

乳腺癌动物模型的研究进展

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摘 要

乳腺癌作为全球女性群体中确诊率位居前列的癌症类型, 其内部存在的诸多异质性为研究工作增添了挑战。乳腺癌研究在很大程度上依赖于多样化的模型系统, 以了解疾病进展、开发新型诊断方法并评估新的治疗策略。动物模型一直是探索癌症病理、构建与人类癌症高度相似的体内微环境的重要工具。这些模型在癌症相关临床研究中不可或缺, 精准识别与疾病预后紧密相关的生物标志物和遗传通路。化学诱导模型成本低且易于构建; 移植模型能够可靠地模拟人类乳腺癌环境; 基因工程小鼠模型有助于揭示所涉及的基因改变, 并测试新型免疫疗法; 本文概述了乳腺癌动物模型研究方法进展, 旨在为从事乳腺癌研究、并需根据研究目的精心挑选最佳模型的研究人员提供坚实的支撑与参考。

关键词

乳腺癌, 动物模型, 化学诱导模型, 移植模型

Research Progress in Animal Models of Breast Cancer

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Abstract

Breast cancer ranks among the top cancer types in terms of incidence among the global female population. The significant heterogeneity within breast cancer poses challenges to research endeavors. Breast cancer research heavily relies on diverse model systems to understand disease progression, develop novel diagnostic methods, and evaluate new therapeutic strategies. Animal models have consistently served as crucial tools for exploring cancer pathology and constructing *in vivo*

microenvironments that closely resemble human cancers. These models are indispensable in cancer-related clinical research, enabling the precise identification of biomarkers and genetic pathways closely associated with disease prognosis. Chemically induced models are cost-effective and easy to establish; transplant models reliably simulate the human breast cancer environment; genetically engineered mouse models facilitate the revelation of involved genetic alterations and the testing of novel immunotherapies. This paper provides an overview of the research advancements in breast cancer animal models, aiming to offer robust support and reference for researchers engaged in breast cancer studies who need to carefully select the optimal model based on their research objectives.

Keywords

Breast Neoplasm, Animal Models, Chemically Induced Models, Transplant Models

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1. 引言

癌症是全球范围内的主要致死原因，乳腺癌是全球女性群体中确诊率最高的癌症类型之一，也是女性癌症相关死亡的主要诱因[1]。多种因素会诱发乳腺癌，包括家族史、接触物理性、化学性或生物性致病因子以及生活方式等[2]。乳腺癌的初步诊断通常通过超声、乳腺钼靶 X 线摄影或磁共振成像(Magnetic Resonance Imaging, MRI)完成[3]。为进一步推进乳腺癌临床前研究与新型抗癌疗法的研发，研究人员正持续优化现有模型并开发新模型。动物模型能在基因表达和组织病理学特征方面高度模拟人类乳腺癌，主要针对调控肿瘤特征的关键生物学过程，如细胞增殖、细胞周期、细胞存活、细胞凋亡、迁移、侵袭、转移及血管生成，是研究肿瘤发生机制、验证潜在治疗方案的重要工具[4]-[6]。

本文就乳腺癌动物模型研究方法进展作一综述，系统介绍自发性、诱导性、移植性模型，基因工程模型，为开展乳腺癌研究并需要根据其目的选择最佳模型的研究人员提供支持。

2. 自发性模型

乳腺癌体内动物(*In Vivo*)模型研究主要以啮齿动物(小鼠、大鼠)为主[7]。小鼠通常有 5 对乳腺，因基因组与人类基因组同源性近 90%，易进行基因编辑构建靶向基因，体型小适合大规模研究以及可支撑免疫治疗研究等特点，是临床前乳腺癌研究最常用的模型[8]。大鼠有 6 对乳腺，与人类核苷酸序列相似度 93%、氨基酸序列相似 94%，乳腺导管树富含终末导管小叶单位(Terminal Duct Lobular Unit, TDLU)即人类乳腺癌主要起源部位，体型为小鼠 10 倍，便于血压测量、血液采样、手术操作，适用于特定研究[9]。

