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母-胎免疫耐受机制研究现状与发展趋势

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摘要: 母 - 胎免疫耐受作为免疫学原理的唯一例外, 一直是生殖免疫学界备受关注的焦点问题。一个世纪以来, 人们对于母 - 胎免疫耐受建立和维持的机制有了越来越深入的认识。妊娠早期胎儿绒毛外滋养细胞(EVT)侵入蜕膜组织, 与母体蜕膜免疫细胞(DIC)及蜕膜基质细胞(DSC)直接接触, 建立精细的母 - 胎交互对话。在总结既往研究成果的基础上, 围绕母 - 胎界面关键的功能细胞, 基于母 - 胎交互对话阐明母 - 胎免疫耐受的建立和维持机制。其中, 对以滋养细胞为中心的母 - 胎界面固有免疫应答、母 - 胎界面适应性免疫应答及穿插于其中的协同刺激信号和趋化因子等方面进行概述, 以解析人早孕母 - 胎免疫耐受与胎盘形成机制, 为反复自然流产、子痫前期、胎儿宫内生长受限等疾患的防治提供新的思路。还将为移植免疫学、肿瘤免疫学的研究提供借鉴, 因此, 具有重要的理论意义和实际应用价值。

关键词: 母 - 胎免疫耐受; 母 - 胎界面; 滋养细胞; 蜕膜基质细胞; 蜕膜免疫细胞; 复发性流产; 子痫前期

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Current situation and development tendency of research on maternal-fetal tolerance

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Abstract: As the only exception to the immunological principles, maternal-fetal tolerance becomes the attention focus in the fields of reproductive immunology. An improved mechanistic understanding of maternal-fetal tolerance is emerging in the last century. The formation of a functional synapse of the invading fetal trophoblasts, decidual immune cells and decidual stromal cells has now been recognized. Here we review the previous research results, with a special focus on the establishment and maintenance mechanism of maternal-fetal tolerance based on the

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maternal-fetal crosstalk. Insights into maternal-fetal tolerance will not only improve our understanding of normal pregnancy but also would be helpful to novel therapeutic strategies of the pregnancy miscarriage, pre-eclampsia and IUGR.

Key words: maternal-fetal tolerance; maternal-fetal interface; trophoblasts; decidual stromal cells; decidual immune cells; recurrent spontaneous abortion; pre-eclampsia

胎儿和母体之间的相互作用是一个矛盾的免疫调节过程,一个世纪以前,免疫学家就开始探讨为什么作为同种移植植物的胎儿不被母体免疫系统排斥^[1]。妊娠早期胎儿绒毛外滋养细胞(EVT)侵入蜕膜组织,与母体蜕膜免疫细胞(DIC)及蜕膜基质细胞(DSC)直接接触,建立精细的母-胎交互对话^[2]。从免疫学角度来看,正常妊娠类似于成功的同种异体移植,母体对携带父系抗原的胚胎不仅不排斥,而且通过精细的母-胎对话建立独特的母-胎界面免疫耐受微环境,允许胎儿在子宫内生长发育直至分娩。代孕(surrogate pregnancy)的胎儿与母体HLA(人类白细胞抗原系统)完全不同,它的成功,进一步证实了妊娠期母体免疫系统对这种同种异体胚胎抗原的耐受^[3]。为揭示妊娠这一“天然移植”获得成功的潜在机理,众多学者进行了不懈的努力。虽然近年来取得了长足的进步,但这一领域尚有许多重要的科学问题亟待回答。

母-胎免疫耐受作为传统免疫学原理的唯一例外,一直是生殖免疫学界备受关注的焦点问题。有关母-胎免疫耐受的理论追溯到20世纪50年代,诺贝尔奖获得者Medawar曾提出3种理论解释作为半同种移植植物的胎儿如何逃逸母体免疫系统的攻击^[4]:其一,胎盘屏障学说;第二,胎儿的抗原不成熟学说;第三是母体子宫的免疫特许。这3种理论曾一度推动了生殖免疫学的发展,至今对该领域的研究仍有重要的指导意义。然而,随着生殖免疫学的飞速发展,后来的研究使得这些观点受到质疑和挑战。本文在总结既往研究成果的基础上,围绕母-胎界面关键的功能细胞,阐明基于母-胎交互对话的母-胎免疫耐受的建立和维持机制。其中,以滋养细胞为中心的母-胎界面固有免疫应答、母-胎界面适应性免疫应答及穿插于其中的协同刺激信号和趋化因子等方面进行概述。

