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## TNF- $\alpha$ 在抑郁症中的作用和机制研究

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**摘要:** 抑郁症是一种情感精神疾病, 临床上以显著而持久的心境低落为主要特征。抑郁症严重危害人们身心健康, 降低生活质量, 增加社会负担。抑郁的产生原因比较复杂, 发病机制存在多种假说。在过去的几十年, 虽然对于抑郁症的研究取得了一定的进展, 但其确切的病因及病理生理机制目前仍不明确。近期, 研究显示, 促炎性细胞因子, 尤其是肿瘤坏死因子- $\alpha$  (tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ , TNF- $\alpha$ ) 在抑郁症的发生、发展及临床药理机制中扮演着重要角色。现通过对 TNF- $\alpha$  的生物学特征、在抑郁症发病和抗抑郁治疗中的作用、基因多态性与抑郁症关联性以及未来的应用与展望等进行综述, 以期从多方面阐明 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症中的作用。

**关键词:** 抑郁症; 肿瘤坏死因子- $\alpha$ ; 病理生理; 多态性

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## Tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ and its role in depression

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**Abstract:** Depression is a mental disorder characterized by a pervasive and persistent low mood in clinic, which is associated with disability and reduced quality of life, as well as a significant social burden. Due to the multifactorial etiology factors of depression, there is a variety of pathogenesis hypothesis. Up to now, however, the pathogenesis of depression still remains poorly understood. Most recently, there is a great deal of evidence that the pro-inflammatory cytokines, specifically, tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ) play a critical role in the development of depressive disorders and the mechanism of antidepressant treatment. In this paper, we focus on recent progress of the relationship between TNF- $\alpha$  and depressive disorders, and illustrate its biological characteristics, role in the pathophysiology, genetic susceptibility and future applications.

**Key words:** depression; tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ ; pathophysiology; polymorphism

抑郁症是一种危害人类身心健康的慢性、易复发、常见的情感性精神障碍, 其核心症状包括情绪低落、精神萎靡、快感缺失、睡眠紊乱、认知功能障碍等<sup>[1-2]</sup>, 且常并发其他精神障碍和生理疾病<sup>[3]</sup>。抑郁症患者的社会功能呈现低下状态, 严重者会丧失生活工作能力, 甚至出现自杀观念和行<sup>[4]</sup>。抑郁症严重危害人们身心健康, 降低生活质量, 增加社会负担<sup>[5]</sup>。根据世界卫生组织的预测, 到2030年抑郁症会成为仅次于人类免疫缺陷病毒 (human immunodeficiency virus, HIV) 的世界第二大造成疾

病负担的原因<sup>[6]</sup>。但是, 目前为止, 抑郁症的发病机制仍不十分明确。抑郁症发病机理的假说包括<sup>[7-10]</sup>: 单胺类递质分泌减少及其突触传递效能减弱、下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺皮质轴的功能失调、应激环境与遗传因素相互作用使神经内分泌紊乱、抑制和兴奋

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性突触传递和突触可塑性异常,以及大脑皮层和边缘系统的结构功能环路异常等等<sup>[11]</sup>。

随着全球众多科研机构对抑郁症病因持续深入的研究和抑郁症临床诊断及治疗经验的不断积累,越来越多的证据提示,神经免疫系统和促炎性细胞因子,如肿瘤坏死因子- $\alpha$  (tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ , TNF- $\alpha$ ) 参与抑郁样症状的产生。TNF- $\alpha$  产生的失调被认为与多种疾病的发生、发展及转归密切相关<sup>[12-13]</sup>。虽然精神疾病领域的学者们一直对机体的炎症反应与抑郁症是否有因果联系争论不休,但当前的研究认为 TNF- $\alpha$  的水平与抑郁症相关<sup>[14-15]</sup>。抑郁症相关性的 Meta 分析(荟萃分析)显示:抑郁症患者 TNF- $\alpha$  水平显著高于健康人<sup>[16]</sup>。同时, GWAS 研究表明, TNF- $\alpha$  基因的多态性与抑郁症易感性相关<sup>[17]</sup>。此外, TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂能有效缓解患者及动物模型的抑郁样病态行为<sup>[18-19]</sup>。因此, TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症病因方面发挥着重要作用。本文通过对 TNF- $\alpha$  的生物学特征、在抑郁症病理生理学和抗抑郁治疗中的作用, TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性与抑郁症的关联性以及未来的研究进行综述,以期从多方面阐明 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症中的作用,从而进一步探讨其在抑郁症致病机制和治疗中的作用。

