

# 脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡对阿尔茨海默病的影响及其分子机制研究

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**【摘要】** 阿尔茨海默病的发病机制主要包括神经元和突触减少、细胞外 $\beta$ -淀粉样蛋白(A $\beta$ )沉积、神经炎性斑(NPs)形成和细胞内tau蛋白过磷酸化，导致神经原纤维缠结(NFTs)形成。其中，神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结形成与脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡密切相关，提示后者在阿尔茨海默病的发生发展中起决定作用。本文综述脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡对阿尔茨海默病的分子调控机制。

**【关键词】** 阿尔茨海默病； 胆固醇； 分子生物学； 综述

## Effects of brain cholesterol homeostasis imbalance on Alzheimer's disease and its related molecular mechanisms

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**【Abstract】** The pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease (AD) mainly includes the decrease of neurons and synapses, the deposition of the extracellular  $\beta$ -amyloid protein (A $\beta$ ), the formation of neuritic plaques (NPs) and neurofibrillary tangles (NFTs) caused by intracellular tau protein hyperphosphorylation. NPs and NFTs are closely related to the brain cholesterol homeostasis imbalance, suggesting that normal brain cholesterol homeostasis may play a decisive role in the development of AD. This paper reviews the molecular regulation mechanism of brain cholesterol homeostasis imbalance in AD.

**【Key words】** Alzheimer disease; Cholesterol; Molecular biology; Review

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目前,全球约有468万例痴呆患者,且患病例数不断上升,截至2050年预计达131.50万例<sup>[1-2]</sup>。阿尔茨海默病是老年人群常见的神经系统变性疾病,也是导致痴呆的主要原因之一<sup>[3]</sup>。临床主要表现为早期记忆障碍、人格和行为改变以及感觉和运动障碍,并呈年轻化趋势<sup>[4]</sup>。发病机制复杂,迄今尚未完全阐明,目前广泛接受的发病机制主要包括神经元和突触减少、细胞外 $\beta$ -淀粉样蛋白(A $\beta$ )沉积、神

经炎性斑[NPs,亦称老年斑(SP)]形成以及细胞内tau蛋白过磷酸化,导致神经原纤维缠结(NFTs)形成<sup>[5]</sup>。研究显示,神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结形成均与胆固醇代谢密切相关<sup>[6-7]</sup>,提示脑组织胆固醇稳态可能在阿尔茨海默病的发生发展中起决定作用。胆固醇是中枢神经系统的重要组成成分,参与神经元和髓鞘的形成,维持细胞膜流动性和细胞之间的信号转导<sup>[8]</sup>;亦是突触和突触小泡的关键组成部分之一,确保突触的可塑性和神经递质的合成、传递、释放<sup>[2]</sup>;此外,神经元存活也与胆固醇水平密切相关<sup>[9]</sup>。脑重量仅占人体体重的2%,但却含有约23%的胆固醇<sup>[10]</sup>。外周血胆固醇无法透过血-脑屏障,故脑组织胆固醇是由神经细胞自主合成和调控的<sup>[11]</sup>。生理情况下,脑组织通过自主调控胆固醇的

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合成与代谢,使胆固醇水平保持相对稳定,即胆固醇稳态。体外研究和动物实验显示,胆固醇代谢异常不仅可以改变神经突触的可塑性,影响突触功能,而且其产生的一系列代谢终产物如27-羟化胆固醇、24-羟化胆固醇等可以诱发细胞内氧化应激反应,诱导神经细胞死亡,进而造成神经细胞发育障碍、认知功能障碍、学习记忆障碍等<sup>[12-13]</sup>。因此,维持脑组织胆固醇稳态对脑神经发育至关重要,一旦胆固醇稳态失衡,即造成一系列的中枢神经系统疾病如阿尔茨海默病、帕金森病、孤独症等<sup>[14-15]</sup>。本文拟对脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡对阿尔茨海默病的影响及其相关分子调控机制的研究进展进行综述,以期对该领域的后续相关研究有所助益。

