

## 血清 miR-146a 变化与强直性脊柱炎的相关性

叶安, 李晶

中南大学湘雅二医院脊柱外科, 湖南 长沙 410000

**【摘要】目的:**探究强直性脊柱炎血清 miR-146a 表达情况, 从而发现潜在的强直性脊柱炎的生物标记分子。**方法:**qRT-PCR 检测强直性脊柱炎患者和正常人血清 miR-146a 表达水平。根据脊柱后凸的程度将患者分为 A (后凸畸形 < 70%) 和 B (后凸畸形 ≥ 70%) 两组。疾病的活性以及患者功能状态分别由强直性脊柱炎疾病活动度指数 (BASDAI) 和强直性脊柱炎功能指数 (BASFI) 来表示。采用 qRT-PCR 检测 A 和 B 两组血清 miR-146a 表达水平, 绘制受试者工作特征 (ROC) 曲线评价血清中 miR-146a 对强直性脊柱炎的诊断价值, 同时将 miR-146a 表达量与临床指标进行相关性分析。**结果:**miR-146a 在强直性脊柱炎血清组表达明显上调 ( $P < 0.05$ )。miR-146a 的 ROC 曲线下面积值为 0.917; 且 B 组强直性脊柱炎患者血清中 miR-146a 表达水平显著高于 A 组 ( $P < 0.05$ )。此外, miR-146a 表达水平同 BASDAI 之间存在显著相关性 ( $r = 0.5, P < 0.05$ )。**结论:**血清中 miR-146a 表达检测可作为强直性脊柱炎诊断的辅助性生物标记。miR-146a 表达水平也可能与疾病活性和胸腰椎后凸畸形的严重程度成一定的相关性。

**【关键词】**强直性脊柱炎; miR-146a; 生物标志物; 血清; 后凸畸形

**【中图分类号】**R651.2

**【文献标志码】**A

**【文章编号】**1005-202X(2017)10-1069-04

## Correlation between serum miR-146a changes and ankylosing spondylitis

YE An, LI Jing

Department of Spine Surgery, Second Xiangya Hospital of Central South University, Changsha 410000, China

**Abstract: Objective** To discover biomarkers of potential ankylosing spondylitis by exploring the expression of serum miR-146a in patients with ankylosing spondylitis. **Methods** qRT-PCR was used to detect the expression of serum miR-146a in patients with ankylosing spondylitis and normal controls. According to the degree of kyphosis, the patients were divided into group A (kyphotic deformity < 70%) and group B (kyphosis deformity ≥ 70%). The disease activity and the functional status of the patients were expressed by Bath ankylosing spondylitis disease activity index (BASDAI) and Bath ankylosing spondylitis functional index (BASFI), respectively. The expression of miR-146a in group A and B was detected by qRT-PCR. The diagnostic value of serum miR-146a on ankylosing spondylitis was evaluated by receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve. We also analyzed the correlation between the expression of miR-146a and clinical indicators. **Results** miR-146a was significantly up-regulated in the serum of patients with ankylosing spondylitis ( $P < 0.05$ ). The area under the ROC curve of miR-146a was 0.917. The expression level of miR-146a in serum of patients in group B was significantly higher than that of group A ( $P < 0.05$ ). In addition, the expression level of miR-146a was significantly correlated with BASDAI ( $r = 0.5, P < 0.05$ ). **Conclusion** The expression of miR-146a in serum can be used as an auxiliary biomarker for the diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis. The expression level of miR-146a may also be related to the disease activity and the severity of thoracolumbar kyphosis.

**Keywords:** ankylosing spondylitis; miR-146a; biomarker; serum; kyphotic deformity

## 前言

强直性脊柱炎是一种侵犯骶髂关节、脊柱和髋关节为特点的慢性免疫性炎症疾病, 主要以过度的

骨形成和韧带骨赘为典型病变。强直性脊柱炎中新骨的形成最终会导致脊椎活动度的下降, 从而使患者的生活活动能力下降, 降低生活质量<sup>[1-3]</sup>。因此, 能在早期对强直性脊柱炎进行准确的诊断是治疗和预防该种疾病的有效手段。强直性脊柱炎患者发病之前通常会有 5~10 年的延迟期<sup>[4-6]</sup>。因此, 探索具有更高的灵敏性和特异性的早期强直性脊柱炎生物诊断标记物是非常迫切和重要的。目前, 早期强直性脊