## 1 TNF- $\alpha$ 的生物学特征

人类 TNF- $\alpha$  基因位于 6 号染色体 (6p21.3), 全长约 2.77 kb, 由 3 个内含子和 4 个外显子组成, 编码的蛋白包括 76 个氨基酸残基组成的信号肽和由 157 个氨基酸残基组成的成熟肽, 后者相对分子质量约为  $1.735 \times 10^4$ <sup>[20]</sup>。由于没有蛋氨酸残基, 故不存在糖基化位点, 其中第 69 位和 101 位两个半胱氨酸形成分子内二硫键。TNF- $\alpha$  以二聚体、三聚体或五聚体的形式存在于溶液中。成熟型 TNF- $\alpha$  的活性形式为三聚体, 其立体结构与生物学活性紧密相关<sup>[21]</sup>。

TNF- $\alpha$  来源广泛, 体内的多种细胞均具有产生释放的能力, 如单核巨噬细胞、淋巴细胞、平滑肌细胞、成纤维细胞、神经细胞和脂肪细胞等<sup>[22]</sup>。TNF- $\alpha$  具有广泛的生物学功能, 在细胞的生长死亡、肿瘤的形成、免疫和应激反应等方面都具有重要的作用。TNF- $\alpha$  主要通过 3 种不同信号通路作用于细胞, 以实现其功能多样性: 胞外的 TNF- $\alpha$  与 TNFR 受体 (p55 或 p75) 致死域结合后招募 Fas 蛋白进入胞内, 随后激活 Caspase3 等下游分子并启动细胞凋亡; TNF- $\alpha$  使核转录因子- $\kappa$ B (nuclear factor-kappa B,

NF- $\kappa$ B) 的抑制蛋白磷酸化、泛素化从而发生降解, 并从 NF- $\kappa$ B 脱离而激活 NF- $\kappa$ B 转移到核内与特定的 DNA 序列结合, 启动或抑制基因的转录; TNF- $\alpha$  通过受体结合后导致结构发生改变, 使其偶联的蛋白激酶 Jak 磷酸化而激活多种转录因子 (AP-1、SP-1、c-myc), 从而影响细胞生存或死亡。

## 2 TNF- $\alpha$ 在抑郁症病理生理过程中的作用

近年研究表明, 抑郁症与炎症应答系统的激活有关, 是一种炎症性疾病<sup>[23-25]</sup>。TNF- $\alpha$  作为一种重要的促炎性因子, 参与免疫病理反应, 在机体免疫-炎症协调的信号网络调节中起重要作用。因此, TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症中的病理生理学作用得到广泛研究。

### 2.1 TNF- $\alpha$ 与抑郁症相关的动物和临床研究

早期抑郁相关动物实验中已经发现, 啮齿类动物注射内毒素或促炎性细胞因子诸如 IL-1 $\beta$ 、IL-6 后, 会出现一系列类似于抑郁症状的病态行为, 如疲劳、快感缺乏、厌食、嗜睡等, 甚至会伴有认知功能缺损<sup>[26-27]</sup>。后来, 大量动物研究证实了 TNF- $\alpha$  的升高可诱发抑郁样行为。如 Babri 等<sup>[28]</sup> 在研究早期感染对日后认知、行为及情感影响时发现, 新生幼鼠早期皮下注射 TNF- $\alpha$ , 成年后更容易表现出抑郁性症状, 且存在剂量依赖性和性别差异; 在对由 TNF- $\alpha$  诱导的抑郁动物进行研究时, 注射 TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂或抗抑郁药物使得模型组抑郁样行为(强迫游泳和糖水偏好实验中)减少<sup>[29-30]</sup>。最近 van Heesch 等<sup>[31]</sup> 研究表明, TNF- $\alpha$  可加快伏隔核内单胺类神经递质代谢, 影响脑中奖赏系统功能, 进而引发小鼠快感缺失。

