

T淋巴细胞对于非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗的预后意义

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摘要

非小细胞肺癌(NSCLC)是一种死亡率很高的全球性肿瘤, 严重威胁着人类的生命和健康。非小细胞肺癌的治疗包括手术、化疗、放疗、靶向治疗、免疫治疗等。目前, 免疫疗法已显示出巨大的潜力。但一部分人并没有受益, 存在原发性耐药、免疫相关不良事件等问题。迫切需要一种有效的标志物来筛选受益人群并判断预后。迄今为止, FDA (食品和药物管理局)唯一批准的ICI反应的生物标志物PD-L1已在临床实践中全面实施。随着进一步的研究发现PD-L1具有一定的局限性, 其他相关的生物标志物仍在探索和开发中。近年来, 对T淋巴细胞的研究逐渐增多, 其在预后中的作用已被广泛证实。本文就非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗的现状及T淋巴细胞预后标志物的意义进行综述。

关键词

非小细胞肺癌, 免疫治疗, 肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞, 外周血淋巴细胞

Prognostic Significance of T Lymphocytes in Immunotherapy for Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

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Abstract

Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is a global tumor with a high mortality rate, which seriously threatens human life and health. The treatment of non-small cell lung cancer includes surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, etc. At present, immunotherapy has shown great potential. Although immunotherapy has a good effect, some people do not benefit. There are problems such as primary drug resistance and immune-related adverse events. There is an urgent need for an effective marker to screen the beneficiary population and determine the prognosis. To date, the only FDA-approved biomarker for ICI response, PD-L1, has been fully implemented in clinical practice. As further studies have found that PD-L1 has certain limitations, other related biomarkers are still being explored and developed. In recent years, the research on T lymphocytes has gradually increased, which has a certain guiding significance for the prognosis of patients with non-small cell lung cancer. Its important role in the prognosis has been widely confirmed. This article reviews the current status of immunotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer and the significance of T lymphocyte prognostic markers.

Keywords

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer, Immunotherapy, Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocytes, Peripheral Blood Lymphocytes

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1. 介绍

非小细胞肺癌(NSCLC)是一种常见的恶性肿瘤,发病率高,严重威胁着人类的生命和健康。由于非小细胞肺癌在早期缺乏典型的临床表现,患者确诊时多为中晚期非小细胞肺癌,治疗方案非常有限,以致于非小细胞肺癌的死亡率很高。非小细胞肺癌严重威胁着人们的生命和健康。根据癌症统计,导致男性死亡人数最多的癌症是肺癌、前列腺癌和结肠直肠癌,女性的是肺癌、乳腺癌和结肠直肠癌[1]。肺癌在男性和女性中都有很高的比例。肺癌主要有两种类型,小细胞肺癌(SCLC)和非小细胞肺癌(NSCLC),其中 NSCLC 占 85% [2]。

2. 非小细胞肺癌的免疫治疗

2.1. 非小细胞肺癌的免疫治疗现状

NSCLC 的治疗经历了从化疗时代到靶向治疗时代,再到免疫治疗时代三个时期。免疫治疗自诞生以来一直发挥着重要作用,几种类型的免疫疗法,包括过继细胞转移(ACT)和免疫检查点抑制剂(ICI),已经获得了持久的临床反应。通常来说,人体自身的免疫细胞攻击和破坏异常的肿瘤细胞,但肿瘤细胞通过复杂多样的免疫逃逸机制逃避 T 细胞的免疫攻击,抑制免疫反应,从而实现无限增殖,促进肿瘤发展。免疫检查点是目前公认的肿瘤免疫逃逸机制之一。PD-1 (程序性细胞死亡蛋白 1),也称为 CD279,是一种 55 kDa 的 I 型跨膜糖蛋白,由 288 个氨基酸组成[3]。PD-1 主要在 T 细胞上表达,与抗原呈递细胞