自发性模型是研究乳腺癌的重要工具。此类模型中的动物(多是小鼠)未接受化学干预、基因改造或细胞系接种，乳腺便会自然形成肿瘤[10]。这些肿瘤源于动物自身乳腺组织，能高度模拟人类乳腺癌的发生发展，依赖自然生物学机制[11]。虽称“自发性”，即肿瘤自然产生，但可能受遗传因素影响[12]。某些品系的小鼠由于遗传背景的影响，更容易发生乳腺肿瘤，如 BALB/c 和 C3H 小鼠品系因具有较高的乳腺肿瘤易感性，常被用作自发性乳腺肿瘤模型[13]。在大鼠中，F344 系、SD 大鼠和 Wistar 大鼠也常用于诱导乳腺肿瘤。自发性模型潜伏期长，适用于研究乳腺癌随时间推移的渐进发展过程[14]。但肿瘤发生时间难测，操作有挑战，研究人员需对动物长期精细管理与监测。

3. 诱导性模型

诱导性模型通过化学致癌物(DMBA, MNU)、激素、辐射、病毒或细菌感染诱导, 潜伏期短、可重复性高, 适用于致癌机制与环境因素研究[15]。多环芳烃(Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, PAHs)是啮齿类动物肿瘤诱导中最广泛使用的化学制剂[16]。研究人员通常采用 2,2-二羟甲基丁酸(7,12-Dimethylbenz(a)Anthracene, DMBA)或 N-甲基-N-亚硝基脲(N-Methyl-N-Nitrosourea, MNU), 对约 45-60 日龄的 SD 大鼠灌胃给予单次剂量的 DMBA 即可诱发乳腺癌, 肿瘤在 80~130 天内形成[17]。DMBA 通常具有激素依赖性, 并需要乳腺组织的代谢激活, DMBA 诱导的乳腺模型会激活致癌信号通路, 如芳香烃受体(Aryl Hydrocarbon Receptor, AhR)、Wnt 通路、NF- κ B 通路等, 促进细胞增殖、存活和侵袭[18]。多种治疗药物已在 DMBA 诱导的大鼠模型中进行测试, 如雌激素信号调节剂他莫昔芬(Moxifen)的体内疗效得到验证[9]。化学诱导模型的优势在于能密切研究疾病的发病机制和病因学, 具有成本相对较低、诱导简便、成瘤率高等特点, 且可从起始阶段观察肿瘤形成过程。存在诱导所需时间较长, 且肿瘤数量及异质性因个体差异而不同等局限[5]。

激素诱导模型借助激素或类激素药物诱发肿瘤, 孕激素、雌激素对人类乳腺癌的发生发展影响显著, 雌激素可促进小鼠乳腺肿瘤生长, 孕激素与之相互作用, 调节乳腺组织对激素的反应, 从而可能增强雌激素的增殖效应[19]。但激素诱导模型存在潜伏期和肿瘤大小难控、发生部位难测、缺乏明确转移证据等局限[20]。辐射可单独或联合化学致癌物、激素诱导乳腺肿瘤, 全身或局部电离辐射暴露均可诱发, 适用于研究辐射效应及分次剂量影响, 但因需特殊设备且要严格防护, 实际应用较少[21]。生物学诱导模型通过给实验动物注射病毒建立, 如小鼠乳腺肿瘤病毒(Murine Mammary Tumor Virus, MMTV)这种逆转录病毒, 能将遗传物质整合到宿主基因组, 所诱发的肿瘤与人类乳腺癌在形态、基因表达等多方面高度相似[22]。与自发模型相比, 该模型发病率高、潜伏期短、预测可靠, 但也有效率低、发病率不稳等局限。

4. 移植性模型

移植性模型是乳腺癌研究中应用最广泛的体内模型类别, 核心通过移植肿瘤细胞或组织至受体动物构建, 主要分为同种移植模型和异种移植模型(CDX 或 PDX 模型), 兼具构建周期短、肿瘤生长可预测、能模拟临床肿瘤特征等优势, 是药物筛选、转移机制研究及个性化治疗探索的核心工具[23]。但其免疫缺陷、肿瘤异质性保留不足等局限性需结合研究目标合理选择。