### 一、脑组织胆固醇稳态与阿尔茨海默病

研究显示,高胆固醇血症可以加重神经退行性变<sup>[16]</sup>,进而增加阿尔茨海默病的发病风险,而他汀类调脂药可以抑制胆固醇合成,从而降低阿尔茨海默病的发病风险<sup>[17]</sup>。动物实验显示,高胆固醇饮食可以增加小鼠的胰岛素抵抗(IR),降低皮质乙酰胆碱(ACh)水平,促进脑组织Aβ沉积和tau蛋白磷酸化,导致认知功能障碍<sup>[18]</sup>。Thirumangalakudi等<sup>[19]</sup>发现,高胆固醇饮食的摄入可以明显加重神经炎症,上调β-淀粉样前体蛋白(APP)表达,导致学习记忆障碍。然而,也有文献报道,脑组织胆固醇水平降低可以诱发神经系统变性疾病。Ledesma等<sup>[20]</sup>发现,与正常成年人相比,老年人脑组织胆固醇水平明显降低。动物实验显示,经基因修饰降低脑组织胆固醇水平后,小鼠表现出明显的神经功能缺损和学习记忆障碍<sup>[21]</sup>。神经细胞缺乏胆固醇时,细胞凋亡增加,脑源性神经营养因子(BDNF)和神经营养因子(NGF)水平降低<sup>[22]</sup>;而适量补充胆固醇可以改善突触功能,增加长时程抑制(LTD),改善大鼠学习记忆功能<sup>[23]</sup>。上述研究从不同角度揭示脑组织胆固醇在神经损伤和学习记忆中的作用。尽管目前尚不明确脑组织胆固醇的神经保护或神经损伤的“双向效应”机制,但可以肯定的是,脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡是导致神经损伤和学习记忆障碍的重要原因之一。

### 二、脑组织胆固醇稳态对阿尔茨海默病的分子调控机制

阿尔茨海默病的发病机制复杂,以脑组织胆固醇稳态作为切入点,其对阿尔茨海默病的分子调控机制主要包括神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结调节、

前蛋白转化酶枯草杆菌蛋白酶/Kexin9型(PCSK9)调节、BDNF/原肌球蛋白相关激酶B(TrkB)信号转导通路调节三方面。

1. 神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结调节 阿尔茨海默病的典型病理改变为神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结<sup>[24]</sup>的形成。APP蛋白在淀粉样前体蛋白β位点剪切酶-1(BACE1)和分泌酶的作用下,形成Aβ,在细胞外基质(细胞外组织间隙)中积聚形成神经炎性斑<sup>[25]</sup>。Tau蛋白是脑组织含量最高的微管相关蛋白(MAP),正常脑组织tau蛋白的作用是与微管相关蛋白结合以促进其聚合形成微管,再与形成的微管结合以维持微管的稳定性,从而减少微管相关蛋白的解离并诱导微管成束<sup>[26]</sup>。然而多项研究显示,病理情况下,tau蛋白发生高度磷酸化,并从微管上脱离,形成不可溶性tau蛋白聚集体,进而形成双股螺旋丝结构——神经原纤维缠结<sup>[27]</sup>。神经炎性斑和神经原纤维缠结共同损伤轴突的转运,导致突触丢失和神经元功能损害。胆固醇可以直接调控分泌酶活性,通过胆固醇分离化合物——甲基-β-环糊精将胆固醇从细胞膜上解离并下调其表达,降低BACE1和γ分泌酶活性,从而减少Aβ生成<sup>[22]</sup>。体外研究显示,高水平胆固醇可以增强BACE1的蛋白水解活性,促使Aβ生成增加<sup>[28]</sup>。APP蛋白代谢途径中存在β分泌酶和γ分泌酶两种限速酶,二者参与APP蛋白的剪切和水解功能,主要发生在脂筏结构域中。脂筏是质膜上富含胆固醇和鞘脂的微结构域,是许多蛋白质系统的信号平台。富含胆固醇的脂筏环境可以通过糖基化β分泌酶而显著提高其活性<sup>[29]</sup>。高胆固醇水平还可以促使APP蛋白的β剪切位点暴露,进而促进APP蛋白淀粉样代谢途径生成更多的Aβ<sup>[30]</sup>。Tau蛋白的病理改变与Aβ生成密切相关,当Aβ信号转导通路被激活时,tau蛋白被磷酸化激活,并大量存在于脂筏中<sup>[31]</sup>。Aβ沉积可以引起神经元内钙离子水平升高,激活蛋白激酶,引起tau蛋白高度磷酸化。抑制胆固醇生成的他汀类调脂药可以抑制tau蛋白磷酸化,减少神经原纤维缠结的形成<sup>[32]</sup>。