(antigen-presenting cells, APCs)相互作用, PD-L1 和 PD-L2 在肿瘤上表达, 向 T 细胞传递负性信号, 导致 T 细胞衰竭, 失去免疫系统保护, 促进肿瘤发展[4]。免疫治疗配体与免疫细胞受体相结合, 阻断肿瘤细胞的表达, 阻断肿瘤的免疫抑制通路, 发挥免疫系统杀伤肿瘤细胞的作用[5]。免疫检查点抑制剂用来阻断抑制性免疫受体并激活功能失调的 T 细胞, 包括 CD8+ T 细胞[6]。也就是说, 肿瘤免疫治疗通过产生和加强患者已有的肿瘤特异性免疫应答, 阻断患者的免疫抑制, 恢复自身免疫系统对抗肿瘤细胞的能力, 从而更加准确有效地对抗肿瘤细胞。全球已批准多种用于 NSCLC 的 PD-1 抑制剂和 PD-L1 抑制剂, 超过 200 种 PD-1/L1 药物仍在临床试验中[7]。免疫治疗联合其他治疗方法治疗非小细胞肺癌也显示出良好的疗效[7] [8]。

2.2. 非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗的预后标志物

免疫治疗在取得良好疗效的同时, 也存在一定的局限性, 如假性进展、原发性耐药、免疫相关不良事件等。免疫检查点在发挥作用的同时也有一定的局限性[9]。为了使接受免疫治疗的患者获益最大化, 未来的研究应该着重探索生物标志物。针对这些问题, 筛选真正的受益者, 准确预测和评价疗效就显得尤为重要。随着免疫治疗的发展, 预测疗效的生物标志物不断被探索。已经提出了多种基于组织的生物标志物来有效预测非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗的疗效。主要包括程序性死亡配体 1 (PD-L1)、肿瘤突变负担 (TMB)、微卫星不稳定性/缺陷错配修复(MSI/dMMR)、特异性基因组改变、驱动突变和易位(EGFR 和 ALK)、STK11/KEAP1、TP53、循环肿瘤 DNA (ctDNA)、中性粒细胞与淋巴细胞比值(NLR)、血小板与淋巴细胞比值(PLR)等[10]-[14]。目前, PD-L1 表达是确定非小细胞肺癌最有可能从免疫治疗中获益的主要标准。多项实验证实, PD-L1 表达与免疫治疗预后相关[15]-[19], 可有效预测非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗的预后。2016 年出现了一个不同的结论, Padmanee Sharma 及其同事在一项大型多中心试验中发现, 通过 Dako 免疫组织化学测量, 发现 Nivolumab 单药治疗复发性转移性尿路上皮癌的客观缓解率(ORR)与肿瘤 PD-L1 表达无关。无论肿瘤 PD-L1 表达水平如何, 均观察到临床显著的抗肿瘤活性[20]。2018 年的一项研究指出, 无论 PD-L1 表达和 EGFR 或 ALK 基因改变状态如何, 在贝伐珠单抗加化疗的基础上, 阿替利珠单抗显著提高了转移性非鳞状 NSCLC 患者的无进展生存期和总生存期[21]。还有学者提出, 高水平的 PD-1 表达似乎在限制患者的生存中发挥了作用[22]。随着不同研究结果的出现, PD-L1 表达的预测作用和适用条件有待进一步研究和规范。近年来, 大多数临床研究都证实了 T 淋巴细胞亚群在免疫治疗中的预后价值[23] [24]。