**【收稿日期】**2017-06-26

**【作者简介】**叶安, 主治医师, E-mail: 3490037978@qq.com

**【通信作者】**李晶, 博士, 教授, E-mail: jingli1969@126.com

柱炎的诊断主要根据临床、影像学、生化检查进行有限诊断,如炎症性腰痛,单侧或双侧骶髂关节炎的检测,根据HLA-B27是否阳性,C反应蛋白(CRP)水平是否升高和红细胞沉降率等<sup>[7-8]</sup>。近期小RNA的发现为癌症和其他疾病的诊断开辟了一条新的研究途径。miRNA是一类通过转录抑制或诱导信使RNA降解从而进行基因表达的负调控作用的非编码RNA。越来越多的证据显示,miRNA在血浆、血清、唾液、尿液及其他形式的体液中稳定存在<sup>[9]</sup>。血清中miR-146a的表达检测可能作为强直性脊柱炎诊断的辅助性生物学标记物<sup>[10-14]</sup>。本研究通过检测外周血清中miR-146a的表达,探讨其在强直性脊柱炎中的改变及潜在的诊断价值,旨在为强直性脊柱炎的早期诊断提供重要的依据。

## 1 材料与方法

### 1.1 测试者

2014年1月~2016年2月中南大学湘雅二医院70名强直性脊柱炎患者及同期健康体检者68名。强直性脊柱炎纳入标准:(1)其诊断符合修订的强直性脊柱炎纽约分类标准;(2)具有全脊椎前后及侧面的整个旋转X光片;(3)具有视觉模拟量表(VAS)、强直性脊柱炎疾病活动度指数(BASDAI)、强直性脊柱炎相关放射学指数(BASRI-SJ)和Bath强直性脊柱炎功能指数(BASFI)等评估疾病的活动度、严重性程度和功能状态的指标;(4)ESR、CRP和HLA-B27均可检测。全脊柱侧位片由改良Stoke强直性脊柱炎脊柱评分计算。依据此方法,椎体前角(VCS)的颈椎和腰椎节段(共24个VCS)以侧视图来判断是否具有骨侵蚀、硬化、椎体四方化(1分)、韧带骨赘(2分)和桥接的骨赘(3分)。总得分的范围为0~72。每位受试者抽取静脉血5 mL,收集血清,凝血样本需立即3 000 r/min离心15 min,收集血清,储存于-80℃备用。受

试者均签署书面的知情同意书。

### 1.2 方法

**1.2.1 一般资料收集** 所有患者均记录年龄、性别、身高、体质量、病程、BASDAI和BASFI等一般情况,并计算体质量指数(BMI)。

**1.2.2 miR-146a检测** 所有测试者均采集外周血4 mL,EDTA抗凝,分离血清,应用miRNeasy Mini Kit试剂盒进行总RNA的提取,miScript II RT Kit逆转录cDNA,RT-PCR检测miRNA逆转录反应完成后,按SYBR Green EXScript™ PCR Kit操作程序进行PCR扩增,以U6为内参,检测miR-146a的表达量。用于扩增miR-146a及内参U6的引物由德国Qiagen公司完成。每个标本均做2个复孔,反应结束后作溶解曲线分析。

**1.2.3 其他检查** 强直性脊柱炎患者根据胸腰段后凸畸形(GK)的严重程度分为2组:轻度畸形(A组):GK<70°;严重畸形(B组):GK≥70°。依据Cobb方法,基于全脊柱侧位X线光片,将最大倾斜上端椎骨的上终板和最大倾斜的下端椎骨的下终板之间的角度定义为Cobb角,其中A组32例,B组38例。

### 1.3 统计学分析

采用SPSS20.0软件进行统计学分析。计量资料用均数±标准差表示,组间比较采用独立样本 $t$ 检验,采用受试者工作特征(ROC)曲线下面积(AUC)探讨诊断价值,miR-146a表达水平与各指标的相关关系采用Pearson相关分析,miR-146a影响因素采用多元回归线性回归分析。 $P<0.05$ 显示具有显著性差异。

## 2 结果

### 2.1 两组一般资料及生化指标比较

两组年龄、BMI比较,差异无统计学意义( $P>0.05$ ),试验组HLA-B27、ESR、CRP、VAS、BASRI-SJ、BASFI、mSASSS高于对照组( $P<0.05$ ),见表1。

