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临床研究·论著

阿尔茨海默病患者血清LncRNA MALAT1、 LncRNA NEAT1的表达变化及临床意义*

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摘要: 目的 分析阿尔茨海默病(AD)患者血清长链非编码RNA(LncRNA)转移相关的肺腺癌转录本1(MALAT1)、LncRNA核旁斑组装转录本1(NEAT1)的表达变化, 探讨其是否参与AD炎症反应和认知功能损伤。**方法** 选取2018年1月—2021年1月青海大学附属医院收治的AD患者93例为AD组, 选取同期该院54例体检健康者为对照组。采用实时荧光定量聚合酶链反应检测血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1的表达, 酶联免疫吸附试验检测血清超敏C反应蛋白(hs-CRP)、白细胞介素-1β(IL-1β)、IL-6、肿瘤坏死因子α(TNF-α)水平, 简易精神状态量表(MMSE)评估认知功能。Pearson或Spearman相关性分析AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达与病程、MMSE评分、炎症因子的相关性。ROC曲线分析血清炎症指标、LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达对AD的诊断价值。**结果** AD组血清LncRNA MALAT1相对表达量和MMSE评分低于对照组, LncRNA NEAT1相对表达量高于对照组($P < 0.05$)。AD组hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α水平高于对照组($P < 0.05$)。Pearson或Spearman相关性分析显示, AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1表达与MMSE评分呈正相关($r_s=0.587, P < 0.05$), 与hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α水平均呈负相关($r_s=-0.522, -0.601, -0.574$ 和 -0.577 , 均 $P < 0.05$), LncRNA NEAT1表达与MMSE评分呈负相关($r_s=-0.593, P < 0.05$), 与hs-CRP、IL-1β水平、IL-6、TNF-α均呈正相关($r=0.487, 0.588, 0.611$ 和 0.573 , 均 $P < 0.05$)。ROC曲线显示, 血清LncRNA MALAT1诊断AD的AUC为0.915(95% CI: 0.858, 0.955), 最佳临界值为0.98, 其对应的敏感性为94.62%(95% CI: 87.92, 98.22), 特异性为81.48%(95% CI: 68.61, 90.70); 血清LncRNA NEAT1诊断AD的AUC为0.858(95% CI: 0.791, 0.910), 最佳临界值为2.37, 其对应的敏感性为90.32%(95% CI: 82.45, 95.52), 特异性为72.22%(95% CI: 58.44, 83.57)。**结论** AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1低表达、LncRNA NEAT1高表达可能参与AD炎症反应和认知功能损伤, 可作为AD的诊断标志物。

关键词: 阿尔茨海默病; 长链非编码RNA; 转移相关的肺腺癌转录本1; 核旁斑组装转录本1; 炎症; 认知功能

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Serum levels and clinical significance of lncRNAs MALAT1 and NEAT1 in patients with Alzheimer's disease

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Abstract: Objective To analyze the serum levels of long non-coding RNAs (lncRNAs) metastasis associated lung adenocarcinoma transcript 1 (MALAT1) and nuclear paraspeckle assembly transcript 1 (NEAT1) in