同种移植模型是指将同一品系啮齿动物中自发形成或诱导产生的肿瘤细胞系, 移植至遗传背景完全相同的免疫健全宿主体内, 且无需进行免疫抑制处理[24]。该模型的主要优势在于能够保留完整的肿瘤微环境, 同时具备肿瘤生长速率快、成本相对适中等特点, 但也面临物种差异、肿瘤异质性有限等挑战[8]。该模型常用于免疫治疗机制研究, 如评估 PD-1 抑制剂等药物的疗效, 观察免疫细胞对肿瘤的杀伤作用; 也可用于构建转移模型, 如移植 4T1 细胞系后能够模拟乳腺癌向肺、肝等器官的自发转移过程[10]。

异种移植模型(细胞系来源 Cell-Derived Xenograft, CDX)即长期体外培养的人类乳腺癌细胞系(如 MCF-7、MDA-MB-231、BT-20)移植至免疫缺陷动物体内, 常用受体包括裸鼠(缺乏 T 细胞)、NOD-SCID 小鼠(缺乏 T 细胞和 B 细胞)及 NSG 小鼠(缺乏 T 细胞、B 细胞与 NK 细胞), 该模型常采用皮下移植或原位移植[25]。CDX 模型优势显著: 肿瘤生长可预测性强, 所用细胞系稳定性高, 保障实验结果的高重复性; 模型构建效率高, 利于大规模药物筛选; 细胞系易获取且能长期保存, 不依赖临床患者样本, 为研究提供便利[26]。但 CDX 模型还存在一定局限: 宿主免疫缺陷限制了其在免疫治疗研究中的应用, 难以真实反映肿瘤与免疫相互作用; 长期体外传代培养可能使细胞遗传特征漂移, 丢失肿瘤异质性与微环境特征; 多数模型仅形成局部肿瘤, 难以有效模拟人类乳腺癌远处转移过程[27]。目前 CDX 模型主要聚焦于常规药物筛选和基础机制研究, 如对化疗药物、靶向药物等进行初步疗效评估以及深入解析肿瘤细胞

增殖、侵袭相关的信号通路,以 PI3K/AKT 通路为例开展分子层面的研究[23]。异种移植模型(患者来源 Patient-Derived Xenograft, PDX)即乳腺癌患者手术切除的新鲜肿瘤组织(未经过体外培养)植入免疫缺陷动物体内[28]。关键步骤在于肿瘤组织经处理后直接移植至乳腺脂肪垫或皮下,可长期传代保留肿瘤特征[29]。该模型临床相关性高:能完整保留患者肿瘤的遗传特征、组织学结构及异质性;可模拟转移:部分 PDX 模型能重现患者肿瘤的转移模式;预测药物响应:可用于评估患者对特定药物的敏感性,为临床治疗方案的精准选择提供重要依据[30]。该模型局限于成本高昂、周期长、免疫缺陷等[31]。尽管如此,PDX 模型在乳腺癌研究中仍发挥着不可替代的作用,为晚期乳腺癌患者筛选出有效的治疗药物,制定出个体化的治疗方案;该模型还可应用于生物标志物的鉴定工作,科研人员通过 PDX 模型筛选出与药物响应、患者预后密切相关的分子标志物(Bcl-2、PI3KCA 突变等),为乳腺癌的精准诊疗提供新的方向和靶点[32]。

原位移植与皮下移植在肿瘤微环境(Tumor Microenvironment, TME)的血管化、缺氧状态及基质组成上差异显著,直接影响肿瘤生长、转移和药物响应。血管化方面,原位移植模拟生理血管网络,血管起源与结构完整,功能与通透性正常,且与宿主淋巴系统相连利于转移;皮下移植血管形成缓慢且不完全,结构异常、功能缺陷,血管化低效且具物种特异性局限[26]。缺氧状态上,原位移植缺氧梯度温和,分布与临床一致,可诱导相关生物学效应并影响治疗;皮下移植缺氧程度剧烈且分布无序,导致的生物学效应及耐药机制与临床差异大,药物响应预测价值有限[33]。基质组成方面,原位移植基质细胞来源与类型贴近人类肿瘤,细胞外基质(Extracellular Matrix, ECM)成分与结构相似,信号通路完整;皮下移植基质组成单一,基质细胞易被替代,细胞外基质结构紊乱,信号通路存在物种特异性不匹配。