1 母-胎界面的组成与功能

正常生理妊娠类似于同种异体移植,胚胎作为自然同种移植植物不被母体免疫排斥是免疫学理论的唯一例外,实际上反映了母体对胚胎抗原的免疫耐

受;而妊娠失败意味着母体对胚胎的免疫排斥。成功妊娠是一个非常复杂的生物学调控过程,它不仅需要母体耐受作为同种移植植物的胎儿,还要依赖发育正常的胎盘和功能正常的蜕膜。母-胎界面是妊娠维持的核心结构,其细胞组成相当复杂,根据其来源大致可分为3类:第一类是侵入蜕膜的绒毛外滋养细胞,第二类为髓源性蜕膜免疫活性细胞,第三类为蜕膜基质细胞(DSC)及腺上皮细胞。后两类细胞又可统一概括为母体来源的细胞。在正常妊娠过程中,妊娠期内分泌和免疫细胞均参与母-胎界面胎盘血管重塑的调节;在内分泌激素的主导作用下,启动血管重塑的滋养细胞通过招募外周免疫细胞到达蜕膜局部,共同参与蜕膜化过程的调节;蜕膜化的基质细胞和滋养细胞交互作用促使免疫细胞驻留在蜕膜局部并进一步训导其功能,从而营造母-胎免疫耐受微环境,以维持成功妊娠。滋养细胞增殖与侵入不足,蜕膜螺旋动脉形成不良、母-胎耐受的失调节可导致自发流产、子痫前期、胎儿宫内生长受限等疾患^[5-6]。

来源于胎儿的滋养细胞沿两条通路分化,合体滋养细胞主要参与营养物质和代谢物质的转运并执行胎盘的内分泌功能;而绒毛外滋养细胞(EVT)具有侵袭力,向子宫间质和螺旋动脉腔内呈侵袭性生长,取代螺旋动脉血管内皮并导致血管重塑,向胎儿提供氧和营养物质^[7]。滋养细胞是唯一与母体蜕膜免疫细胞直接接触的胚胎细胞,与母体免疫细胞直接接触并被其有效识别。滋养细胞的迁移与侵袭是胚泡着床、胎盘发育并建立母-胎关系的关键步骤,在母-胎免疫耐受中起着至关重要的作用^[8]。

母-胎界面既往许多研究工作聚焦于胎儿来源的滋养细胞,而另一群特殊的母体来源的细胞DSC(蜕膜的主要组成细胞),具有广泛的生物学功能,除参与蜕膜营养供应外,尚能分泌活性激素、多种细胞因子和酶类,表达孕激素受体,调节胚泡着床与胎盘的形成。作为一种免疫潜能细胞,参与抗原提呈及分泌细胞因子,从而发挥重要的免疫调节作用。作为母-胎界面的两种主要组成细胞,DSC与滋养细胞直接接触,它们之间的相互作用是母-胎

免疫调节的重要组成部分^[19]。胎儿绒毛外滋养细胞EVT能与母体DSC形成桥粒连接^[10],提示滋养细胞与DSC细胞之间确实存在对话与交流,而且这种对话与交流对于正常妊娠的维持至关重要。

蜕膜免疫细胞群是形成母-胎免疫耐受的基础,主要由特殊类型的NK细胞(CD56^{bright}/CD16⁻)(~70%)、T细胞(~10%)和单核细胞(~10%)组成,它们通过表达特殊活化标志和产生大量的细胞因子,在母-胎界面局部发挥着不同于外周的免疫调节作用,形成固有的Th2型和Treg免疫优势^[11-12];通过旁分泌作用调控滋养细胞的生长、分化和迁移^[13],从而对妊娠的维持起重要的局部调节作用。而母-胎界面微环境同时又可能参与母体免疫细胞的功能训导,早孕滋养细胞可以通过训导和调节蜕膜DC细胞、T细胞及其相互作用,诱导母-胎界面调节性Th2与Treg细胞优势分化^[14-15],有助于维持母-胎界面免疫耐受状态。