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patients with Alzheimer's disease (AD) and to explore whether they are involved in the inflammatory response and cognitive impairment in AD. **Methods** A total of 93 patients with AD admitted to our hospital from January 2018 to January 2021 were selected as the AD group, and another 54 healthy individuals undergoing physical examination during the same period were selected as the control group. Serum levels of lncRNAs MALAT1 and NEAT1 were measured by qRT-PCR, and serum levels of high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hs-CRP), interleukin-1 β (IL-1 β), IL-6 and tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α) were measured by ELISA. The cognitive function of patients was assessed by the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE). Pearson or Spearman method was used to analyze the correlations between serum levels of lncRNAs MALAT1 and NEAT1 and the disease duration, MMSE scores and inflammatory factors in AD patients. ROC curves were used to analyze the diagnostic values of serum inflammatory indicators and expressions of lncRNAs MALAT1 and NEAT1 for AD. **Results** The serum expression of MALAT1 ($Z = -8.381$, $P = 0.000$) and MMSE score ($Z = -9.904$, $P = 0.000$) in AD group were lower than those in control group, while the serum expression of NEAT1 ($t = 10.479$, $P = 0.000$) in AD group was higher than that in the control group. The serum levels of hs-CRP ($t = 14.575$, $P = 0.000$), IL-1 β ($t = 8.503$, $P = 0.000$), IL-6 ($t = 10.739$, $P = 0.000$), and TNF- α ($t = 6.522$, $P = 0.000$) in AD group were higher than those in control group ($P < 0.05$). Pearson or Spearman correlation analysis showed that the expression of serum MALAT1 was positively correlated with MMSE score ($r_s = 0.587$, $P = 0.000$), and negatively correlated with hs-CRP ($r_s = -0.522$, $P = 0.000$), IL-1 β ($r_s = -0.601$, $P = 0.000$), IL-6 ($r_s = -0.574$, $P = 0.000$), and TNF- α levels ($r_s = -0.577$, $P = 0.000$) in AD patients. The expression of NEAT1 was negatively correlated with MMSE score ($r_s = -0.593$, $P = 0.000$), and positively correlated with the levels of hs-CRP ($r_s = 0.487$, $P = 0.000$), IL-1 β ($r_s = 0.588$, $P = 0.000$), IL-6 ($r_s = 0.611$, $P = 0.000$) and TNF- α ($r_s = 0.573$, $P = 0.000$). The ROC curve analysis showed that the AUC of serum MALAT1 for the diagnosis of AD was 0.915 (95% CI: 0.858, 0.955), and the optimal cut-off value was 0.98, with the corresponding sensitivity being 94.62% (95% CI: 87.92, 98.22) and the specificity being 81.48% (95% CI: 68.61, 90.70). The AUC of serum NEAT1 for the diagnosis of AD was 0.858 (95% CI: 0.791, 0.910), and the optimal cut-off value was 2.37, with the corresponding sensitivity being 90.32% (95% CI: 82.45, 95.52) and the specificity being 72.22% (95% CI: 58.44, 83.57). **Conclusions** The low expression of lncRNA MALAT1 and the high expression of lncRNA NEAT1 in the serum may be associated with the inflammatory response and cognitive impairment in AD patients. Thus, they can be established as potential diagnostic markers for AD.

Keywords: Alzheimer's disease; long non-coding RNA; metastasis associated lung adenocarcinoma transcript 1; nuclear paraspeckle assembly transcript 1; inflammation; cognitive function

阿尔茨海默病(Alzheimer's disease, AD)是以进行性认知功能障碍和行为损害为主要特征的中枢神经系统变性疾病,起病隐匿,病程慢性迁延并进行性发展,严重影响患者生活质量^[1]。目前尚未完全明确AD发病机制,近年研究证实神经免疫炎症反应在其中发挥重要作用,以小胶质细胞激活和炎症细胞因子表达为主要特征^[2-3]。长链非编码RNA(long non-coding RNA, LncRNA)是一类不编码蛋白质的RNA,转移相关的肺腺癌转录本1(metastasis associated lung adenocarcinoma transcript 1, MALAT1)和核旁斑组装转录本1(nuclear paraspeckle assembly transcript 1, NEAT1)是近年来受到广泛关注的LncRNA,研究指出LncRNA MALAT1通过抑制核因子E2相关因子2表达,LncRNA NEAT1通过激活Wnt/ β -连环蛋白信号通路参与小胶质细胞激活和神经炎症损伤^[4-5]。目前关于LncRNA MALAT1、

LncRNA NEAT1与AD患者炎症因子和认知功能的关系鲜有报道。本研究分析AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1的表达变化,探讨其是否参与AD炎症反应和认知功能损伤。

1 资料与方法

1.1 一般资料

选取2018年1月—2021年1月青海大学附属医院收治的AD患者93例为AD组。其中,男性51例,女性42例;年龄48~84岁,平均(64.88 ± 7.36)岁;体质指数18~28 kg/m²,平均(23.47 ± 2.20)kg/m²;病程1~11年,平均(5.24 ± 1.18)年;文化程度:初中及以上65例,小学28例。纳入标准:①符合《美国精神障碍诊断与统计手册(第4版)》^[6]的AD诊断标准;②MRI或CT脑改变或脑萎缩;③临床资料完整;④患者监护人均知情研究。排除标准:①神经活性

药物滥用史;②脑血管疾病、颅脑外伤等导致的认知功能损害;③严重感染疾病;④合并自身免疫性疾病;⑤合并心、肝、肾等器质性病变;⑥其他精神疾病;⑦存在攻击行为或自杀倾向。另选取同期本院54例体检健康者为对照组。其中男性34例,女性20例;年龄54~86岁,平均(65.25 ± 8.14)岁;体质指数18~28 kg/m²,平均(23.54 ± 2.17)kg/m²;文化程度:初中及以上38例,小学16例。两组一般资料比较,差异无统计学意义($P > 0.05$),具有可比性。