大量临床病例-对照研究还发现, 抑郁症患者外周血和脑脊液中 TNF- $\alpha$ 、IL-1 和 IL-6 等细胞因子表达水平增加<sup>[15,32-33]</sup>。最近几项 Meta 分析结果显示, 抑郁症患者 TNF- $\alpha$  血清浓度显著升高<sup>[16,34]</sup>。这些研究结果提示, TNF- $\alpha$  可能在抑郁症病理生理机制上发挥着重要作用。

### 2.2 TNF- $\alpha$ 影响大脑的途径

Kleine 等<sup>[35]</sup> 证实脑内存在大量在结构和功能方面与巨噬细胞相似的细胞, 如星形胶质细胞、小胶质细胞、血管内皮细胞在生理状态下均可合成与分泌 TNF- $\alpha$ 、IL-6 等细胞因子。在炎症情况下, 这些因子水平多显著升高, 并对中性粒细胞有明显趋化作用。TNF- $\alpha$  对单胺类神经元既有神经保护作用又有神经毒性作用<sup>[36-38]</sup>。此外, TNF- $\alpha$  还能促进胶质细胞分泌一系列细胞因子, 促进神经营养因子分

泌及轴突生长,参与中枢神经系统发育等<sup>[39]</sup>。

外周血中 TNF- $\alpha$  主要通过以下几种途径跨越脑血屏障将信息传递到中枢神经系统 (central nervous system, CNS), 进而产生中枢效应<sup>[40-41]</sup>: (1) 快速传递通道, 与外周传入神经纤维 (如迷走神经) 上的细胞因子受体结合, 进而将信号传导到脑内相关区域, 如孤束核、下丘脑等; (2) 慢速传递通道, 血液中的细胞因子可从血脑屏障的某些缺失位点, 如脉络丛、脑室周器官和中隔等处, 扩散进入脑实质内; (3) 经由可饱和性转运体介导的主动运输或者与其受体结合进入相应脑区, TNF- $\alpha$  转运速率在各个脑区间存在差异, 其中下丘脑最高、前额叶皮质最低。以往研究者认为人脑是免疫豁免器官, 然而, 随着研究的深入, 学者们开始意识到细胞因子能作用于与抑郁症病理生理相关的伏隔核、杏仁核、海马及前额叶皮质等脑区, 通过一系列途径和胞内信号转导系统, 导致神经内分泌功能障碍、神经递质代谢障碍及神经可塑性异常等。

## 2.3 TNF- $\alpha$ 在抑郁症中可能的病理生理机制(图1)

### 2.3.1 TNF- $\alpha$ 促使下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺皮质轴(hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axi, HPA)功能亢进<sup>[42-44]</sup>

各种应激和损伤诱导促炎性细胞因子 TNF- $\alpha$  释放, 激活下丘脑室旁核中含促肾上腺皮质激素释放激素 (corticotropin releasing hormone, CRH) 神经元, 导致促肾上腺激素 (adrenocorticotrophic hormone, ACTH)、糖皮质激素 (glucocorticoids, GC) 浓度升高<sup>[45-46]</sup>。过多 GC 与海马内 GR 结合后, 导致海马神经元萎缩、凋亡及神经再生减少等一系列可塑性损伤, 使其对 HPA 轴的抑制作用减弱, 刺激 GR, 使 GR 数量和功能降低, 不能有效抑制 HPA 轴亢进, 使其功能更为亢进, 形成恶性循环<sup>[47]</sup>。HPA 轴功能亢进通过损伤脑海马, 导致以其为重要组成部分的情感调节中枢功能失常引发抑郁症, 与脑内单胺类神经递质相互作用, 参与抑郁症发病过程, 抑制褪黑激素的分泌, 导致抑郁症患者产生睡眠障碍和食欲减退症状<sup>[48-49]</sup>。