2 母-胎界面固有免疫应答

2.1 母-胎界面NK细胞的募集及其功能

妊娠早期孕卵着床后,在雌、孕激素作用下,内膜间质细胞分化成为富含糖原的DSC^[16],与此同时,胚泡发育形成胚胎及EVT^[8]。EVT和DSC表达多种趋化因子及其受体,趋化因子配受体的相互作用不仅介导了EVT向蜕膜的侵袭,还解释了母-胎界面大量存在的免疫细胞的募集方式。蜕膜NK细胞(decidual NK, dNK)以其绝对组成优势(约占蜕膜免疫细胞的70%)与独特的表型(CD56^{bright}CD16^{dim}、抑制性受体和活化性受体库)在母-胎耐受中发挥至关重要的调节作用^[17]。蜕膜NK的富集通常认为有局部产生和外周募集两种方式。外周血CD56^{bright}CD16^{dim}NK通常表达CXCR3和CXCR4;而DSC和EVT上表达的相应趋化因子配体与之相互作用募集了外周NK到达母-胎界面局部^[18-19]。此外,CCR1、CCR2、CXCR1及CX3CR1也参与了dNK的募集^[20]。DSC和EVT可以产生TGF-β1和IL-5,促进造血干细胞向NK分化^[21-22],进一步解释了NK细胞在母-胎界面富集的缘由。

EVT不表达经典的MHC I、II类分子^[23],从而逃逸了母体对胎儿同种异体移植物的排斥;但完全缺乏MHC I类分子的胚胎细胞易被NK细胞识别并杀伤。EVT细胞表面可特异性表达非经典的MHC I类抗原,如HLA-G、HLA-E及HLA-C^[24]。在早孕期蜕膜广泛分布的NK细胞特征性表达杀伤

细胞抑制性受体KIR。KIR在滋养细胞表达的HLA-G、HLA-C启动下,向细胞内转导相应抑制性信号,使这些母-胎界面重要的杀伤细胞非但不能有效杀伤胚胎来源的细胞,相反对其行使免疫保护作用^[25-26]。一旦滋养细胞表面HLA分子或NK表面的抑制性受体表达异常,NK即可对滋养细胞进行攻击^[27]。dNK亦表达NKP46、NKG2D、NKP44等,但其细胞毒作用明显减弱,以分泌细胞因子为主要功能,而外周NK细胞(CD56^{dim}CD16⁺)以杀伤功能为主^[28]。dNK本身也能表达多种细胞因子,调控滋养细胞的侵袭,促进胎盘血管形成^[29]。

2.2 母-胎界面单核细胞及树突状细胞的募集及其功能

母-胎界面的单核细胞也通过滋养细胞表达的趋化因子募集。CD14⁺蜕膜巨噬细胞(dMφ)可以表达dNK上不表达的CXCR6,与滋养细胞表达的CXCL16相互作用趋化到母-胎界面局部^[30]。dMφ参与蜕膜化的进程,促进螺旋动脉重塑,利于妊娠的维持^[31]。在母-胎界面,巨噬细胞主要为产生抗炎细胞因子(如IL-10)为主的M2细胞,而不是以分泌促炎细胞因子(如TNF、IL-12)为主的M1细胞^[32]。M2细胞高表达清道夫受体、甘露糖受体等,精氨酸酶活性增强,从而具有较高的组织修复能力^[33]。dMφ亚群失调将导致复发性流产的发生^[34]。

单核细胞可以分化成为树突状细胞(DC),CCR1~7参与了DC的募集,其中CCR1和CCR2也介导dMφ在母-胎界面的富集^[20]。DC在母-胎界面局部具有双重作用,一方面,通过诱导效应性T细胞凋亡和调节性T细胞(Treg)扩增进而促进母-胎免疫耐受;另一方面,又作为抗原提呈细胞活化引流淋巴结的T细胞,促进T细胞免疫应答^[35]。正常妊娠时,母-胎界面DC抗原提呈效力减弱,协同共刺激分子表达降低,IL-12产生减少,而IL-10表达增加,从而形成耐受表型,利于母体耐受作为同种移植植物的胚胎^[36]。