3. T 淋巴细胞亚群与肿瘤免疫

3.1. 免疫系统与肿瘤

免疫系统是机体自身的保护机制, 具有免疫监视、防御和调节功能。免疫细胞的主要生理功能是监测组织稳态, 防止病原体入侵, 消除受损细胞的转化[25]。先天免疫反应导致适应性免疫系统(B 细胞和 T 细胞)的激活, 提供与抗原呈递细胞和促炎环境的直接相互作用。T 淋巴细胞起源于骨髓干细胞, 在胸腺中发育分化, 成熟后进入外周免疫器官胸腺依赖区, 经血液循环至淋巴细胞、组织等分布全身, 介导细胞免疫, 调节机体免疫反应。当机体受到外来细菌或异常细胞入侵时, T 细胞、B 细胞、NK 细胞等免疫细胞产生免疫反应, 识别并清除有害物质, 保护机体免受攻击, 维持体内平衡[25]。T 细胞是重要的效应免疫细胞, 负责诱导恶性细胞的病毒转化或细胞死亡。T 淋巴细胞的两个主要亚群是辅助 T 细胞(Th、CD4+)和细胞毒性 T 细胞(CTL、CD8+) [26]。癌症免疫编辑是一个由三个阶段组成的过程, 即癌症免疫监视、平衡和逃逸[26]-[28], 肿瘤生长主要由 CD4+和 CD8+ T 细胞控制[29]。免疫编辑学说描述了癌症发展过程中免疫细胞与肿瘤细胞相互作用, 可应用于包括 NSCLC 在内的多种肿瘤类型。T 细胞在癌症、

自身免疫和感染中形成免疫反应,其中 CD4+ (Th)和 CD8+介导被调节性 T 细胞(Tregs)抑制的效应反应[30]。早在 2002 年,Edward Y Woo 就证明肺癌患者体内的调节性 T 淋巴细胞直接抑制自体 T 淋巴细胞增殖,这些调节性 T 细胞可能在诱导或维持肺癌患者的肿瘤耐受中发挥作用,对这一亚群的操纵可能是癌症免疫治疗的重要组成部分[31]。PD-1、CTLA-4、Tim-3 和 Lag-3 对肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞(TILs)的上调被认为表明了一种称为 T 淋巴细胞衰竭的功能障碍状态,这种状态最初是在慢性小鼠淋巴细胞性脉络丛脑膜炎病毒(LCMV)感染中发现的[32] [33]。近年来的研究揭示了 T 淋巴细胞衰竭的功能状态,这表明它不是一种惰性和无功能状态,而是 T 淋巴细胞显示出残留水平的阻断功能,这使我们推测 T 淋巴细胞衰竭已经发展成为一种保护我们免受致病但潜伏病毒侵害的策略[34]。T 淋巴细胞耗竭是一种特异性表现,耗竭的 T 淋巴细胞的特征是效应功能的逐渐丧失、免疫检查点抑制受体的高表达和持续表达、代谢失调和体内平衡自我更新减少[35] [36]。在癌症治疗中,强调靶向重新激活肿瘤内耗尽的 T 细胞的潜在作用[34]。T 淋巴细胞耗竭的机制也证实了 T 淋巴淋巴细胞与肿瘤发生的密切关系。

3.2. CD4+和 CD8+

CD4+ T 淋巴细胞主要通过膜表面分子和分泌的细胞因子辅助和调节免疫应答。CD4+ T 淋巴细胞在适应性免疫系统中发挥多种功能,最广为人知的是它们作为辅助性 T 细胞(Th)的作用,包括 Th1、Th2、Th17 和调节性 T 细胞(Tregs)亚群[37]。CD4+ T 淋巴细胞大致可分为不同的类别,包括招募关键淋巴细胞群进入继发性淋巴组织或病原体感染部位,协助其他效应细胞的扩增或功能,或通过产生细胞因子或细胞介导的细胞毒性提供直接效应功能,在病毒免疫中具有重要作用[38]。CD4+ T 淋巴细胞显著增强 IIC 的早期表达并增强病毒控制[39]。Helene Beuneu 通过建立小鼠模型并使用 FACS 分析,观察到 CD4+ T 淋巴细胞可以非常快速地影响 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞的分化,提高 IFN- γ 的产生能力[40],并增加树突状细胞招募 CD8+ T 细胞的能力[41]。CD8+ T 淋巴细胞记忆亚群的产生和持续在一定程度上受 CD4+ T 淋巴辅助细胞影响[42],在维持 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞反应和防止失败中起重要作用[4]。CD4+ T 淋巴细胞亚群也具有高度可塑性,许多群体能够偶然产生异质细胞因子,能够与其他初级、效应、记忆和调节性 CD4+ T 淋巴细胞交叉,并能够与其他初级、效应、记忆和调节性 CD4+ T 淋巴细胞交换以扩大其功能[43]。CD4+ T 淋巴细胞还具有抗肿瘤作用,可以增强其他抗肿瘤效应细胞的杀伤肿瘤活性,如 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞和巨噬细胞[40] [44]。

