

mTOR 抑制剂耐药机制及预测依维莫司疗效标志物的研究进展

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摘要: 依维莫司是一种哺乳动物雷帕霉素靶蛋白 (mammalian target of rapamycin, mTOR) 抑制剂, 可改善晚期激素受体阳性/人表皮生长因子受体 2 阴性(hormone receptor-positive/human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-negative, HR+/HER2-) 乳腺癌患者的预后。然而, 依维莫司耐药日益发展, 缺乏有效的标志物预测其疗效, 对其临床应用造成了挑战。针对这一重要的临床问题, 全文整理了近年来 mTOR 抑制剂的耐药机制及依维莫司疗效预测标志物的相关研究, 以期提供参考。

主题词: 乳腺癌; 耐药; 哺乳动物雷帕霉素靶蛋白抑制剂; 依维莫司; 疗效标志物

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Progress on Mechanism of Resistance to mTOR Inhibitor and Predicting Biomarkers for Everolimus Efficacy

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Abstract: Everolimus, a mammalian target of rapamycin(mTOR) inhibitor, has been shown to improve survival of patients with hormone receptor-positive/human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-negative (HR+/HER2-) advanced breast cancer. However, resistance to everolimus has been increasingly developed, and there is no efficient biomarker to predict its efficacy, which becomes a challenge for the clinical use of everolimus. This paper reviews the mechanisms of resistance to mTOR inhibitor and potential markers that can predict the efficacy of everolimus.

Subject words: breast cancer; drug resistance; mammalian target of rapamycin inhibitor; everolimus; predictive marker

乳腺癌已成为全球发病率最高的恶性肿瘤, 给家庭及社会带来了沉重负担^[1]。乳腺癌至少可分为 3 个分子分型: 激素受体(hormone receptor, HR)阳性(HR+)/人表皮生长因子受体 2 (human epidermal growth factor receptor 2, HER2) 阴性(HR+/HER2-) 乳腺癌、HER2 阳性(HER2+) 乳腺癌及三阴性乳腺癌^[2]。其中, HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌占比约 70%, 预后较好; 治疗上以内分泌治疗为主, 复发转移后仍以内分泌治疗为主^[2-3]。近年来, 内分泌治疗联合靶向治疗成为晚期 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者全新的治疗模式。

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哺乳动物雷帕霉素靶蛋白(mammalian target of rapamycin, mTOR)抑制剂依维莫司联合内分泌治疗是晚期 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者目前标准治疗选择之一^[4-7]。

mTOR 是一种高度保守的丝氨酸/苏氨酸激酶, 由两种结构和功能不同的大型多蛋白复合体的催化亚基构成, 即 mTOR 复合物 1 (mTOR complex 1, mTORC1) 和 mTOR 复合物 2(mTORC2)^[8-9]。mTORC1 通过固醇调节元件结合蛋白 1 调节脂质合成; 通过缺氧诱导因子 1 调节血管生成, 驱动肿瘤的发生; 通过 mTORC1 效应蛋白的磷酸化和激活, 启动相关翻译事件, 促进肿瘤细胞的增殖和生存, 与细胞周期蛋白依赖性激酶 4/6 (cyclin D/cyclin dependent kinase

4 and 6, CDK4/6)抑制剂起到协同作用。研究表明,磷脂酰肌醇激酶 3(phosphoinositide 3 kinase, PI3K)/Akt/mTOR 通路异常可激活雌激素受体(estrogen receptor, ER)通路,促进肿瘤细胞抵抗内分泌治疗,引起乳腺癌患者对内分泌治疗耐药;而抑制该通路的活性有助于逆转内分泌治疗耐药、维持肿瘤细胞对内分泌药物的敏感性^[10]。

mTOR 抑制剂依维莫司可逆转 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者的内分泌耐药,但并非所有患者对依维莫司都具有良好的药物反应,部分患者在治疗期间出现耐药和疾病进展。在一项多中心临床研究中,接受一线依维莫司治疗的晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者客观缓解率(objective response rate, ORR)约为 50%,27.3%患者在治疗开始后即出现疾病进展^[4]。作为一种费用昂贵,且有一定毒性的靶向药物,临床迫切需要可以预测依维莫司疗效的生物标志物,对依维莫司敏感人群进行分层,进而更全面、精准地指导用药。本文整理依维莫司在晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌中的临床应用,并总结 mTOR 抑制剂的耐药机制及预测依维莫司疗效相关标志物,以期为肿瘤工作者提供参考依据。