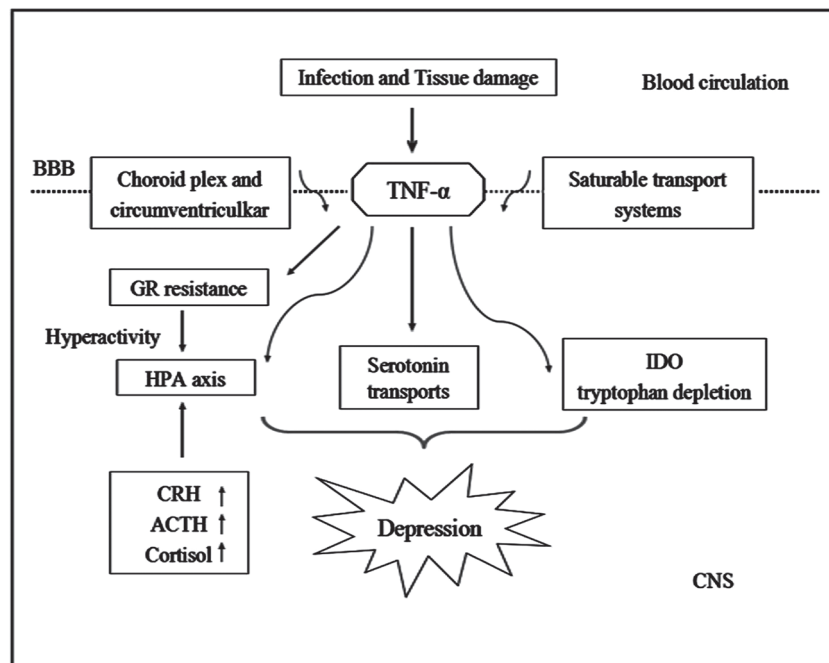


图1 TNF- $\alpha$ 在抑郁症中可能的病理生理机制

### 2.3.2 TNF- $\alpha$ 上调5-羟色胺转运体(serotonin transporter, SERT)活力

5-羟色胺 (5-hydroxytryptamine, 5-HT) 是一种广泛分布在动物中高度保守的传导神经信号的化学物质, 存在于大脑和消化道中, 在脑内可参与多种

生理功能及病理状态的调节, 包括情感、动机、认知、喂食、睡眠和伤害性感受等。5-HT 在发挥生理作用后灭活, 以免产生中毒反应及相应受体的脱敏, 这个过程主要依靠 5-HT 转运体来完成。5-HT 含量减少是抑郁症发病的重要原因之一, 而抗抑郁药物

选择性 5-羟色胺重摄取抑制剂 (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor, SSRI) 通过抑制 SERT 活性, 阻断 5-HT 再摄取, 从而提高突触间隙 5-HT 浓度, 进而缓解或治疗抑郁性症状<sup>[50]</sup>。动物和体外实验表明, TNF- $\alpha$  刺激小鼠中脑及纹状体突触体和大鼠胚胎中缝细胞系 5-HT 重摄取。Zhu 等<sup>[51]</sup> 进一步研究发现, TNF- $\alpha$  通过 p38 促分裂原活化蛋白激酶 (mitogen-activated protein kinase, MAPK) 介导的信号通路快速激活神经元 SERT, 调节中枢内 5-HT 的突触可利用度, 进而参与抑郁症进程。