1.2 血清指标检测

采集受试者静脉血,以3 000 r/min 离心10 min,离心半径10 cm,取上清液,置于-80°C冰箱冷冻保存待检。取部分血清,采用TRIzol试剂盒提取血清总RNA,TaKaRa逆转录试剂盒转录合成cDNA,Narodrop验证cDNA浓度及纯度,使OD260/OD280为1.8~2.0,进行实时荧光定量聚合酶链反应(quantitative real-time polymerase chain reaction, qRT-PCR)扩增。LncRNA MALAT1正向引物:5'-GCTCTAGACGCCAGCCTCCAGCCCCGAGACTTCT-3',反向引物:5'-CGGGATCCCTAGGCCTCTCAAAACACCAGCT-3',长度均296 bp;LncRNA NEAT1正向引物:5'-CTTCCTCCCTTAACTTATCCATTAC-3',反向引物:5'-CTCTCCCTCCACCATTACCAACAATAC-3',长度均244 bp。反应条件:95°C预变性90 s、95°C变性30 s、63°C退火30 s、72°C拉伸15 s,共40个循环。以GAPDH作为内参校正,正向引物:5'-TATGATGATATCAAGAGGGTAGT-3',反向引物:5'-TGTATCCAAACTCATGTACATAC-3',长度均22 bp。 $2^{-\Delta\Delta Ct}$ 法计算血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1

表1 两组血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1相对表达量和MMSE评分比较

组别	n	LncRNA MALAT1 M(P ₂₅ , P ₇₅)	LncRNA NEAT1 ($\bar{x} \pm s$)	MMSE评分 M(P ₂₅ , P ₇₅)
AD组	93	0.82(0.74, 0.92)	3.07 ± 1.01	18.00(16.00, 21.00)
对照组	54	1.05(1.01, 1.08)	1.68 ± 0.59	29.00(27.75, 30.00)
Z/t值		-8.381	10.479	-9.904
P值		0.000	0.000	0.000

2.2 两组血清炎症因子水平比较

两组hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α水平比较,差异有统计学意义($P < 0.05$),AD组高于对照组。见表2。

2.3 AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA

相对表达量。剩余血清采用酶联免疫吸附试验(enzyme linked immunosorbent assay, ELISA)检测超敏C反应蛋白(high-sensitivity C-reactive protein, hs-CRP),白细胞介素-1β(Interleukin-1β, IL-1β)、IL-6、肿瘤坏死因子α(tumor necrosis factor-α, TNF-α)水平,试剂盒购自上海延慕实业有限公司,所有操作严格按照试剂盒说明书进行。

1.3 认知功能评估

采用简易精神状态量表(mini-mental state examination, MMSE)^[7]评估受试者认知功能,包括6个维度共30个条目,分值0~30分,分值越高则认知功能越好,初中及以上受教育程度患者<24分、小学<20分、文盲<17分视为认知功能障碍。

1.4 统计学方法

数据分析采用SPSS 26.0统计软件。计量资料以均数±标准差($\bar{x} \pm s$)或中位数和四分位数间距M(P₂₅, P₇₅)表示,比较用t检验或秩和检验;相关性分析用Pearson或Spearman法;绘制受试者工作特征(receiver operating characteristic, ROC)曲线。 $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 两组血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1相对表达量和MMSE评分比较

两组血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1相对表达量和MMSE评分比较,差异有统计学意义($P < 0.05$),AD组血清LncRNA MALAT1相对表达量和MMSE评分低于对照组,LncRNA NEAT1相对表达量高于对照组。见表1。

NEAT1表达与病程、MMSE评分和炎症因子的相关性

Pearson或Spearman相关性分析显示,AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1表达与MMSE评分呈正相关($r_s = 0.587, P = 0.000$),与hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α

表2 两组血清炎症因子水平比较 (pg/mL, $\bar{x} \pm s$)

组别	n	hs-CRP	IL-1 β	IL-6	TNF- α
AD组	93	3.10 ± 0.60	38.03 ± 8.04	107.15 ± 13.51	195.66 ± 12.80
对照组	54	1.87 ± 0.42	27.41 ± 5.79	83.28 ± 12.04	181.59 ± 12.29
t值		14.575	8.503	10.739	6.522
P值		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