1 依维莫司在晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌中的疗效

1.1 BOLERO-2 研究

BOLERO-2 研究^[6]是一项多中心、双盲Ⅲ期临床试验,入组 724 例内分泌治疗失败的绝经后晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者,排除脑转移和既往接受依西美坦或 mTOR 抑制剂治疗的患者。BOLERO-2 研究中,485 例接受依维莫司+依西美坦联合治疗,239 例接受依西美坦+安慰剂对照处理,研究的主要终点为无进展生存期(progression-free survival, PFS),次要终点为总体生存期(overall survival, OS)、临床获益率(clinical benefit rate, CBR)和 ORR 等。结果显示,在依西美坦治疗基础上,加入依维莫司可明显提高患者对药物治疗的反应(ORR:12.6% vs 1.7%, $P<0.001$; CBR:51.3% vs 26.4%, $P<0.001$)。依维莫司联合治疗较依西美坦单药治疗延长 PFS 超 2 倍(7.8 个月 vs 3.2 个月),降低 55%的疾病进展和死亡风险($HR=0.45$, 95%CI:0.38~0.54, $P<0.001$);但对 OS 不

具有改善作用(31.0 个月 vs 26.1 个月, $P=0.143$)^[5]。

BOLERO-2 研究证实,依维莫司可逆转内分泌耐药,在依西美坦的基础上加入依维莫司可改善绝经后晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者的 CBR、ORR 和 PFS。

1.2 MIRACLE 研究

国际上多项临床研究结果,为依维莫司在绝经后晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者中的疗效提供了更多证据。研究表明,绝经前与绝经后乳腺癌在生物学行为、预后等方面存在差异^[11]。依维莫司在绝经前患者中的疗效如何,尚缺少足够的数据。

MIRACLE 研究前瞻性地探索依维莫司对绝经前 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者的疗效^[4]。研究共纳入199 例他莫昔芬治疗失败的绝经前晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者,以 1:1 随机分组,其中 101 例接受依维莫司(10 mg/d)+来曲唑(2.5 mg/d)治疗,98 例单独接受来曲唑(2.5 mg/d)治疗。PFS 为主要研究终点。中期分析发现,依维莫司联合治疗明显改善了患者的中位 PFS(19.4 个月 vs 12.9 个月),降低了 36%疾病进展和死亡风险($HR=0.64$, 95%CI:0.46~0.89, $P=0.008$)。这一获益在内分泌治疗进展的患者交叉接受依维莫司联合治疗也得到了体现,但 OS 尚未达到。该研究表明,对于内分泌耐药的晚期 HR+/HER2-绝经前乳腺癌患者,依维莫司联合来曲唑治疗可显著改善 PFS。

另外多项研究表明,在内分泌耐药的晚期 HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者中,单独抑制 mTORC1 的依维莫司显示了良好的疗效。

2 mTOR 抑制剂的耐药机制

mTOR 抑制剂耐药可分为原发性耐药和继发性耐药。原发性耐药指肿瘤细胞因预先突变自主地对治疗产生抵抗性反应,一般是固有的;而继发性耐药指肿瘤细胞一开始对治疗表现出应答,但随后发生肿瘤进展或复发,为先天性固有或后天性获得^[12]。

2.1 信号通路的代偿性激活

一些证据表明,mTORC1 可通过胰岛素受体(insulin receptor, IR)、胰岛素样生长因子 1 受体(insulin-like growth factor receptor, IGFR)和其他受体酪氨酸激酶家族(receptor tyrosine kinases, RTK)通路,抑制肿瘤细胞中相关的上游信号网络。因此,抑制

mTORC1 活性可反馈性激活一系列信号通路的代偿激活，在一定程度上可以解释肿瘤细胞对某些 mTOR 抑制剂的耐药性。

IR/IGFR 信号传导涉及有丝分裂原激活的蛋白激酶(mitogen-activated protein kinase, MAPK)级联信号通路的活动,其异常与恶性肿瘤的发生、进展和转移有关,常与 PI3K/Akt/mTOR 信号通路上调共存^[13]。在接受依维莫司治疗的乳腺癌患者的肿瘤组织中, Thr202/Tyr204 p 过度磷酸化,MAPK 信号通路中的细胞外信号调节激酶(extracellular-signal regulated protein kinase, ERK)水平显著性升高^[14]。进一步探索发现,mTORC1 通过调节 Grb10 磷酸化,增强其对 IR/IGFR 信号的抑制活性,而 mTOR 抑制剂对 Grb10 磷酸化的急性抑制可引起 PI3K/Akt/mTOR 和 MAPK 通路的过度激活^[15]。在临床前实验中发现,与单独抑制 PI3K/Akt/mTOR 通路的药物治疗相比,联合靶向 MAPK 通路的药物治疗能更好地抑制肿瘤细胞侵袭性,显示出更好的疗效^[16]。ERK 抑制剂 AZD6244 阻断 MAPK 通路上的 ERK 通路,可有效促进 mTOR 抑制剂诱导的肿瘤细胞凋亡,提高 mTOR 抑制剂对肿瘤细胞的毒性^[17]。