5. 基因工程模型

基因工程模型(Genetically Engineered Models, GEMs)是通过转基因、基因敲除或敲入及 CRISPR-Cas9 介导的体细胞编辑等技术改造基因组构建的乳腺癌模型,核心通过乳腺特异性启动子(如 MMTV-LTR、WAP)驱动癌基因(如 c-Myc、HER2、PyMT)过表达,或敲除抑癌基因(如 p53、BRCA1、PTEN),在小鼠、大鼠等啮齿动物中模拟肿瘤自发发生过程[34]。其优势在于能精准操控特定基因、保留完整免疫微环境、重现肿瘤异质性与癌变全流程,是解析基因功能、肿瘤发生机制及免疫治疗疗效评估的关键工具[35]。典型模型包括 MMTV-PyMT 小鼠(模拟 Luminal B 型乳腺癌)、BRCA1/BRCA2 敲除小鼠(研究遗传性乳腺癌)及 CRISPR 编辑 Nf1/Tp53 大鼠[36]-[38]。但该类模型存在技术门槛高、构建周期长、难以模拟人类肿瘤多基因复合变异、物种特异性导致的临床转化偏差等局限,需结合研究目标与移植性模型、诱导模型互补使用[39]。目前正朝多基因复合修饰、体细胞精准编辑及人源化改造方向演进,以提升临床相关性 with 转化价值。

6. 人源化小鼠模型

人源化小鼠模型通过在免疫缺陷小鼠体内重构人类免疫系统,弥补了传统动物模型与人类生理环境的差异,成为乳腺癌免疫治疗研究连接基础实验与临床转化的关键工具,其核心价值在于能模拟人类肿瘤微环境中的免疫细胞相互作用,为免疫治疗靶点验证、药物疗效评估及毒性预测提供贴近临床的研究平台。该模型构建主要有两类主流类型:一是基于免疫细胞重构的模型, PBMC 人源化模型构建周期短,可直接反映患者免疫细胞功能,但易发生异种移植抗宿主病、髓系细胞重构不完全; HSC 人源化模型可形成完整人类免疫细胞谱系,适合长期观察,但构建周期长、成本高; BLT 人源化模型 T 细胞功能接近人类,可避免异种移植抗宿主病,但操作复杂、普及性低[36]。二是结合肿瘤移植的复合模型, PDX 人源化复合模型能双重重构,保留患者肿瘤特征,是评估个体化疗效的理想工具;基因修饰人源化模型通过基因编辑优化免疫相关性[28]。模型构建依赖重度免疫缺陷小鼠品系,部分还会表达人类细胞因子促

进髓系细胞成熟活化。在乳腺癌免疫治疗研究中,人源化小鼠模型凭借人类免疫系统 + 人类肿瘤的双重优势,在免疫治疗靶点验证与机制研究方面,可模拟经典靶点表达模式及免疫细胞抑制状态,解析肿瘤免疫逃逸机制;在药物筛选与疗效评估方面,能预测个体化治疗响应,优化联合治疗方案;在毒性评估方面,可模拟人类免疫系统对正常组织的攻击,评估免疫治疗的心血管毒性并探索缓解效果[24]。

7. 结语

在乳腺癌研究中,选对动物模型需紧扣具体研究目的与问题(见图 1)。模型选择要考量聚焦于乳腺癌的起始、进展、转移、药测、遗传因素或特定生物学,同时兼顾模型复杂度[40]。化学诱导模型可分析病因、剖析早期进展,但诱导周期长、难完全反映人类预后,增加研究难度。CDX 和 PDX 模型能模拟肿瘤微环境,应用广泛,却因在免疫缺陷小鼠中构建,无法研究免疫反应。基因工程小鼠模型验证遗传机制效果佳,是测试新型免疫疗法的优选,但会引发移植物抗宿主反应。