水平均呈负相关($r_s = -0.522, -0.601, -0.574$ 和 -0.577 , 均 $P = 0.000$), LncRNA NEAT1 表达与 MMSE 评分呈负相关 ($r_s = -0.593$, $P = 0.000$), 与 hs-CRP、IL-1 β 、IL-6、TNF- α 均呈正相关 ($r = 0.487, 0.588, 0.611$ 和 0.573 ,

均 $P = 0.000$)。

2.4 血清炎症指标和LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达对AD的诊断价值

ROC 曲线显示, 血清 LncRNA MALAT1 诊断 AD 的 AUC 为 0.915 (95% CI: 0.858, 0.955), 最佳临界值为 0.98, 其对应的敏感性为 94.62% (95% CI: 87.92, 98.22), 特异性为 81.48% (95% CI: 68.61, 90.70); 血清 LncRNA NEAT1 诊断 AD 的 AUC 为 0.858 (95% CI: 0.791, 0.910), 最佳临界值为 2.37, 其对应的敏感性为 90.32% (95% CI: 82.45, 95.52), 特异性为 72.22% (95% CI: 58.44, 83.57)。见表 3 和图 1。

表3 血清炎症指标和LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达诊断AD的效能分析

指标	约登指数	截断值	AUC	95% CI		敏感性/ %	95% CI		特异性/ %	95% CI	
				下限	上限		下限	上限		下限	上限
hs-CRP	0.274	2.35 pg/mL	0.699	0.618	0.772	77.42	67.64	85.42	50.00	36.18	63.90
IL-1 β	0.416	32.44 pg/mL	0.733	0.654	0.803	73.12	62.92	81.82	68.52	84.45	80.52
IL-6	0.383	97.23 pg/mL	0.719	0.639	0.790	62.37	51.77	72.21	75.93	62.42	86.57
TNF- α	0.425	191.20 pg/mL	0.716	0.636	0.787	59.14	48.5	69.27	83.33	70.72	92.10
LncRNA MALAT1	0.761	0.98	0.915	0.858	0.955	94.62	87.92	98.22	81.48	68.61	90.70
LncRNA NEAT1	0.625	2.37	0.858	0.791	0.910	90.32	82.45	95.52	72.22	58.44	83.57

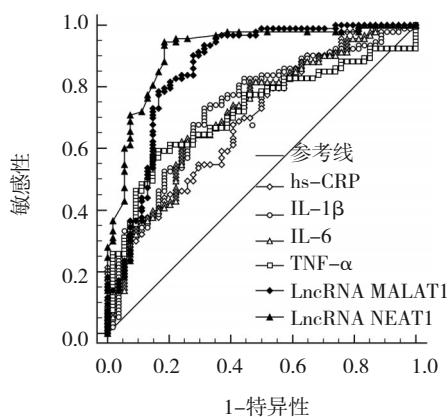


图1 血清炎症指标和LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达诊断AD的ROC曲线

3 讨论

AD 是导致老年人失能的重要原因, 发病率逐年增高, 2020 年我国 AD 患者约 900 万, 到 2050 年预计将增加至 2 100 万^[8]。早期识别 AD 有助于改变脑结构、功能和行为水平的可塑性, 延缓病情进展, 减轻功能障碍, 增强患者社会参与力, 改善生活质量。目前尚未完全明确 AD 发病机制, 主流

观点认为错误折叠的 β -淀粉样蛋白 (amyloid β -protein, A β) 于大脑中沉积形成淀粉样蛋白斑块和 Tau 蛋白过度磷酸化导致的神经纤维纠缠是 AD 最主要的病理特征^[9]。研究发现, A β 斑块沉积周围存在大量活化小胶质细胞, 与 A β 大量产生导致小胶质细胞过度激活有关, 小胶质细胞过度激活介导的炎症反应又能诱导 A β 大量产生, 形成恶性循环参与 AD 进展^[10]。近年实验也表明, 非甾体类抗炎药能显著改善 A β 沉积和认知功能^[11]。上述研究提示神经炎症反应参与 AD 病理、生理过程, 研究其相关细胞因子对 AD 早期诊断、治疗具有重要意义。