### 2.3.3 TNF- $\alpha$ 激活吲哚胺 2,3-双加氧酶 (indoleamine 2,3-dioxygenase, IDO)

TNF- $\alpha$  通过信号转导及转录激活因子 1 (signal transducer and activators of transcription 1, STAT1)、干扰调节因子 1 (interferon regulatory factor 1, IRF1)、NF- $\kappa$ B 和 p38 MAPK 等激活炎症信号通路时激活 IDO<sup>[52]</sup>。IDO 是 5-HT 前体物质色氨酸沿犬尿氨酸 (kynurenine, KYN) 路径代谢的第一个限速酶, 广泛分布于多种细胞, 如巨噬细胞、内皮细胞、胶质细胞等。IDO 活性的增加将会导致 5-HT 前体色氨酸的耗竭, 转为合成 KYN。KYN 对神经递质的功能和行为也具有重要影响。例如, 在小鼠体内单独注射 KYN 能诱导出抑郁样行为<sup>[53]</sup>。此外, 基于相关代谢酶的表达差异, 在星形胶质细胞中 KYN 优先转换犬尿喹啉酸, 在小胶质细胞中则转化为喹啉 (quinolinic acid, QUIN)<sup>[54]</sup>。QUIN 是一种 NMDA (*N*-methyl-*D*-aspartic) 受体激动剂, 由于可以增加氧化应激而被认为具有神经毒性。

综上所述, TNF- $\alpha$  主要通过调节单胺类神经递质的合成、代谢与重摄取, 引起 HPA 轴的过度激活并使其负反馈调节受损, 活化 IDO 等机制参与抑郁症的形成。TNF- $\alpha$  是多功能细胞因子, 可介导多种信号传递通路发挥生物学效应。未来需继续探究 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症病因中的其他通路及之间的相互联系。此外, 需要进一步将 TNF- $\alpha$  与神经传递相结合, 细化其在抑郁症发病过程中对各个脑区及神经环路的影响作用。

## 3 TNF- $\alpha$ 基因多态性与抑郁症关联性研究

随着全基因组关联分析 (genome-wide association studies, GWAS) 在疾病遗传领域的广泛应用, 越来越多的研究证明, 基因的单核苷酸多态性 (single nucleotide polymorphism, SNP) 与疾病的发生、发展或疗效存在相关性<sup>[55]</sup>。TNF- $\alpha$  是一种具有广泛生物

学活性的细胞因子。一方面它调节机体的免疫功能, 另一方面则介导炎症过程、组织损伤、休克等病理生理反应。众多研究表明, TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性与传染性疾病、神经退行性疾病、心脑血管疾病、代谢综合征、肿瘤等相关<sup>[56-61]</sup>。关于抑郁症人群 TNF- $\alpha$  基因遗传易感性的研究也得到开展。

### 3.1 TNF- $\alpha$ 基因多态性

人类 TNF- $\alpha$  基因定位于染色体 6p 21.3, 位于 HLA-B 和 HLA-C 之间的 MHC-III 类基因区内, 现已发现有高度的基因多态性。目前为止, 已有 181 个 TNF- $\alpha$  基因的 SNPs 被收录在 NCBI 数据库中, 其中启动子区域有 11 个: 包括 -163G/A、-238G/A、-244A/G、-308G/A、-376G/A、-575A/G、-857C/T、-863C/A、-1031T/C、-1125G/C、-1196C/T<sup>[62]</sup>。在这些 SNPs 中, 研究最多的是 -308G/A 等位基因的多态性。由于 A 替代 G, 造成了限制性内切酶 *Nco*I 丧失了识别位点, 导致限制性片段长度多态性得以呈现。此外, 体外和临床试验证实 A 等位基因增加 TNF- $\alpha$  的转录和分泌<sup>[63-65]</sup>。鉴于 TNF- $\alpha$  以神经损伤为主的生物学活性, -308G/A 位点多态性可能与抑郁症关联。