WNT/β-catenin 轴涉及 mTOR 抑制剂耐药发生。WNT/β-catenin 通路的关键成分是 GSK3β 蛋白复合体^[18-19]。该复合物可协调来自多个信号级联的信号,包括 PI3K/Akt/mTOR 和 MAPK 信号通路,诱导肿瘤细胞对 mTOR 抑制剂治疗的耐药^[18]。在具有PI3KCA 突变的肿瘤细胞中,GSK3β 蛋白复合体促进 mTOR 与 mTOR 调控相关蛋白 Raptor 的相互作用,上调 mTORC1 活性,进而引发肿瘤细胞对 mTOR 抑制剂耐受^[20]。而通过小干扰 RNA 敲低 GSK3β 或使用 GSK3β 抑制剂处理耐药细胞,抑制 GSK3β 的表达,可降低 mTORC1 及 WNT/β-catenin 信号通路的活性,恢复肿瘤细胞对 mTOR 抑制剂的敏感性^[20]。

2.2 代谢重编程

mTORC1 参与调节葡萄糖、氨基酸、脂质和核苷酸代谢,进而影响肿瘤细胞的代谢活动。代谢重编程是 mTOR 抑制剂耐药的机制之一^[21]。

有氧糖酵解是肿瘤细胞的特征之一,高度活跃的有氧糖酵解引起肿瘤细胞分泌过量乳酸,导致肿瘤微环境酸化^[22-23]。酸性的肿瘤微环境可降低 mTOR 抑制剂对肿瘤细胞的抑制作用,使肿瘤细胞

对 mTOR 抑制剂产生耐药性。在体外,将肿瘤细胞暴露于酸性环境中,可检测到 p-4EBP1 Ser65 磷酸化水平降低,对雷帕霉素敏感的 mTORC1 活力下降^[24]。相反,碱性的肿瘤微环境可提升 mTOR 抑制剂的抗肿瘤作用。在异种移植体外模型中发现,碳酸氢钠可增加肿瘤细胞中 mTORC1 的活力,引发肿瘤坏死和凋亡,抑制肿瘤细胞增殖,提高雷帕霉素的疗效^[25]。

mTORC1 可促进嘌呤重新合成,调节嘌呤合成途径相关酶的转录效应,包括磷酸戊糖途径、丝氨酸和甘氨酸合成以及线粒体四氢叶酸途径^[26-27]。mTORC1 信号通路通过增加激活转录因子 4 的表达,促进嘌呤重新合成关键酶亚甲基四氢叶酸脱氢酶 2 的合成^[26]。相比较于 mTOR 抑制剂敏感的肿瘤细胞,mTOR 抑制剂耐药细胞可检测出更多嘌呤相关代谢物,如次黄嘌呤、腺嘌呤苷酸和鸟嘌呤苷酸^[21],提示嘌呤代谢通路的激活。此外,耐药细胞中编码次黄嘌呤磷酸核糖转移酶 1 的信使 RNA 水平升高^[21]。该酶是嘌呤挽救途径的关键成分。研究提示,mTOR 抑制剂耐药机制由嘌呤挽救途径介导,该途径为核苷酸生物合成提供嘌呤资源,而不依赖于嘌呤重新合成路径。

2.3 免疫微环境的介入

肿瘤微环境(tumor microenvironment, TME)是一个复杂的综合系统,主要由基质、肿瘤细胞及其周围的免疫和炎症细胞、各种细胞因子和趋化因子构成^[28]。肿瘤细胞与其所处的 TME 是一个功能整体,两者相互影响;TME 可影响肿瘤细胞对治疗的反应,对肿瘤的发生及进展具有重要作用^[29]。

mTOR 信号分子参与 TME 中多种细胞成分的调节,包括免疫细胞和基质细胞^[30-31]。在小鼠模型中,雷帕霉素增加了外周血 CD68⁺巨噬细胞的比例,减少了肿瘤组织中 CD8⁺ T 细胞。进一步分析发现,雷帕霉素增加了肿瘤组织中 10 种代谢物的表达,如(S)-5-二磷酸甲羟戊酸、阿伦磷酸、红霉素 E 等,这些代谢产物可能上调循环中的 CD68⁺巨噬细胞以增强免疫应答,从而提高药物对肿瘤细胞的抑制作用^[31]。另外,mTOR 抑制剂耐药与 TME 中的基质成分也具有相关性。肿瘤相关成纤维细胞可通过抑制白细胞介素 6 的分泌,下调 mTORC1 分子的表达,进而介导 mTOR 抑制剂耐药^[32]。

