

核因子- κ B与炎症性肠病

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摘要

核因子- κ B(NF- κ B)是一类具有多向活性的转录调控因子,参与多种基因的表达和调控,在炎症及免疫反应、细胞生长增生、凋亡及感染等方面起着重要作用。本文重点介绍核因子- κ B结构和激活机制,及其在炎症性肠病中的表达及可能的作用机制;NF- κ B抑制剂在炎症性肠病治疗上的应用。

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0 引言

1986年,Sen和Baltimore^[1]首次从B淋巴细胞核提取物中检测到一种转录调控因子,他能与B淋巴细胞中免疫球蛋白 κ 轻链基因增强子 κ B序列(GGGACTTCC)特异性结合并具有转录调节活性,故被命名为核因子- κ B(nuclear factor- κ B, NF- κ B)。研究表明,NF- κ B同样以无活性的形式广泛存在于其他细胞胞质中;激活的NF- κ B与核内相关基因的 κ B基序特异结合,启动或调节相关基因转录,在免疫和炎症反应、细胞生长、病毒感染及某些疾病急性期反应等方面起着重要作用^[2-11]。近年研究显示,NF- κ B与炎症性肠病(inflammatory bowel disease, IBD)关系密切^[12-14]。本文就此方面作一综述。

1 NF- κ B/I κ B结构及活化

NF- κ B是NF- κ B/Rel家族的一员;该家族的特征是其肽链亚基均存在约300 bp组成的Rel同源结构域(Rel homology domain, RHD),内含二聚体化区、DNA结合区和核定位序列,分别介导Rel蛋白间的二聚体化,Rel蛋白和DNA特异性结合及与I κ B(inhibitor of κ B)家族成员相互作用。NF- κ B/Rel家族包括^[15-16]:NF- κ B₁(p50/p105)、NF- κ B₂(p52/p100)、p65(ReIA)、RelB及C-Rel,其中大多亚基均可相互结合成同源或异源二聚体,NF- κ B最常见的形式是由p50或p52与p65亚基组成的异二聚体^[16]。根据结构和功能等方面的差异Rel家族成员可分为两类:一类是前体蛋白p105和p100,其C端具有锚蛋白重复序列(ankyrin repeat motif),但无反式激活区,

可水解为成熟的p50和p52,p52、p50同源二聚体对转录起抑制作用^[17];另一类由p65(ReIA)、RelB和C-Rel组成,其C端含有一个或多个反式激活区,具有激活基因转录的功能。

静息状态下,NF- κ B二聚体与I κ B单体偶联,以无活性的形式存在于细胞质中^[18-19]。I κ B与NF- κ B结合具有以下意义:I κ B可与NF- κ B亚基的RHD结合,覆盖核定位序列,使NF- κ B不能发生核易位;在核内阻止NF- κ B与DNA结合;解离NF- κ B与DNA结合的复合体。I κ B家族包括I κ B α 、I κ B β 、I κ B γ /p105、I κ B δ /p100、I κ B ε 和Bcl-3^[20-22]。所有已知的I κ B均有一由30-33氨基酸组成的重复序列(ankyrin),I κ B蛋白籍此与NF- κ B的RHD作用,不同的I κ B分子对NF- κ B各亚基具有不同的调节活性,已证实,I κ B α 与NF- κ B的瞬时活化有关,而I κ B β 则参与了NF- κ B的持续活化过程。I κ B α 对p50-p65异二聚体的抑制作用强于对p50同源二聚体的作用,而I κ B β 对p50-p65异二聚体的抑制作用强于p50-C Rel复合体,但I κ B α 对二者的抑制作用无差异^[16]。

细胞质中的NF- κ B/I κ B复合体可被多种因素激活:如细胞因子(TNF- α 、IL-1 β)、氧化剂、病毒、抗原、佛波醇酯(PMA)、放射线等。其激活机制是一个复杂的过程,尚未完全阐明,但至少包括以下步骤:(1)I κ B从NF- κ B/I κ B复合物中解离并降解,暴露NF- κ B的核定位序列;(2)NF- κ B易位至核内与特定的 κ B序列结合。研究表明,I κ B激酶(I- κ B kinases, IKKs)在此过程中起着重要的作用。IKKs可特异性磷酸化I κ B N端32和36位丝氨酸,磷酸化的I κ B通过泛素连接酶与多个泛素分子结合后发生构象改变,被26S蛋白酶识别并降解,NF- κ B得以释放并移入核内^[18, 23-27]。NF- κ B在核内与新合成的I κ B结合后失活。