### 3.2 TNF- $\alpha$ 基因多态性与抑郁症

关于 TNF- $\alpha$  基因 -308G/A (即 rs1800629) 多态性与抑郁症的相关性, 不同的课题组未得到一致结果 (表 1)。Jun 等<sup>[66]</sup> 在 2003 年首先对韩国人群中抑郁症患者与 rs1800629 多态性关联性进行病例-对照研究, 发现 TNF- $\alpha$  基因 -308G/A 位点 (rs1800629) 多态性与抑郁易感性相关。抑郁症患者组的 rs1800629 AA 基因型及 A 等位基因频率显著高于对照组, A 等位基因可能是抑郁症发病的风险因素。2012 年, Kim 等<sup>[67]</sup> 在脑卒中后抑郁症患者中证实了上述结论。2009 年, Clerici 等<sup>[68]</sup> 通过对双向情感障碍和抑郁症患者 TNF- $\alpha$  基因进行研究却发现, 病例组 rs1800629 A 等位基因携带率低于对照组。同年, Cerri 等<sup>[69]</sup> 研究表明, rs1800629 GG 基因型及 G 等位基因在意大利老年抑郁症患者有较高分布率, 携带 G 等位基因抑郁症发病风险增加。上述研究提示, 种族的差异可能影响了 rs1800629 在抑郁症发病中的作用。相反, Misener 等<sup>[70-71]</sup>、Haastруп 等<sup>[72]</sup> 及 Middle 等<sup>[73]</sup> 分别针对儿童期、单一发作和产后抑郁人群 TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性的研究显示, rs1800629 与抑郁症易感不存在相关性。2011 年, Bosker 等<sup>[74]</sup> 对 1 738 名抑郁症患者和 1 802 名健康者开展 GWAS 分析, 探究与抑郁症相关的基因。结果发现 TNF- $\alpha$

表1 TNF- $\alpha$ 基因多态性与抑郁症关联性研究

研究者	研究类型	SNP	人群	抑郁组/对照组	抑郁症诊断标准	参考文献
Jun等	病例-对照	-308G/A	韩国	108/125	DSM-IV	[66]
Kim等	病例-对照	-850C/T	韩国	77/199	DSM-IV	[67]
		-308G/A				
Clerici等	病例-对照	-308G/A	意大利	84/363	Physical examination	[68]
Cerri等	病例-对照	-308G/A	意大利	50/140	DSM-IV	[69]
Hastrup等	病例-对照	-308G/A	丹麦	288/335	ICD-10	[72]
		-238A/G				
Bosker等	GWAS	92 SNPs	—	1738/1802	—	[74]

基因 rs769178 多态性与抑郁症易感性相关。此外,多个课题组针对抑郁症患者开展的研究未发现 TNF- $\alpha$  基因上的其他多态性位点,如 -238G/A、-1031T/C、-857C/T 及 -850C/T 与抑郁症相关<sup>[67,71-72,75]</sup>。

TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性存在较大种族和地区差异,且抑郁症发病危险因素众多,因此,对于 TNF- $\alpha$  基因与抑郁症的关系,出现不同结论。此外, TNF- $\alpha$  基因与 TNF- $\beta$  和人类白细胞抗原 III 类基因紧密连锁<sup>[76]</sup>。将来应着力于在多地域、多民族、大样本、多位点中开展抑郁症人群 TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性的研究。此外, TNF- $\alpha$  基因多态性是否影响抑郁症治疗效果值得探究。

## 4 TNF- $\alpha$ 在抑郁症治疗中的作用

### 4.1 TNF- $\alpha$ 拮抗剂

由于 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症病理生理学中扮演着重要角色,科研机构开始关注 TNF- $\alpha$  抑制类药物能否缓解抑郁性症状。关于此方面的研究主要其中在慢性炎症性疾病并发抑郁症<sup>[77]</sup>。临床药物试验表明, TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂能有效改善慢性炎症性疾病相关的抑郁样行为。Tyring 等<sup>[78]</sup> 在一项随机双盲对照研究中,对 618 例银屑病给予 TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂依那西普 (Etanercept) 治疗 12 周, TNF- $\alpha$  治疗组汉密尔顿抑郁评分及贝克抑郁量表评分的改善程度均超过安慰剂对照组 50%,临床上疲劳感明显减轻。随后, TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂阿达木单抗 (Adalimumab) 和英夫利昔单抗 (Infliximab) 也被证实可以降低银屑病患者抑郁程度。两个独立的课题组分别于 2012 和 2013 年,单用 Infliximab 治疗抑郁症患者并发强直性脊柱炎后,患者抑郁样行为及社会功能明显改善<sup>[79-80]</sup>。上述研究为新型抗抑郁药物的研发开拓了思路,将来需要进一步探究 TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂治疗慢性炎症性疾病并发抑郁症的机制及在不同病因引发的抑郁症中是否具有疗效。