2.4 表观遗传修饰

表观遗传修饰指在不改变原始 DNA 序列的情

况下，改变染色质结构和基因表达的过程，涉及DNA甲基化、组蛋白乙酰化等。表观遗传修饰的积累可诱导恶性事件的发生。研究表明表观遗传修饰参与mTOR抑制剂耐药^[33-34]。在启动子DNA甲基化的诱导下，磷酸肌醇依赖性蛋白激酶-1(3-phosphoinositide-dependent protein kinase 1, PDK1)/c-Myc通路代偿激活，进而导致肿瘤细胞对mTOR抑制剂敏感性下降，出现耐药^[35]。相反，抑制PDK1/c-Myc通路的活性可缓解肿瘤细胞对mTOR抑制剂的耐药。体外和体内实验表明，联合靶向DNA甲基转移酶的DNA去甲基化药物地西他滨，可恢复耐药细胞对mTOR抑制剂的敏感性^[33]。

2.5 MTOR 基因突变

MTOR基因突变可引起MTOR激酶激活，抑制mTOR与mTOR激酶内源性抑制因子Deptor的结合，进而激活mTORC1或mTORC2，影响下游靶点的磷酸化状态，使肿瘤细胞对mTOR抑制剂的敏感性发生变化^[36]。MTOR突变主要发生在雷帕霉素治疗的长期应答者，提示其与继发性耐药有关^[37]。

在乳腺癌细胞系中，MTOR基因突变可发生在mTOR的FKBP12-雷帕霉素结合结构域和激酶结构域。在乳腺癌BT474细胞中，发生在结合结构域的S2035F突变会干扰mTOR与FKBP12的相互作用，进而引起乳腺癌细胞对雷帕霉素产生耐药性；而在MCF-7细胞中，对AZD8055耐药的细胞在激酶结构域M2327I位点出现了mTOR突变，对雷帕霉素耐药的细胞在A2034V和F2108L位点出现突变^[36]。

体外实验表明一种新的mTOR复合物3(mTORC3)介导了雷帕霉素耐药的发生^[38-39]。mTORC3可通过E26转化特异性易位变体7转录因子的表达与mTOR相互作用，发挥mTORC1/2特异性激酶活性^[38]。

3 预测依维莫司疗效的生物标志物

针对晚期HR+/HER2+乳腺癌患者，一系列研究探索了依维莫司疗效与基因调控异常之间的相关性，为预测依维莫司的疗效提供了参考依据。

在BOLERO-2的一项衍生研究中，共纳入302例HR+/HER2+晚期乳腺癌患者，其中209例接受依西美坦联合依维莫司治疗，93例接受内分泌对照治

疗，对这些患者的组织标本进行二代测序，并结合临床预后数据分析发现，PIK3CA、FGFR1、细胞周期相关基因CCND1、CDK4、CDK6、CDKN2A及其组成的通路与依维莫司PFS获益无统计学意义相关。在少数PIK3CA突变患者中进行亚组分析，相比较外显子20号(激酶结构域)突变的患者，外显子9号(螺旋结构域)突变的患者从依维莫司的治疗中得到更大的获益，PFS延长^[40]。另外，染色体不稳定性评分低于75%的患者在使用依维莫司后，中位PFS可延长5.5个月^[40]。研究结果提示，染色体不稳定性评分可提示依维莫司疗效，但PIK3CA突变并不能较好地预测依维莫司的疗效。

在其他两项研究中，PIK3CA突变可有效地预测依维莫司的疗效。16例HR+乳腺癌患者的外周血进行循环肿瘤DNA分析发现，PIK3CA/H1047R突变可以有效提高依维莫司的疗效，改善乳腺癌患者的中位PFS。相比较野生型患者，携带PIK3CA/H1047R突变的乳腺癌患者中位PFS延长将近2倍(4.1个月vs8.8个月，P=0.02)^[41]。Gombos等^[42]对46例晚期ER+/HER2-乳腺癌患者分析发现，在依维莫司联合依西美坦治疗14天后，等位基因突变(任意ESR1、PIK3CA、TP53或AKT1突变)的患者PFS缩短(2.1个月vs5.0个月，P=0.012)。Ki-67指数也与HR+乳腺癌患者对依维莫司的药物反应和PFS具有关联，或可成为预测其疗效的标志物。Ki-67是一种与细胞增殖相关的核蛋白，其高表达与乳腺癌患者的不良预后相关^[43]。在一项回顾性研究中发现，相比较疾病进展的晚期HR+/HER2-乳腺癌患者，接受依维莫司治疗时疾病缓解或疾病稳定大于24周的患者，Ki-67水平显著降低(20%vs70%，P=0.006)；进一步以Ki-6735%为界值将患者分为两组，低Ki-67组的患者中位PFS明显优于高Ki-67组(109周vs19周，P=0.0114)^[44]。