3 母-胎界面适应性免疫应答

3.1 母-胎界面辅助性T细胞(Th)的募集及其功能

初始CD4⁺T细胞接受抗原刺激后,首先分化为Th0细胞,在不同细胞因子作用下,分化为Th1、Th2、Th17及Treg细胞,发挥不同生物学作用。在母-胎界面,Th1、Th2、Th17及Treg之间存在着平衡机制,共同维持正常妊娠^[6]。EVT及DSC表达的趋化因子依然是募集T细胞到达母-胎界面的

主要因素^[37]。胚胎抗原特异性的效应性T细胞在母-胎界面的聚集将导致胚胎排斥。尽管DSC表达CXCR3的配体CXCL9和CXCL10,但与外周相比,母-胎界面CXCR3⁺效应性T细胞数量明显减少^[38]。妊娠时DSC编码CXCL9和CXCL10的基因发生甲基化,进一步减少了母-胎界面对Th1细胞的募集。与此同时,EVT和蜕膜腺上皮细胞高表达Th2型趋化因子CCL17,进而募集表达CCR4的Th2细胞至母-胎界面^[39];此外,EVT可以训导蜕膜DC表达CCL17,进一步募集Th2细胞^[44]。妊娠期,在蜕膜免疫细胞群中CD4⁺CD25⁺Treg比例明显高于外周^[40],形成母-胎界面Treg扩增优势。主要表达于腺上皮的CCL19通过识别外周Treg表面CCR7,趋化外周Treg到达蜕膜局部^[41];子宫局部表达的CCL2、CCL4、CCL17、CCL20、CCL22也参与了对外周Treg的募集^[20];EVT表达的CXCL12可以进一步促进Treg细胞的迁移^[42]。DSC通过分泌CCL2趋化外周Th17细胞到达母-胎界面^[43]。

1993年,Wegmann等^[44]首次提出,母-胎界面是Th2型占优势的免疫微环境。尽管在妊娠早期,子宫局部炎性微环境利于胚泡的种植^[45],Th1型免疫应答及其相关细胞因子,如IL-2、IFN-γ和TNF-α等对胚胎具有细胞毒作用,不利于妊娠维持;而Th2型免疫应答及其相关细胞因子,如IL-4、IL-10、TGF-β2等对妊娠具有免疫营养和保护作用^[44]。正常妊娠模型小鼠母-胎界面呈现典型的Th2型免疫优势,一旦这种Th2型免疫优势被打破,自然流产的发生率显著增加^[46]。给予孕鼠Th2型细胞因子IL-10或Th1型细胞因子TNF-α的拮抗剂可以抑制LPS引起的妊娠失败^[47-48]。这些研究均提示母-胎界面Th2型免疫优势是成功妊娠的关键。除了对外周Th2细胞的直接募集外,DSC通过分泌CCL2降低母-胎界面Th1型细胞因子,同时增加Th2型细胞因子的产生;Th2型细胞因子又促进DSC分泌CCL2从而形成正反馈,进一步促进母-胎界面Th2型免疫偏移^[49-50]。此外,EVT表达的CXCL16可以识别γδT细胞上的CXCR6并促进其分泌IL-10^[51];孕激素可以减少促炎性细胞因子的产生,促进Th2型免疫应答^[52]。由此可见,妊娠期多方面因素共同作用形成了母-胎界面Th2型免疫偏移,维持母-胎免疫耐受。