2. 前蛋白转化酶枯草杆菌蛋白酶/Kexin9型调节 PCSK9不仅是脑组织胆固醇稳态的重要调节因子,同时还与阿尔茨海默病的发病密切相关<sup>[33]</sup>。血-脑屏障阻碍外周血胆固醇进入脑组织,故仅可依靠中枢神经系统自主合成内源性胆固醇<sup>[34]</sup>,内源性胆固醇主要源自星形胶质细胞<sup>[35]</sup>。脑组织胆固醇

通过特殊的分子和受体以协同运输的方式自星形胶质细胞转运至神经元,例如,通过转运子如ATP结合盒转运体A1(ABCA1)、G1(ABCAG1)、G4(ABCAG4)与载脂蛋白E(ApoE)相结合<sup>[36]</sup>,这些被转运的胆固醇与血浆高密度脂蛋白胆固醇(HDL-C)的成分和大小相似,最终通过与特异性受体如低密度脂蛋白受体(LDLr)、极低密度脂蛋白受体(VLDLr)和ApoE受体2(ApoEr2)结合,转运至神经元<sup>[37]</sup>。研究显示,PCSK9可以促使VLDLr和ApoEr2两种受体降解,提示PCSK9在脑组织胆固醇稳态中发挥重要作用<sup>[38]</sup>。这一假设经动物实验证实,正常小鼠脑组织内源性PCSK9对LDLr水平有重要调节作用;短暂性脑缺血发作(TIA)小鼠模型显示,PCSK9可降解LDLr<sup>[39]</sup>。因此推测,PCSK9对上述脂蛋白受体的降解可能转变为神经元摄取胆固醇减少,低胆固醇水平可以改变突触可塑性,影响突触信号转导,诱发神经细胞死亡。亦有研究所得结论与之相悖,正常小鼠脑组织PSCK9过表达并未影响LDLr、VLDLr和ApoEr2水平<sup>[40]</sup>。因此,PCSK9对脑组织胆固醇稳态的影响尚待进一步研究。此外,PCSK9不仅可以调节胆固醇稳态,而且在Aβ的形成过程中亦发挥重要作用<sup>[41]</sup>。动物实验显示,过表达PCSK9的小鼠大脑BACE1水平明显降低,予心脏缺血-再灌注致脑损伤小鼠PCSK9抑制剂后,可以减少Aβ的生成和神经炎症的发生<sup>[42]</sup>。关于PCSK9与tau蛋白磷酸化以及APP蛋白酶水解的关系研究甚少,尚待进一步研究。

**3. 脑源性神经营养因子/原肌球蛋白相关激酶B信号转导通路调节 BDNF对维持神经元存活、生长、分化以及神经损伤后修复、再生具有重要意义。**BDNF与受体酪氨酸激酶(RTK)结合后,可激活下游信号转导通路如磷脂酰肌醇3-激酶(PI3K)/磷酸化蛋白激酶B(pAKT)信号转导通路<sup>[43]</sup>。海马是参与学习和记忆的关键脑区,其中表达最广泛的神经生长因子受体即为TrkB<sup>[40]</sup>。随着年龄增长,BDNF水平逐渐降低,小鼠海马组织TrkB磷酸化激活信号增强<sup>[23]</sup>。Martin等<sup>[44]</sup>的研究显示,敲除BDNF基因的小鼠或老年野生型小鼠海马组织TrkB活性显著增强,该作者还发现在胆固醇不富集的细胞膜区域更易形成TrkB二聚体,激活TrkB/PI3K/pAKT信号转导通路,而过多的pAKT积聚可以降低长时程抑制,导致学习和记忆障碍。研究显示,BDNF可以促进脂筏中胆固醇生成,调节下游信号转导通路,进

而改善学习和记忆功能<sup>[45]</sup>。体外研究显示,在细胞培养基中添加胆固醇进行细胞培养后,细胞凋亡标志物裂解Caspase-3和聚ADP核糖聚合酶(PARP)水平明显升高,予BDNF预处理后,细胞凋亡标志物则显著降低;同时,ABCA1和ApoE表达水平明显升高,提示神经营养因子的神经保护作用主要体现在其可降低神经元胆固醇的摄取上<sup>[46]</sup>。

