR-23a抑制Wnt/ β -catenin,从而改善RA造成的骨侵蚀。SHEN等^[67]证实BBR可诱导Dvl1抑制剂-CYLD抑制FZD4、LRP5和Dvl1的表达,调节FLS细胞中Wnt/ β -catenin通路,降低细胞内 β -catenin的表达水平,从而改善关节炎。

5 调节细胞凋亡

细胞凋亡是由基因控制的细胞自主的有序的生理性死亡过程,细胞的增殖与凋亡相互平衡是维持细胞正常的生理功能和数量稳定必要条件^[65]。体外研究观察到,在炎症环境的刺激下,RA滑膜细胞中B细胞淋巴瘤2(B-cell lymphoma-2, Bcl-2)家族中抗凋亡蛋白Bcl-2和Mcl-1的表达增加,这些蛋白可抑制细胞色素c(cytochrome c, cyt-c)从线粒体释放,而cyt-c可与三磷酸脱氧腺苷(deoxyadenosine triphosphate, dATP)和凋亡蛋白酶活化因子(apoptotic protease activating factor-1, Apaf-1)结合形成复合物,激活含半胱氨酸天冬酶(cysteiny aspartate specific proteinase, caspase)-9,增强caspase-3、caspase-6活性,从而诱导细胞凋亡^[69]。在RA进程中,多种因素促进滑膜细胞增殖及存活并阻碍它们通过细胞凋亡被消除^[70]。DINESH等^[71]发现,IL-21可通过诱导Bcl-2促进AIA大鼠的FLS异常增殖,并通过PI3K/Akt信号传导减少Bcl-2相关X蛋白(BAX)的表达。BBR可通过增加BAX的表达和降低Bcl-2转录因子水平调控细胞周期和促进细胞凋亡,从而抑制AA-FLS的增殖。此外,MOHAMMADLOU M等^[72]发现BBR可通过减少CLL患者的Bcl-2、ROR1和mir-21的表达水平,并被认为可能是靶向CLL细胞的一种新型凋亡诱导剂。

6 调节细胞自噬

细胞自噬又称为II型程序性细胞死亡,能够在异常生理状态下将功能受损细胞成分如线粒体、内质网、过氧化物酶体、折叠不良的蛋白质等进行降解,并通过自噬途径对溶解物循环利用,从而维系细胞稳态^[72]。自噬的详细分子机制和特征已被广泛描述,主要涉及哺乳动物雷帕霉素靶蛋白(mammalian target of rapamycin, mTOR)介导的自噬体和自噬溶酶体的形成以及产物的再利用^[73]。现有研究在RA患者滑膜组织中发现Beclin1、ATG5、LC3等自噬相关蛋白的表达显著增加,并会对滑膜细胞造成凋亡拮抗,促进RA滑膜细胞增殖^[74]。其

次,自噬可调节RA中的T细胞亚群,也有助于其凋亡抵抗^[75]。

PI3K/AKT/mTOR信号通路对关节组织的正常代谢至关重要,是调节自噬的关键机制之一,与RA的发生发展密切相关。DINESH P等^[71]发现,在IL-21刺激下,AA-FLS可通过介导p62和抑制C/EBP同源蛋白(CCAAT enhancer binding protein, CHOP)提高自噬相关蛋白Atg5、Beclin-1和LC3-II的表达水平,而BBR(15~45 μM)可剂量依赖性抑制AA-FLS细胞中PI3K/Akt信号介导的自噬,抑制自噬相关蛋白和p62,并诱导CHOP,减弱AA-FLS增殖。ZONG S等^[76]研究发现BBR可呈时间和浓度依赖性地抑制TNF-α(25 ng/mL)诱导下RA-FLSs的增殖活力,mCherry-EGFP-LC3B检测结果显示,BBR(30 μmol/L)可对RA-FLS造成明显的自噬流阻滞。免疫荧光结果证实BBR可显著降低TNF-α诱导后RA-FLSs的ROS水平,上调自噬调控蛋白p-mTOR表达水平,且受ROS水平调控,这一结果可证明BBR可能通过调控ROS-mTOR抑制RA-FLSs自噬,并促进其凋亡。

7 调节肠道菌群

肠道菌群(gut microbes, GM)在维持肠道自身生理功能、营养物质的代谢、激发宿主的免疫系统以及参与全身炎症过程等方面发挥着重要作用^[77]。RA炎症常起源于黏膜部位,如肠黏膜和口腔黏膜^[2]。在一些早期的RA病例中,GM中的普雷沃氏菌的丰度增加,这提示菌群失调与RA的发展密切相关^[78]。研究发现口服BBR(200 mg/kg)能使CIA大鼠肠道中的普雷沃氏菌数量减少^[78]。GM产生的小分子次生代谢物可通过介导肠道Breg细胞中AhR的活化来抑制关节炎的严重程度,也可以通过循环系统作用于宿主身体的各个部位。丁酸盐作为一种短链脂肪酸(SCFAs),是GM通过复杂的碳水化合物发酵产生的代谢产物,通过增加5-羟基吲哚-3-乙酸(5-HIAA)的水平来支持Breg功能,以抑制关节炎的严重程度,还能抑制IL-1β、IL-6和IL-17等炎症因子,调控Th17/Treg细胞的平衡,抑制破骨细胞,并诱导Treg细胞扩增产生IL-10^[79]。研究证明,比格犬连续7 d口服BBR(50 mg/kg)后产生丁酸和产生硝基还原酶的肠菌丰度增加。从而提高丁酸盐的水平^[80]。在体外用BBR培养肠道细菌菌株可促进丁酸盐的产生,这可能是BBR调节能量代谢的重要机制之一^[78]。BBR可通过以下方式提高丁酸菌的数量。其一,BBR可通过限制硝酸盐的产生和稳定肠道内的生理性缺氧来调节宿主肠道环境,提高丁酸菌的丰度^[81]。其二,口服BBR可提高肠道丁酸盐含量,促进丁酰-CoA、乙酸-CoA转移酶的表达和活性^[82]。此外,BBR可通过PI3K信号通路诱导肠道中皮质酮的表达,并抑制STAT3磷酸化调控Th17细胞反应来改善CIA大鼠的临床症状^[82]。

8 讨论

BBR作为黄连、黄柏等药物的主要成分,是一种重要的先导化合物,在近年来引起了大家的关注。通过文献查阅发现,BBR可以从调节免疫及缓

解炎症、抑制滑膜增生、改善氧化应激、减少血管生成、减轻骨破坏、调节机体细胞凋亡、调节细胞自噬、维持肠道菌群平衡等方面防治RA,其作用机制涉及Th17/Treg、MAPK、NF-κB、JAKs/STATs、AMPK、RANK/RANKL/OPG、Wnt/β-catenin、PI3K/AKT/mTOR等^[83-85],在药物开发中具有很大的优化潜力。然而,BBR治疗RA的研究主要集中在动物和细胞实验上,临床研究则相对较少。水溶性极低、口服吸收不良、口服生物利用度较差是限制BBR临床应用的主要原因,固体分散体、脂质体、醇质体、纳米粒、传递体、微乳、微胶囊等新剂型的研究与开发有望弥补其不足之处^[11],提高治疗效果。此外,BBR补充剂被认为是耐受性良好和安全的,但其临床指导原则的不完善有可能导致不良反应的发生,为保证BBR临床使用的合理性及安全性,仍然需要广大研究者对黄连素的详细成分及药理作用进行更加深入研究。◆

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