2 NF- κ B在IBD中的表达及调控

众多资料显示,溃疡性结肠炎(UC)和克罗恩(CD)患者肠黏膜组织活检中NF- κ B p65亚单位表达明显上调,且在CD患者中尤为明显^[12, 28-29]。免疫组织化学染色表明CD中活化的NF- κ B主要定位于黏膜固有层单核细胞(LPMC)及巨噬细胞内,但黏膜下表皮细胞和内皮细胞中亦可见阳性染色。双重免疫荧光染色进一步发现活化的NF- κ B几乎存在于所有主要的单核细胞亚群中,包括CD3+ T淋巴细胞、CD20+ B淋巴细胞和CD68+的单核吞噬细胞/巨噬细胞。几乎所有NF- κ B的阳性染色

都表现在核内, 而仅有少量的NF- κ B阳性细胞表现为胞质着色^[12, 28]. Schreiber et al^[12]采用western blot及电泳迁移率改变法(EMSA)发现在CD和UC患者肠活检组织核提取物中的NF- κ B p65蛋白水平明显增高, 但在总的组织提取物中NF- κ B p65蛋白水平与正常对照组并无差别, 提示IBD中NF- κ B是由胞质转位胞核活化后而发挥生物学功能的.

Thiele et al^[28]同时观察了CD患者中NF- κ B p50和NF- κ B-C Rel亚单位的水平变化. EMSA显示仅有少量的p50从胞质转位至胞核, 而经激素治疗后转位至胞核的p50明显增多; western blot发现转位至核内的NF- κ B-C Rel有轻度增高, 同时用抗-C Rel抗体进行的Supershift实验表明C-Rel并非NF- κ B的主要成分. Neurath et al^[29]的研究表明IBD中p50和C Rel亚单位表达升高, 但p65表达上升更显著, 进一步说明在IBD中起主要作用的是p65亚基; p50在炎症过程中并不活化, 甚至可能参与封闭NF- κ B p65的 κ B结合序列的过程^[12].

有关IBD中I κ B的报道不一, Yang et al^[30]在IL-2缺陷鼠结肠炎发现除NF- κ B活性升高外, 还伴有I κ B α 表达上调, 但大多数人认为IBD患者肠组织中I κ B水平与正常人并无不同^[12, 28]. 实验方法及观察时段的不同是导致结果相异的可能原因之一, 在体外实验中发现TNF- α 等刺激后I κ B可在短时间(约10 min)内快速反应性地降解或消失, 但60-90 min后再现, 恢复到刺激前水平^[12, 31]. 由于I κ B和p50是参与NF- κ B胞内负反馈调节的主要成分, 这可能提示IBD中NF- κ B的自身调节过程存在异常.

3 NF- κ B在IBD发病中可能的作用机制

CD和UC都是非特异性的慢性肠道炎性疾病, 目前病因、发病机制尚不十分清楚, 可能与感染、免疫异常、遗传及精神等多种因素有关^[32-41], 但肠道局部炎性损伤是其病理基础, 以大量炎性细胞浸润和持续存在, 肠道炎性损伤为特征表现. NF- κ B通过对细胞因子、黏附分子、趋化(化学)因子及其他炎性递质的调控在IBD炎症反应中起着关键作用.

很多证据均表明了循环和肠道局部细胞因子表达异常是IBD发病的重要机制之一^[42-48], 目前发现许多与此密切相关的细胞因子基因启动子或增强子部位均有 κ B位点, NF- κ B在核内与 κ B序列结合促进多种炎性细胞因子如IL-1 β 、IL-2、IL-6、IL-8、TNF- α 及TNF- β 等的基因转录^[2, 16]. 在IBD复杂的细胞因子网络失调中, NF- κ B活化可能是一中心环节. 已有资料表明IBD中NF- κ B活性增高的同时伴有IL-1、IL-6、TNF- α 等水平上升^[12, 28, 29]. IL-1、TNF- α 可促进NF- κ B进一步活化, 后者通过正反馈使IL-1、TNF- α 分泌更加增多, 同时使其他细胞因子IL-6、IL-8等表达也增加, 产生级联反应, 使炎症过程得到放大和持续.

有研究表明在炎症性肠病患者肠浆膜组织纤维母细胞中NF- κ B和ICAM-1的表达有明显增强^[49], Jobin

et al^[31]在鼠肠上皮细胞系CE1-6细胞中发现TNF- α 可以激活NF- κ B而促使ICAM-1 mRNA和蛋白表达上升, 且采用蛋白酶抑制剂MG-132或ALLN阻断TNF- α 诱导的I κ B降解过程可以明显降低NF- κ B活性和ICAM-1基因表达. NF- κ B同时可增强VCAM-1、选择素等黏附分子转录^[50-55], 这些黏附分子在白细胞与血管内皮细胞、上皮细胞的稳定黏附, 炎性细胞向炎症部位移行、活化过程中起重要作用.