LncRNA 是一类转录本 >200 个核苷酸的非编码 RNA, 携带多种信息并具有重要调节功能, 已被证实参与脑卒中、AD、帕金森等多种神经炎症反应疾病过程^[3]。LncRNA MALAT1 位于染色体 11q13.1, 首次由 JI 等^[12]在非小细胞肺癌中发现, 并认为是非小细胞肺癌预后标志物。近年来大量研究证实 LncRNA MALAT1 还参与其他恶性肿瘤进展, 并参与其他非肿瘤疾病发生、发展过程。SHANG 等^[13]

研究显示, 脑缺血或再灌注损伤小鼠模型海马中LncRNA MALAT1表达下调, 增加LncRNA MALAT1表达具有抑制神经元凋亡、缩小梗死体积、改善学习和记忆功能等作用。PATEL等^[14]研究显示, 创伤性脑损伤大鼠模型脑组织LncRNA MALAT1表达下调, 增加LncRNA MALAT1表达能抑制脑组织中IL-1β、TNF-α等炎症细胞因子表达, 抑制神经炎症。上述研究提示LncRNA MALAT1与神经炎症反应和认知功能密切相关。本研究结果显示, AD组血清LncRNA MALAT1表达低于对照组, 提示LncRNA MALAT1参与AD发病过程。MMSE为临床AD患者智力状态和认知功能评估方式, hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α是AD患者血清中常见异常炎症细胞因子。本研究结果证实, LncRNA MALAT1低表达与AD患者炎症反应升高和认知功能降低密切相关, 其机制可能与AD患者脑组织炎症反应引起LncRNA MALAT1表达抑制, LncRNA MALAT1低表达导致miR-125b表达升高。miR-125b作为AD重要的生物标志物, 在促进Aβ大量分泌、抑制神经突生长、诱导神经元凋亡等方面发挥关键作用^[15]。研究表明, LncRNA MALAT1能靶向下调miR-125b表达, 降低IL-6、TNF-α表达, 抑制AD模型神经炎症和凋亡, 促进神经突生长^[16]。

LncRNA NEAT1也位于人染色体11q13.1, 因该染色体是癌症多发的基因位点, 因此近年来大量研究报道了其在癌症中的作用, 如LncRNA NEAT1能通过海绵miR-486-5p调节核受体4A1/Wnt/β-连环蛋白信号通路, 促进结直肠癌细胞增殖、迁移和侵袭^[17]。近年研究发现, LncRNA NEAT1还参与中枢神经系统疾病, 如KUKHARSKY等^[18]研究显示, 敲除小鼠LncRNA NEAT1基因可损害小鼠社交能力, 但对小鼠认知功能、运动功能无影响。NI等^[19]研究显示, 敲低脑缺血或再灌注损伤小鼠LncRNA NEAT1可抑制小胶质细胞向促炎M1表型极化, 抑制神经元凋亡。有研究显示, LncRNA NEAT1能靶向miR-107加重Aβ过度沉积诱导的神经元损伤^[20]。本研究结果显示, AD组血清LncRNA NEAT1表达高于对照组, 提示LncRNA NEAT1参与AD发病过程。进一步分析证实, LncRNA NEAT1过表达与AD患者炎症反应和认知功能降低密切相关, 其机制可能与LncRNA NEAT1可促进小胶质细

胞向促炎表型极化, 释放炎症细胞因子, 损害神经功能有关^[18]。β分泌酶1是IL-6、TNF-α等炎症细胞因子诱发的AD重要促进因子, 能通过增加Aβ表达参与AD发生、发展^[21]。研究发现, LncRNA NEAT1能通过海绵miR-124上调β分泌酶1表达^[22]。提示LncRNA NEAT1高表达还可能通过增加Aβ表达诱导小胶质细胞过度活化, 释放炎症细胞因子, 参与AD发生、发展。笔者评估了血清炎症指标和LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达对AD的诊断价值, 结果显示LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达诊断AD的AUC分别为0.915和0.858, 显著大于血清hs-CRP、IL-1β、IL-6、TNF-α水平, 说明血清LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1表达对AD具有良好的诊断价值。

综上所述, AD患者血清LncRNA MALAT1低表达, LncRNA NEAT1高表达, 两者可能参与AD炎症反应和认知功能损伤, 可作为AD诊断标志物。但本研究样本量有限, 且有关LncRNA MALAT1、LncRNA NEAT1与AD的作用机制尚未完全明确, 还需进一步研究。

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