研究表明，基于基因突变分析或表达差异分析而进行的前期研究，在一定程度上有利于预测依维莫司的疗效。但值得注意的是，由于肿瘤生物学认识程度和技术发展的阶段性限制，这些指标基本都围绕着肿瘤相关信号通路及信号分子开展，其分析维度和范围相对局限；另一方面，依维莫司的药物靶点mTOR可影响的细胞类型不仅仅是肿瘤细胞本身，其疗效的发挥或可涉及复杂的免疫微环境(如肿瘤

细胞、免疫细胞、基质细胞等),这些研究未考虑到 mTOR 药物作用过程中肿瘤微环境调控所带来的其他因素影响。

4 总结和展望

由于高度的肿瘤异质性,乳腺癌患者在抗肿瘤治疗期间的疗效各不相同,如何找到疗效相关的生物标志物来更精准地治疗患者,这是目前临床治疗面临的主要难题。在后 CDK4/6 抑制剂时代,依维莫司在晚期 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者取得良好疗效^[45],但是,耐药对依维莫司的临床使用造成了挑战。

针对依维莫司疗效的预测指标,国内外开展了一系列研究(Table 1)^[4,6-7,46-51]。这些研究主要围绕肿瘤本身的基因或信号改变开展,探索出了一些可用于疗效预测的生物标志物,但未构建系统的预测模型用于预测依维莫司疗效;其次,现有研究未探索 TME 与依维莫司耐药的关联,更缺乏来自 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者的真实数据支持。如果能在 TME 水平,将 TME 组分与依维莫司疗效差异进行系统分析,有机结合临床病理及预后信息,进而构建依维莫司疗效预测模型,或可用于指导临床用药。我们期待未来有更多来自真实世界的数据,鉴定出可用于指导依维莫司用药的生物标志物或模型,更精准地为晚期 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者提供有效的治疗方案,造福更多 HR+/HER2- 乳腺癌患者。

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Table 1 List of clinical studies of Everolimus in HR+/HER2- breast cancer

Study	Drug regimen	Study design	Menopausal station	Sample size (EVE vs control)	Year of publication	PFS(months) (EVE vs control)	P (PFS)
BOLERO-2 ^[6]	EVE+EXE vs EXE	Phase III randomized controlled trial	Postmenopause	485 vs 239	2013	7.8 vs 3.2	<0.001
BRAWO ^[46]	EVE+EXE	Non-interventional one-arm study	Not described	3000	2014	8(First-line therapy: 10.1)	N
4EVER ^[7]	EVE+EXE	Phase III one-arm study	Postmenopause	281	2018	5.6	N
STEPAUT ^[48]	EVE+EXE	Non-interventional one-arm study	Not described	236	2020	9.5(First-line therapy: 14)	N
EVEREXES ^[7]	EVE+EXE	Phase III one-arm study	Not described	235	2021	9.3(First-line therapy: 9.3)	N
GINECO ^[49]	EVE+TAM vs TAM	Phase II randomized controlled trial	Postmenopause	54 vs 57	2012	8.6 vs 4.5 (TPP)	0.002
PrEO102 ^[50]	EVE+Ful vs Ful	Phase II randomized controlled trial	Postmenopause	66 vs 65	2018	10.3 vs 5.1	0.02
MANTA ^[51]	Ful vs every day vistusertib+Ful vs EVE+Ful interval vistusertib+Ful vs EVE+Ful	Phase II randomized controlled trial	Postmenopause	67 vs 103 vs 98 vs 65	2020	5.4 vs 7.6 vs 8.0 vs 12.3	<0.05
MIRACLE ^[4]	EVE+LET vs LET	Phase II randomized controlled trial	Premenopause	101 vs 98	2021	19.4 vs 12.9	0.008

Notes: EVE:everolimus; EXE:exemestane; TAM: tamoxifen; Ful: Fulvestrant; PFS:progression-free survival; TPP:time to progression; N: no reported

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