2004年,研究证实Treg参与介导了母-胎免疫耐受^[53],Treg主要通过两种机制发挥免疫调节作用:通过分泌多种抑制性细胞因子,如IL-10、

TGF-β等,间接发挥免疫调节作用;通过细胞与细胞之间的直接接触发挥免疫调节作用,这种调节作用需要通过TCR的刺激表达CTLA-4后,与其他细胞直接接触发挥免疫调节作用^[54]。近年研究发现,妊娠期母体外周血、蜕膜以及胎儿的脐带血都有CD4⁺CD25⁺Treg的扩增,在母-胎免疫调节中发挥重要的作用^[55]。非常有趣的是Treg在正常妊娠组显著高于自然流产模型组,且过继转输Treg至流产模型小鼠可改善妊娠预后^[56]。妊娠前或妊娠早期删除Treg可导致孕鼠胚胎吸收率增高^[57],提示CD4⁺CD25⁺调节性T细胞不但参与了母-胎免疫耐受机制的形成,而且对其维持有重要作用。除了通过趋化因子配受体的相互作用募集Treg之外,早孕期EVT可以通过训导蜕膜DC分泌TGF-β1促进CD4⁺CD25⁺T向CD4⁺CD25⁺Treg分化,进一步形成母-胎界面Treg扩增优势^[15],发挥免疫调节作用。

Th17细胞通常被认为是介导炎症性疾病及自身免疫性疾病的“罪魁祸首”^[58-59],应该处于母-胎免疫耐受的对立面。现已证实妊娠期母-胎界面存在Th17细胞^[60],Th17细胞通过分泌IL-17促进EVT的侵袭并抑制其凋亡^[43],IL-17还可以增加人滋养细胞系JEG-3细胞孕激素的分泌^[61]。因此,Th17细胞参与了妊娠的生理过程。然而,Th17细胞的过度激活及数量增多可以导致复发性自然流产和子痫前期等妊娠并发症^[62],在正常妊娠时,CD4⁺CD25⁺Treg可以通过细胞与细胞之间的直接接触抑制Th17过度活化并减少Th17细胞IL-17的分泌,而这种调节平衡在复发性自然流产患者中被打破^[63],表明适当的Th17细胞免疫应答在妊娠维持中发挥积极作用。

母-胎界面辅助性T细胞的功能平衡还与协同共刺激分子、抑制性分子的作用相关。协同刺激信号CD80/CD86—CD28/CTLA-4在T细胞活化、增殖及辅助性T细胞的分化中起重要调节作用。自然流产患者蜕膜CD86转录水平明显高于正常早孕期蜕膜,而CTLA-4转录水平则低于正常早孕期蜕膜^[64]。在着床期阻断CD86协同刺激信号,能够恢复母体对胚胎抗原的免疫活化与免疫抑制间的生理平衡,促进Th2型免疫偏移和Treg扩增优势,诱导母体对胚胎抗原的免疫耐受,最终改善妊娠预后^[65-66]。蜕膜Treg可以表达糖皮质激素诱导的肿瘤坏死因子受体相关蛋白OX40及抑制性受体CTLA-4^[67],Treg表达的CTLA-4可以促进蜕膜DC和单核细胞表达吲哚胺2,3双加氧酶(indoleamine

2,3-dioxygenase, IDO)^[68]。IDO 是肝脏以外唯一可催化色氨酸沿犬尿酸途径分解代谢的限速酶，在哺乳动物的组织细胞，尤其是淋巴组织和胎盘中广泛存在，活化后导致组织细胞局部色氨酸饥饿，从而启动相应靶细胞的凋亡^[69]。母-胎界面较高水平表达 IDO，是母-胎界面局部抑制母体针对胚胎抗原毒性 T 细胞效应的重要分子^[70]，抑制 IDO 活性将导致流产^[71]。母-胎界面还表达 L- 精氨酸酶、PDL-1、CD95L 等抑制母体 T 细胞的过度活化，避免母体对胚胎的排斥，促进母-胎免疫耐受^[72-74]。

3.2 母-胎界面 CD8⁺T 细胞和 B 细胞功能

相对于 CD4⁺T 细胞，妊娠期 CD8⁺T 细胞功能研究相对较少。删除 CD8⁺T 细胞可以废除孕激素的保胎作用，这一效应通过改变 Th1/Th2 型细胞因子比例实现^[75]。而正常妊娠时蜕膜局部 CD4⁺CD25⁺T 和 CD8⁺CD28T 细胞（调节性 CD8⁺T 细胞）的数量都增加^[76]，EVT 的存在也进一步促进了调节性 CD8⁺T 细胞的活化^[77]。此外，调节性或抑制性 CD8⁺T 细胞可能影响 B 细胞产生抗体^[2]，因此有学者认为调节性或抑制性 CD8⁺T 细胞在母-胎免疫耐受的建立和维持中发挥作用。B 细胞在母-胎界面含量极少^[78]，并且有文献报道孕鼠骨髓中胚胎抗原特异性的 B 细胞被系统删除^[79]，同时妊娠期增加的雌激素可以抑制 B 淋巴细胞增殖^[80]。含量极少的 B 细胞可以减少体液免疫应答对于胚胎抗原的损害，促进母-胎免疫耐受。