表1 两组一般资料及生化指标比较( $\bar{x} \pm s$ )

Tab.1 Comparison of general data and biochemical indexes between two groups ( $Mean \pm SD$ )

Group	Cases (male/ female)	Age/ years	BMI/ kg·m <sup>-2</sup>	Disease duration/ years	HLA-B27 (+) [cases(%)]	ESR/ mg·L <sup>-1</sup>	CRP/ mg·L <sup>-1</sup>	VAS	BASDAI	BASRI-SJ	BASFI	mSASSS
Experi- ment	67/3	34.5± 10.0	23.42±1.82	4.1±3.1	76(95)	43.1± 28.9	37.9± 35.5	6.4±2.2	4.4±1.9	2.3±1.4	83.9±14.8	17.9±15
Control	63/5	35.6±6.0	22.49±1.87	—	3(3.8)	13.1± 18.3	17.6± 15.2	1.4±1.2	1.4±0.9	0.3±0.4	23.9±4.8	7.9±0.5

BMI: Body mass index; HLA-B27: Human leucocyte antigen-B27; ESR: Erythrocyte sedimentation rate; CRP: C reactive protein; VAS: Visual analogue score; BASDAI: Bath ankylosing spondylitis disease activity index; BASRI-SJ: Bath ankylosing spondylitis radiology index for the spine; BASFI: Bath ankylosing spondylitis functional index; mSASSS: Modified stoke ankylosing spondylitis spine score

## 2.2 qRT-PCR 验证 miR-146a 的表达水平

通过qRT-PCR分别对70例强直性脊柱炎患者和68例正常对照组血清进行验证,miR-146a在强直性脊柱炎患者中的表达水平显著高于对照组( $P<0.05$ ,图1)。B组( $\text{Cobb}\geq 70^\circ$ )强直性脊柱炎患者血清中miR-146a的含量明显高于A组( $\text{Cobb}<70^\circ$ ),表明血清miR-146a的水平越高,患胸腰椎后凸畸形的风险越高( $P<0.05$ ,图2)。

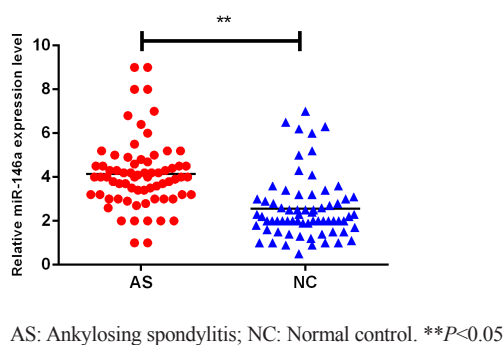


图1 两组miR-146a表达水平比较

Fig.1 Comparison of the expression levels of miR-146a in two groups

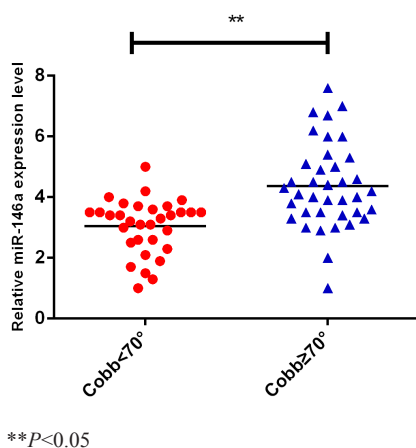


图2 试验组miR-146a表达水平比较

Fig.2 Comparison of the expression level of miR-146a in experiment group

## 2.3 miR-146a对强直性脊柱炎的诊断价值

ROC曲线分析曲线下面积(AUC)为0.917,其对强直性脊柱炎诊断的敏感性为83.8%,特异性为61.9%(95%CI:0.566~0.842,  $P<0.05$ ),见图3。

## 2.4 miR-146a表达水平与各指标的Pearson相关分析

miR-146a的表达水平同BASDAI呈显著相关性( $P<0.05$ ,  $r=0.69$ ),但是与BASFI无明显相关性( $P>0.05$ ,  $r=0.009$ )。早期强直性脊柱炎患者,miR-146a的表达水平同CRP和mSASSS呈显著相关性( $P<0.05$ ,  $r$ 分别为0.79、0.64),但与ESR、VAS和BASRI-SJ无相关性( $P>0.05$ ,  $r$ 分别为0.002、0.004、0.005)。