NF- κ B活化还可促进诱导型一氧化氮合酶(iNOS)、环氧酶-2(COX-2)和5-脂氧化酶等多种酶类表达^[56-62]. Conner et al^[63]发现NF- κ B抑制剂MG-341可明显降低肽聚糖诱导的鼠结肠炎中iNOS的上升水平; Nakase et al^[64]的研究显示NF- κ B抑制剂地塞米松可减轻TNBS诱导的大鼠结肠炎中COX-1、COX-2表达, 提示NF- κ B对这些炎性酶类的调节可能是其参与IBD发病的机制之一.

NF- κ B同时可增强巨噬细胞炎性蛋白-1 α 、单核细胞趋化蛋白-1、3(MCP-1, 3)等其他炎性递质表达^[52, 65-66], 但NF- κ B对这些炎性递质的调控是否参与了IBD炎症损伤过程, 目前的研究尚不能十分肯定.

4 NF- κ B抑制剂与IBD治疗

NF- κ B在肠道炎症过程中的中心调控作用, 使其逐渐成为引人注目的新的炎症性肠病治疗靶点. 已证明, 许多IBD临床治疗用药如糖皮质激素、柳氮磺胺吡啶的药理作用均与抑制NF- κ B活性有关. 体外实验发现糖皮质激素可通过以下途径抑制NF- κ B活化: (1)通过与糖皮质激素受体(GR)结合, 使其活化后在核内与NF- κ B p65相互作用, 抑制NF- κ B功能. (2)活化的GR激活糖皮质激素反应元件(GRE), 上调I κ B表达, 从而影响NF- κ B活化^[12, 28]. 糖皮质激素对NF- κ B的抑制正是其发挥广泛抗炎作用的基础. Weber et al^[67]证实柳氮磺胺吡啶对NF- κ B的抑制作用是通过对IKK- α 、IKK- β 的直接抑制而实现的. 有人发现, 在CD患者肠活检组织LPMC和外周血单核细胞(PBMC)中, 丁酸盐降低前炎性细胞因子IL-1 β 、IL-6等的产量, 同时发现此作用与阻止I κ B降解, 抑制NF- κ B核转位过程及转录活性有关^[68]. 此外, 其他许多免疫抑制剂、抗氧化剂如N-乙酰半胱氨酸(NAC)、抗坏血酸等均可阻断NF- κ B活化的信号途径从而抑制NF- κ B功能, 但在IBD中的应用和疗效观察尚需进一步的研究.

Neurath et al^[69-70]在TNBS诱导和IL-10基因敲除导致的大鼠结肠炎模型中局部给予NF- κ B p65亚单位的反义寡核苷酸治疗后发现, 大鼠组织学表现和症状明显改善, 其疗效优于单独使用糖皮质激素, 为临幊上运用NF- κ B特异性抑制剂治疗IBD提供了实验依据.

随着对I κ B激酶在NF- κ B活化过程中作用了解的不断深入, 目前很多研究都围绕着如何阻断I κ B激酶活化及活化后导致NF- κ B激活的信号传导途径这一问题,

以期寻找到新的更安全有效的NF- κ B抑制剂。这些抑制剂具有高度选择性，可减少或避免传统用药如糖皮质激素的许多毒副作用，在IBD中具有广阔的治疗前景。但值得注意的是，NF- κ B在机体正常免疫反应和细胞生长调节等方面具有重要作用，如p65缺失可导致胚胎致命性损害及肝脏退行性变；p50或RelB缺失可能出现免疫缺陷^[16]，过度抑制NF- κ B活性可能会导致肝功能衰竭及免疫缺陷。

5 存在的问题及展望

在IBD患者和动物模型中，NF- κ B活性增高，提示NF- κ B与IBD关系密切。但NF- κ B在IBD中的具体作用机制尚不十分清楚，如NF- κ B在IBD中的活化及调节过程，NF- κ B活性改变与疾病复发的关系等，此外，NF- κ B对细胞生长和凋亡的调节作用是否参与了IBD的发病过程等也有待进一步的研究。NF- κ B在其他免疫性疾病如风湿性关节炎和支气管哮喘中的作用已有广泛研究，有理由相信，深入探讨炎症性肠病中NF- κ B激活的信号传导途径和自身调节过程，寻找和研究阻断NF- κ B活化的特异性抑制剂，将为阐明IBD的发病机制及IBD的临床治疗带来新的希望。

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