4 母-胎免疫耐受失衡与妊娠期相关疾病

4.1 母-胎免疫耐受失衡与自发流产

自发流产是妊娠最常见的并发症，除少数患者可查明病因如染色体异常、生殖道畸形等，大部分病因不明^[81]。自发流产患者蜕膜局部与外周 Th1、Th2、Th17 及 Treg 细胞亚群平衡失调，表现为促炎性 Th1、Th17 比例增高，耐受性 Th2、Treg 比例下降与功能缺陷^[82]；母-胎界面细胞因子格局也发生改变，表现为 IFN-γ/IL-4、TNF-α/IL-4、TNF-α/IL-10 比例升高^[83]；TGF-β1 及 IDO 等免疫抑制性分子降低，经典的协同刺激分子表达上升，提示这些分子可能参与自发流产的发生^[83-84]。某些关键抗炎性细胞因子，如 IL-10 基因敲除小鼠妊娠失败率明显增加^[85]；过继转输 Treg 可挽救濒临死亡的小鼠胚胎^[86]；滋养细胞表面 HLA 分子或 NK 表面的抑制性受体表达异常，NK 即可发挥毒性作用，可导致自发流产^[87]。蜕膜局部 Galectin-1 表达下降、

DC 细胞数量减少也与自发流产有关^[36, 88]。至此，可以认为母-胎免疫失衡与自发流产密切相关，但仍然需要更深入地研究探讨免疫耐受失衡是导致自发流产的直接因素，还是自发流产引发各种生理失衡的表现之一。

4.2 母-胎免疫耐受失衡与子痫前期

子痫前期 (PE) 发病率高达 5%~7%^[82]，是全球范围内导致孕妇死亡的首要原因。尽管 PE 发生的确切机制不明，通常认为慢性炎症、滋养细胞侵袭不足、胎盘血管重塑障碍是导致 PE 的重要原因^[27, 89]。滋养细胞表达的 HLA-C1、C2、G、E 与 NK 表面的抑制性受体 KIR2DL1、KIR2DL2 结合，抑制 NK 杀伤活性，一旦这种识别发生异常，NK 即可对滋养细胞进行攻击，发生 PE^[27]。2013 年，Freitag 等^[90] 研究显示，PE 患者局部与外周血 NK 异常活化，Galectin-1 表达下降，引起促炎性的 Th1 型免疫应答。正常妊娠时外周血 Treg/Th17 比例上升，但在 PE 患者并未观察到这一现象^[91]。PE 患者蜕膜局部与外周辅助性 T 细胞亚群平衡失调，表现为促炎性 Th1、Th17 转录因子表达升高，Treg 转录因子表达降低，表明 PE 患者以 Th1 和 Th17 型免疫应答为主，同时 Treg 数量和功能下降^[92]。

5 结语与展望

母-胎免疫调节是当生殖免疫学领域最为重要，并且是十分活跃的研究方向，研究母体免疫系统针对胚胎作为同种抗原特异性免疫耐受的形成过程及规律意义重大，一旦这种免疫耐受形成障碍，则导致母体免疫排斥同种异体胎儿。妊娠作为一种特殊的同种异体移植物，不同于人类所从事的任何一种同种异体移植物，根本区别在于来源于胚胎的滋养细胞通过表达细胞表面分子及释放可溶性细胞因子，参与调节及训导母体来源的免疫细胞，使之对胚胎抗原呈现特异性免疫耐受，其中确切的分子调控机制尚有待进一步深入研究。就整个世界而言，生殖免疫学研究队伍还很弱小，但面临的科学问题对于生命科学领域非常重要，母-胎免疫调节机制的研究对于移植免疫学、肿瘤免疫学及自身免疫性疾病防治新策略的研究具有重要的学术价值。相信未来生殖免疫学将有长足进步和光明的未来。

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