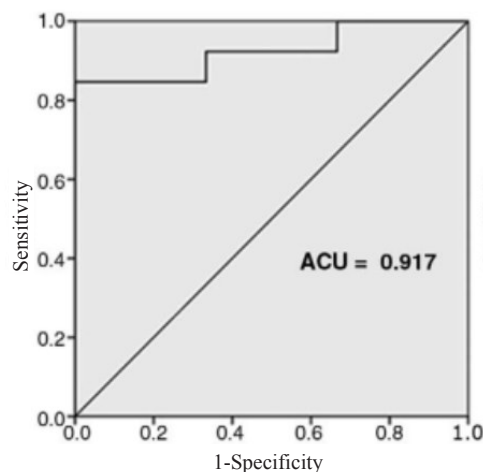


图3 miR-146a ROC曲线对强直性脊柱炎的诊断价值

Fig.3 Diagnostic value of miR-146a ROC curve for ankylosing spondylitis

## 3 讨论

目前为止只有一项研究报道过强直性脊柱炎患者中具有差异表达的miRNA,这项研究主要是对T细胞中miRNA的表达谱进行了分析,且样本量较少,强直性脊柱炎和对照组各5例<sup>[9]</sup>。从miR-146a ROC曲线结果可以将强直性脊柱炎患者组和对照组区分开来表明<sup>[8,15]</sup>,miR-146a可能作为强直性脊柱炎早期鉴定的潜在分子标记,但仍需要大量的血清样本来验证他的有效性。还需要研究miR-146a作用的靶基因是如何调控强直性脊柱炎患者自身免疫性炎症反应,这将为探究强直性脊柱炎疾病的发病机制、分子标记的筛选鉴定以及新的有效治疗方法奠定基础。

miR-146a的表达水平同BASDAI和CRP具有显著相关性,表明miR-146a可能具有精确诊断强直性脊柱炎疾病的潜能。BASDAI和CRP目前是临床上指示强直性脊柱炎的指标。由此研究可以得出,miR-146a可能作为强直性脊柱炎诊断的较准确的生物标记,并对强直性脊柱炎的预后也具有重要作用,可以作为未来治疗和诊断强直性脊柱炎疾病的预测生物标记。此外,在强直性脊柱炎患者早期,我们还发现miR-146a的表达水平与mSASSS具有一定的相关性,表明miR-146a也可能预测强直性脊柱炎患者的新骨形成,还需要长期的临床样本来进行结果的验证。值得注意的是,后凸度大于等于70°的强直性脊柱炎患者血清中miR-146a的含量明显高于后凸度小于70°的强直性脊柱炎患者,表明血清miR-146a的水平越高,患胸腰椎后凸畸形的风险越高。因为miR-146a的表达水平升高时,血液中免疫炎症因子的表达水平也异常升高。miR-146a高表达时同时会



增加促炎因子的表达,如IL-6和IL-23,这些炎症因子可以诱发自身反应性Th17细胞和TNF- $\alpha$ 的表达。IL-6和TNF- $\alpha$ 都是强直性脊柱炎疾病发生发展的重要细胞因子。因此,高表达miR-146a的强直性脊柱炎患者的脊椎、椎间盘及脊椎周围的软组织部分更容易发生自身免疫性反应疾病,从而导致胸腰椎后凸畸形的产生。

本研究发现miR-146a在强直性脊柱炎患者的血清中高表达。然而,在Tang等<sup>[16-17]</sup>的报道中显示miR-146a在系统性红斑狼疮(SLE)患者中的表达水平低于正常对照组。强直性脊柱炎和SLE均为系统性风湿性疾病<sup>[18-19]</sup>,但是miR-146a在这两种疾病中的表达情况并不一致。当然也有可能仅是反映了两种不同的临床病例之间的细胞因子的表达具有差异<sup>[20-21]</sup>,如异型干扰素在SLE疾病中发挥主要作用,TNF- $\alpha$ 、IL-1和IL-6则主要影响强直性脊柱炎疾病的发生发展<sup>[22-25]</sup>。

综上所述,miR-146a在强直性脊柱炎患者中特异的表达可以作为非侵袭性强直性脊柱炎诊断的辅助生物标记,从而推动血清中筛选疾病分子生物标记的研究。此外,miR-146a的表达水平同疾病的活动性、严重程度和结构损伤具有相关性。

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(编辑:黄开颜)