综上所述,阿尔茨海默病发病机制复杂,除脑组织胆固醇稳态失衡外,还与性别、年龄、颅脑创伤、重金属接触、遗传因素等有关。虽然脑组织胆固醇稳态可以通过不同途径调控阿尔茨海默病的发生,但单方面因素并不能代表整体。因此,亟待探寻各发病机制之间的相关性,探索不同信号转导通路之间的相互作用,以为阿尔茨海默病的治疗提供新的思路。

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## · 小词典 ·

## 中英文对照名词词汇(六)

## 实时震动诱导转化

real-time quaking-induced conversion(RT-QuIC)

## 视觉模拟评分

Visual Analog Scales(VAS)

## 视觉诱发电位

visual-evoked potential(VEP)

## 视网膜色素变性

retinitis pigmentosa(RP)

## 受试者工作特征曲线

receiver operating characteristic curve(ROC 曲线)

## 受体酪氨酸激酶

receptor tyrosine kinase(RTK)

## 数字评价量表

Numerical Rating Scale(NRS)

## 水痘-带状疱疹病毒

varicella-zoster virus(VZV)

## 水通道蛋白4

aquaporin 4(AQP4)

## 睡眠相关呼吸障碍

sleep-related breathing disorder(SBD)

## 丝氨酸/苏氨酸激酶

serine/threonine kinase(AKT)

## 髓过氧化物酶

myeloperoxidase(MPO)

## 髓鞘少突胶质细胞糖蛋白

myelin oligodendrocyte glycoprotein(MOG)

## 胎牛血清

fetal bovine serum(FBS)

## 调节性T细胞

regulatory T cell(Treg)

## 统一帕金森病评价量表

Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale(UPDRS)

## α-突触核蛋白

α-synuclein(α-Syn)

## 微管相关蛋白

microtubule-associated protein(MAP)

## 微小RNA

microRNA(miRNA)

## 细胞毒性T细胞

cytotoxic T lymphocyte(CTL)

## 细胞外基质

extracellular matrix(ECM)

## 细胞外基质金属蛋白酶诱导因子

extracellular matrix metalloproteinase inducer(EMMPRIN)

## 39项帕金森病调查表

39-Item Parkinson's Disease Questionnaire(PDQ-39)

## 小波变换相干法

Wavelet Transform Coherence(WTC)

## 小干扰RNA

small interference RNA(siRNA)

## 信号转导与转录激活因子3

signal transducer and activator of transcription 3(STAT3)

## 兴趣区

region of interest(ROI)

## 血氧水平依赖

blood oxygenation level-dependent(BOLD)

## 血氧水平依赖性功能磁共振成像

blood oxygenation level-dependent functional magnetic resonance imaging(BOLD-fMRI)

## 氧合血红蛋白

oxyhemoglobin(HbO<sub>2</sub>)

## NOD样受体

NOD-like receptor(NLR)

## 胰岛素抵抗

insulin resistance(IR)

## 胰高血糖素样肽-1

glucagon-like peptide-1(GLP-1)

## 乙酰胆碱

acetylcholine(ACh)

## 异硫氰酸荧光素

fluorescein isothiocyanate(FITC)

## Glasgow 预后分级

Glasgow Outcome Scale(GOS)

## 原肌球蛋白相关激酶B

tropomyosin-related kinase B(TrkB)

## 载脂蛋白E

apolipoprotein E(ApoE)

## 早发型帕金森病

early-onset Parkinson's disease(EOPD)

## 中国气味识别测验

Chinese Smell Identification Test(CSIT)

## 中间纤维

intermediate filaments(IF)

## 中脑导水管周围灰质

periaqueductal gray matter(PAG)

## 中央杏仁核

central nucleus of the amygdala(CELC)

## 肿瘤坏死因子-α

tumor necrosis factor-α(TNF-α)

## 重型颅脑创伤

severe traumatic brain injury(sTBI)

## 主观认知下降

subjective cognitive impairment(SCD)

## 转化生长因子-β

transforming growth factor-β(TGF-β)

## 自身免疫相关性癫痫

autoimmune-associated epilepsy(AAE)

## 自身免疫性胶质纤维酸性蛋白星形胶质细胞病

autoimmune glial fibrillary acidic protein astrocytopathy  
(GFAP-A)

## 自身免疫性脑炎

autoimmune encephalitis(AE)

## 纵向延伸横贯性脊髓炎

longitudinally extensive transverse myelitis(LETM)

## 阻塞性睡眠呼吸暂停

obstructive sleep apnea(OSA)