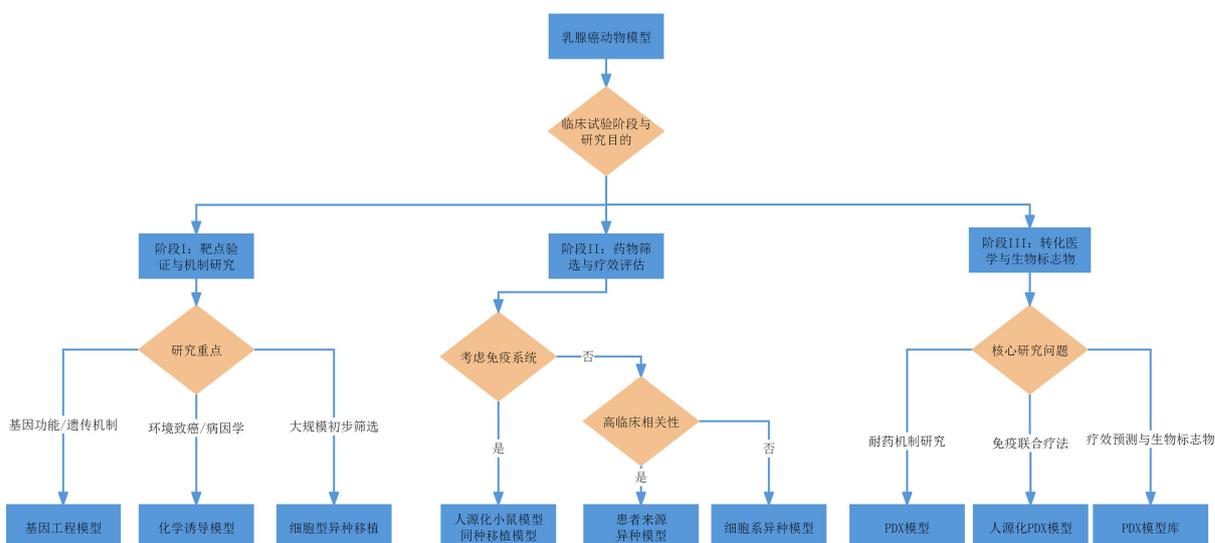


Figure 1. Decision tree for selecting breast cancer animal models based on clinical trial phases

图 1. 据临床试验阶段选择乳腺癌动物模型的决策树

乳腺癌临床前模型存在固有局限,这是导致转化鸿沟的核心因素,因其无法完全复刻人类肿瘤的生物学复杂性、微环境特征及临床诊疗场景,致使大量临床前有效结果在人体试验中失败[41]。从模型核心局限性看,CDX 模型因长期体外培养出现遗传漂移,丢失原发肿瘤异质性,无法模拟肿瘤内异质性,导致广谱有效的药物仅对少数患者亚型有效[23];PDX 模型多次传代后人类肿瘤基质细胞被小鼠宿主细胞替代,TME 出现物种特异性偏差,使依赖 TME 的药物临床前有效但人体试验失效[27];GEM 模型单一基因修饰,无法复刻人类肿瘤遗传协同效应,针对单一靶点的药物在人体中因其他驱动基因代偿而无效[35]。在肿瘤微环境方面,常规 CDX 或 PDX 依赖免疫缺陷小鼠,缺乏人类免疫系统,人源化模型髓系细胞重构不完全且缺乏人类肠道菌群和细胞因子网络,导致免疫治疗协同激活效应无法复现[36];皮下移植模型血管异常,原位移植小鼠与人类血管表型差异大,且模型缺氧状态与人体不同,影响药物疗效评估[26]。临床诊疗场景上,临床前模型缺乏转移灶微环境适配性,无法模拟器官特异性转移;未考虑特殊人群与共病状态,剂量推荐导致人体不良反应增加;高估联合治疗协同效应[42]。此外,PDX 肿瘤组织处理和原位移植手术创伤等技术偏差,以及伦理与成本限制导致模型单一化,均使模型失真,影响药物疗效评估。各模型优劣互补,综合运用多种模型研究,或能更全面揭示乳腺癌及其潜在机制[43]。

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