### 4.2 TNF- $\alpha$ 与抑郁症治疗效果的相关性

TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症病因和治疗慢性炎症性疾病并发抑郁中发挥着重要作用,而抗抑郁药物的治疗效果是否与 TNF- $\alpha$  水平相关,多项研究已经检测到患者抗抑郁治疗中 TNF- $\alpha$  的变化,结果各不相同。Tugla 等<sup>[81]</sup> 对接受 6 周 SSRIs 治疗后的抑郁症患者追踪时发现,治疗后 TNF- $\alpha$  水平显著降低,且接近健康人。Leo 等<sup>[82]</sup> 和 Sutcgil 等<sup>[83]</sup> 两个独立课题组也发现 SSRIs 治疗一段时间后,患者抑郁症状减轻,血清中 TNF- $\alpha$  明显降低。然而, Eller 等<sup>[84]</sup> 研究却发现 SSRIs 治疗后, TNF- $\alpha$  水平升高或者无变化。临床研究表明,采用抗抑郁药物 5-羟色胺及去甲肾上腺素再摄取抑制剂文拉法辛 (Venlafaxine) 治疗后,患者血清中 TNF- $\alpha$  变化无一致规律<sup>[85-87]</sup>。Rethorst 等<sup>[88]</sup> 对抗抑郁药物治疗失败而进行体育锻炼达 12 周以上患者的调查表明,随着抑郁症状减轻,血清 TNF- $\alpha$  下降。由于治疗周期、药物种类、患者耐药性等多种因素影响了患者治疗后 TNF- $\alpha$  水平,2011 年, Hannestad 等<sup>[34]</sup> 对抑郁症治疗的 Meta 分析表明,抗抑郁药物可以阻断 TNF- $\alpha$  介导的炎症信号通路对脑区的影响进而缓解抑郁性症状,但不能降低 TNF- $\alpha$  水平。换言之,血清中 TNF- $\alpha$  的降低并不能看作是抑郁症治疗效果的生物标记物。

## 5 未来应用与展望

近十几年,随着越来越多的研究显示了免疫系统在抑郁症的发生和发展过程中起着重要的作用,抑郁症越来越多地被学者认为是一种神经免疫紊乱性疾病。抑郁症涉及免疫多方面的变化,尤其是伴随着一些促炎性细胞因子的增加。TNF- $\alpha$  作为一种重要促炎性因子,与抑郁症发病、易感性及治疗密切相关。一些初步的研究已经报道了抗炎药对抑郁症的治疗作用。在埃默里大学,利用 TNF- $\alpha$  拮抗剂英夫利昔单抗 (Infliximab) 治疗难治性抑郁症疗效

评估的临床试验已即将完成(试行标识符 NCT-00463580, <http://clinicaltrials.gov>), 这为阻断促炎性细胞因子介导炎症信号通路诱发抑郁症的治疗提供了一条崭新途径。

基于 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症病理生理机制中的重要作用, 转化医学或许可以从其可能的作用机制中探索新的靶点药物的研究。抑郁症人群 TNF- $\alpha$  基因遗传易感性的研究也可以为抑郁症进行风险预测、诊断及个体化治疗策略提供重要线索。然而, 关于抑郁症 TNF- $\alpha$  的研究还需要很多的工作, 如 TNF- $\alpha$  作用于哪些确切的脑区, 它是通过什么确切信号通路调节抑郁症的病理机制, 抑郁症人群 TNF- $\alpha$  基因遗传易感性的分子机制。随着光遗传学、生物信息学、分子生物学和基因工程等技术的日趋发展、成熟和完善以及临床研究的不断深入, 不久的将来对于 TNF- $\alpha$  在抑郁症中作用的研究会有重大突破。

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