细胞毒性 T 细胞是抗癌免疫反应中最强大的效应体,也是目前成功的癌症免疫治疗的支柱[5]。CD8+ T 淋巴细胞具有选择性检测和根除癌细胞的能力[45]。细胞毒性 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞在消除细胞内感染和恶性细胞中发挥关键作用,并可提供长期保护性免疫[46]。当 T 细胞受体识别人类白细胞抗原 I 类(HLA-I)/ β -2 微球蛋白(β 2m)复合物在靶细胞表面呈现特异性抗原肽时,CD8+ T 淋巴细胞通过其杀死恶性细胞的能力在癌症免疫中发挥核心作用[47]。CD8+ T 淋巴细胞的原位功能是一种直接的癌细胞杀手[48]。王伟民在 2019 年发现免疫治疗激活的 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞增强了肿瘤细胞中铁死亡特异性脂质过氧化,这意味着铁死亡增加有助于免疫治疗的抗肿瘤作用。T 淋巴细胞促进肿瘤铁死亡是一种新的抗肿瘤机制[49]。研究表明,CD8+ T 淋巴细胞的环境适应性与其发育轨迹交织在一起,并最终决定了提供有效应答和长期组织免疫的能力[50]。当肿瘤发生时,CD8+ T 淋巴细胞受到多种免疫抑制信号的刺激,包括慢性 TCR 信号、缺氧、营养缺乏和促炎细胞因子,这些信号共同作用诱导肿瘤微环境中的 T 细胞衰竭[46] [51] [52]。肿瘤浸润性 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞在预测患者生存和免疫治疗反应中的作用已在许多肿瘤中得到证实[53]-[56]。

4. T 淋巴细胞亚群作为非小细胞肺癌预后生物标志物的意义

非小细胞肺癌的免疫结构包括肿瘤核心、浸润边缘、三级淋巴结构(TLS)和肿瘤微环境,以及各种免

免疫细胞的分布[57]。肺癌微环境中的免疫细胞主要由 T 淋巴细胞、巨噬细胞和肥大细胞组成,浆细胞、NK 细胞和骨髓抑制细胞相对较少[25] [58] [59]。它通常具有高度的免疫抑制作用,能够通过多种机制下调抗肿瘤免疫反应,包括抗原加工和呈递缺陷、免疫调节细胞因子的释放和免疫抑制细胞如调节性 T 淋巴细胞(Tregs)的募集[31] [60]。

4.1. 肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞(TIL)

1986 年,肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞(tumor 浸润淋巴细胞, TIL)是一组具有抗原性活性的肿瘤侵袭细胞,在小鼠肿瘤组织中首次发现[61]。TIL 数量的增加与 1A 期非小细胞肺癌患者无复发生存率的提高有关[62],而 TIL 的密度与非小细胞肺癌患者的疾病复发和生存有关[63]。不同的 T 细胞亚型与较长的 NSCLC 存活相关,在肿瘤和肿瘤间质中有不同的水平[64]。CD3+ T 淋巴细胞和 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞与生存率一致相关,但在非小细胞肺癌中只有 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞提供独立的预后信息[64]。2008 年, Khalid I Al-Shibli 通过 335 例切除的 I 至 IIIA 期非小细胞肺癌的组织微阵列,构建了一个充满活力和代表性的肿瘤上皮和间质区重复核心。上皮细胞和间质细胞 CD4+、CD8+、CD20+淋巴细胞免疫组化检测证实,间质细胞 CD4+、CD8+淋巴细胞密度高是非小细胞肺癌切除术患者独立的阳性预后指标[65]。一项涉及 797 人的大型研究得出结论,间质 CD8+ TIL 密度对可切除的非小细胞肺癌具有独立的预后影响,在每个病理阶段都有预后影响[66]。2015 年,通过对来自 29 篇文章的 8600 个数据的荟萃分析,研究人员发现,高水平的 CD8+和 CD3+ T 细胞浸润或高水平的 CD4+ T 淋巴细胞浸润与肺癌患者更好的 OS 相关[67]。浸润 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞在癌巢和间质中的数量是预测 IV 期 NSCLC 化疗患者预后的有用生物标志物[68]。2019 年,于云芳对非小细胞肺癌患者生存率与免疫相关生物标志物及免疫治疗相关性进行 meta 分析,发现 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞与改善 OS 预后预测相关。进一步结合 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞、PD-L1 表达和 TMB (肿瘤免疫微环境)与可靠的预后相关[69]。然而,相关实验发现肿瘤表面存在不同类型的免疫浸润细胞, TIL 的大量浸润与患者预后无关,但两种不同的免疫亚群以定义的 T 淋巴细胞标记物的相对富集为特征,是患者生存的独立预测因子[70]。也有学者认为,耗尽的 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞主要包括两个不同的亚群:前体耗尽 T 细胞(Tpex)和最终耗尽的 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞[45],最终耗尽的 T 细胞主要发挥细胞毒性作用。如果不进行治疗,最终耗尽的 T 淋巴细胞将逐渐成为无功能 T 细胞并诱导凋亡,需要恢复耗尽的 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞,以提高这两个亚群的功能,从而达到治疗肿瘤的目的[71]。改善 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞可能是逆转目前癌症免疫治疗困境的一个突破[71]。2021 年, Miguel F. Sanmamed 等人通过对 25 例可切除的非小细胞肺癌患者的手术切除肿瘤(TU)和非 TU 配对肺组织的比较研究,开发了一种先前未描述的“免疫高效”PDX 模型,称为免疫 PDX 模型。CD8+ TIL 在非小细胞肺癌患者的 TME 中扩增,是 TIL 中最具增生性的部分。由于过量的不可恢复的凋亡 TIL,具有丰富的 CD8+ TIL 的 T 细胞可能与其他 CD4+ TIL 群体竞争空间和资源,导致肿瘤的发展[72]。对 TIL 的研究仍在不断地完善中。

4.2. 外周血 T 细胞亚群

与 TIL 相比,外周血循环 T 淋巴细胞亚群更容易采样、可重复性强,对于非小细胞肺癌的预后影响研究中。2018 年, Nataly Manjarrez-Orduno 分析了黑色素瘤和 NSCLC 患者 CD4+和 CD8+的中枢记忆细胞(CM)和效应细胞(Eff)的比例,发现 CM/Eff T 细胞比例高与炎症性肿瘤有关,还与纳武单抗治疗非小细胞肺癌后更长的无进展生存期(PFS)相关。这是首次提出循环 T 淋巴细胞亚群作为非小细胞肺癌患者对检查点抑制剂反应的预测性生物标志物[73]。在 2020 年, Selene Ottonello 等人筛选了 74 例接受纳武单抗治疗的 NSCLC 患者,符合条件的患者每 14 天接受 3 mg/kg 的纳武利尤单抗治疗,直至死亡或出现不可接受的毒性,或从第一次给药开始长达 96 周,在第一次给药前、15 天、30 天和 45 天采集血液样本,并通

过流式细胞术进行表型分析。采用非参数 Kruskal-Wallis 检验、kappan-meier 法、Cox 回归分析、随机效应回归分析等方法对数据进行分析,发现总 CD3+ T 淋巴细胞和不同 T 淋巴细胞亚群(即 CD4+、CD8+ 和 CD3+ CD56+ T 淋巴细胞, Tregs 除外)出现频率较高的患者获得了较好的效果。相比之下,相对较高比例的 NK 细胞和较高比例的 CD8+/CD39+ Tregs 与较短的 OS (总生存期)和 PFS 相关[22]。在一项研究中,观察外周血中到基线 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞较高者与较长 PFS 和 OS 相关[74]。虽然通过统计分析,基线 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞不是 OS 的独立预后因素,但数据也表明,对于基线外周 CD8+ T 淋巴细胞低的患者,应谨慎使用 ICIs [74]。洪祥灿等回顾性分析了 2020 年 8 月至 2022 年 1 月在南方医科大学深圳医院诊治的 651 例肺癌患者的临床资料,选取了 50 例晚期肺癌患者。分别于治疗前、治疗后 1~4 周及免疫治疗期间检测静脉血外周血淋巴细胞、CD3+、CD4+、CD8+、B 淋巴细胞及 NK 细胞总数。采用 SPSS 26.0 软件进行统计分析,发现治疗后 CD3+、CD4+、CD4+/CD8+均显著升高, B 淋巴细胞数量显著降低($P < 0.05$)。治疗前后 CD8+和 NK 细胞数量相近。T 细胞亚群不仅作为预测标志物,而且在动态监测和疗效评价方面的作用已逐渐得到证实。因此, T 细胞亚群对于非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗,以及疾病发展和预后的评估都很重要。

5. 讨论

免疫检查点抑制剂(ICIs)的出现,无论是单一免疫治疗还是联合治疗,都扩大了非小细胞肺癌患者的标准治疗选择。虽然取得良好效果,但部分人没有受益。筛查受益人群和确定预后对于疾病的诊断和实施下一个治疗计划至关重要。T 细胞亚群作为非小细胞肺癌的预后指标具有重要意义,越来越多的学者开始关注免疫治疗过程中 T 细胞亚群的动态变化。根据 CD3+和 CD8+ TIL 细胞的密度进行分类。Francois Ghiringhelli 等人验证了对 206 名 NSCLC 患者的两个独立队列的分析,发现当患者被分为三个免疫评分-IC (IS-IC)时,风险比(HR)进一步增加。所有低 IS-IC 患者在不到 18 个月的时间内进展,而在训练组和验证组中,36 个月时的 PFS 分别占高 IS-IC 患者的 34%和 33%,这表明免疫评分是抗 PD-1/PD-L1 免疫治疗反应的有效定量和预测性标志物[75]。目前有学者认为免疫评分比目前单独使用的 PD-L1 染色具有更好的预测价值,可以指导临床医生制定治疗决策策略[76]。免疫评分的引入和肯定进一步证实了 T 淋巴细胞亚群可以作为预后标志物发挥一定的作用。尽管抗 PD-(L) 1 疗法已被批准用于非小细胞肺癌患者,但很大一部分患者对其没有反应。PD-L1 表达并不总是预测对检查点免疫治疗的反应,也不是一个完美的预测因素。结合 T 淋巴细胞亚群及其预测效果有望取得更好的效果。

T 淋巴细胞亚群也有一定的局限性。目前,大多数实验都是回顾性数据分析,这可能会导致某些偏差。需要进一步的前瞻性研究来验证 T 淋巴细胞在非小细胞肺癌免疫治疗中的预后作用。T 淋巴细胞亚群分型的具体意义也有待进一步研究,各亚型的变异机制研究尚不深入。T 淋巴细胞亚群动态监测的时间截止点有待进一步商定。此外,如果 NSCLC 患者采用免疫治疗联合化疗,化疗药物对免疫细胞的杀伤也是我们在今后的研究中需要关注的因素。

6. 结论

通过对 T 淋巴细胞的深入研究, TILs 和外周循环 T 淋巴细胞作为非小细胞肺癌的预测因子显示出一定的潜力。综上所述, T 淋巴细胞亚群标志物有望发挥更显著的作用,并与其他相关预测标志物联合,也将进一步促进 NSCLC 免疫治疗的发展。

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YTHDF2 基因调控 NSCLC 中 TAMs 重塑改变免疫微环境的机制探索。

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