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靶向A型红细胞生成素肝配蛋白受体-2 治疗肿瘤的研究进展

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摘要: 基于肿瘤和正常组织基因差异表达开发的靶向药在临幊上获得巨大成功。A型红细胞生成素肝配蛋白受体2(EphA2)在多种人类肿瘤中高表达,发挥驱动肿瘤增殖、迁移和侵袭的癌基因功能,有作为肿瘤治疗靶点的潜力。靶向EphA2可有效抑制肿瘤生长,并恢复耐药肿瘤细胞对药物的敏感性。该文详细介绍了EphA2靶点结构和双向调控信号的机制,深入探讨了不同途径在其靶向治疗中的优势和复杂性,概述了EphA2靶向治疗的最新临幊前进展,以及未来临幊应用的潜力。

关键词: EphA2; 肿瘤; 靶向治疗

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Progress for targeting erythropoietin-producing hepatocellular receptor A2 in cancer-specific therapy

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Abstract: Targeted drugs developed based on the differential gene expression between cancerous and normal tissues have achieved significant success in clinical settings. Erythropoietin-producing hepatocellular receptor A2 (EphA2) has been found to be highly expressed in various human tumors, and plays a role as an oncogene driving tumor proliferation, migration, and invasion, making it a promising therapeutic target for cancer treatment. Targeting EphA2 can effectively inhibit tumor growth and restore drug sensitivity in drug-resistant tumor cells. This review provided a detailed overview of the mechanisms underlying EphA2 targeting, including its target structure and bidirectional regulatory signals, and investigated the advantages and complexities of strategies targeting EphA2 through canonical and noncanonical signaling pathways. Furthermore, it summarized the latest preclinical advancements in EphA2-targeted therapy and discussed its potential for future clinical applications.

Key words: EphA2; tumor; targeted therapy

肾上腺素受体(Eph)家族是受体酪氨酸激酶(RTK)家族中最大的亚家族。到目前为止,已发现14种Eph受体,包括EphA(EphA1~A8、A10)和EphB(EphB1~B4、B6)^[1-3]。Eph受体的配体Ephrin,按照其在细胞膜上固定方式的不同分为两类:通过糖基磷脂酰肌醇(glycosylphosphatidylinositol, GPI)固定的膜表面蛋白EphrinA和跨膜结合蛋白EphrinB^[4-5]。

Eph-Ephrin信号通路参与多种生物学过程,包括调节组织边界的形成^[6]、神经嵴细胞迁移^[7]、轴突引

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导及胚胎分割^[8-10]等。同时,在多种恶性肿瘤中发现Eph蛋白差异表达^[11-13]。特别是EphA2,除了可以维持胚胎晶状体和肾脏发育、乳腺上皮分支形态发生和血管生成等正常功能^[14],EphA2-EphrinA1信号通路已被证实对肿瘤发生和发展起到重要的调控作用^[15-16],从而引起越来越多的关注。本综述将重点研究EphA2在肿瘤中差异表达的临床相关性以及EphA2-EphrinA1信号通路在肿瘤进展中的作用,并讨论了基于EphA2靶向治疗干预的潜在机会。

1 EphA2的结构

EphA2是一个含有976个氨基酸残基,分子量为130 kDa的I型跨膜糖蛋白^[17]。它的结构包括胞外区、近膜结构域和胞内区。N端的胞外区含有1个生长因子样基序(EGF)和2个纤维连接蛋白III型重复序列(FNIII1和FNIII2),而C端的胞内区则是与下游信号相互作用并转导的蛋白质的结合点,包括1个酪氨酸激酶结构域(KD)、1个SAM无活性α基序和1个PDZ结合基序^[18-20]。EphA2的近膜结构域具有两个自磷酸化位点(Y588和Y594),可与含有SH2结构域的鸟嘌呤核苷酸交换因子Vav2/3结合,KD结构域上的Y735和SAM结构域上的Y930磷酸化有助于其与磷脂酰肌醇3-激酶(PI3K)

的p85调节亚基相互作用,均可导致Ras相关C3肉毒菌毒素底物1(Rac1)的激活和下游信号的传导,促进EphrinA1诱导的血管生成^[21-23]。即抑制这三个位点(Y588、Y594和Y735)的磷酸化可以限制Rac1诱导板状伪足形成和膜皱褶的能力,使内皮细胞无法在体外迁移和血管生成,从而抑制肿瘤生长和细胞体内转移^[21]。SAM与KD连接结构域的S897是蛋白激酶C(PKC)的靶点,PKC通过激活ERK及其下游激酶RSK磷酸化S897^[24-25],同时S897也可被AKT、PKA磷酸化^[26-27],从而增强使肿瘤细胞恶性的EphA2非经典信号转导,促进了肿瘤细胞的侵袭和转移^[25, 28]。通过磷酸化负电荷干扰SAM与KD连接结构域,可减少S897磷酸化,增加受体二聚体的稳定性,保持EphA2细胞内区域封闭构象,抑制非经典信号通路^[29](图1)。

2 EphA2在癌症中的过表达

虽然EphA2最初是在胚胎发生过程中的神经元迁移背景下研究的,但它现在已经被证实可以调节肿瘤细胞的生长、迁移、侵袭和血管生成^[30],EphA2作为致癌靶点在子宫颈^[31]、卵巢^[32-33]、乳腺^[34]、肺^[35]、前列腺^[36-37]、大肠^[38]、食管^[39]等多种肿瘤类型中相对于其正常组织高表达^[40],尤其是

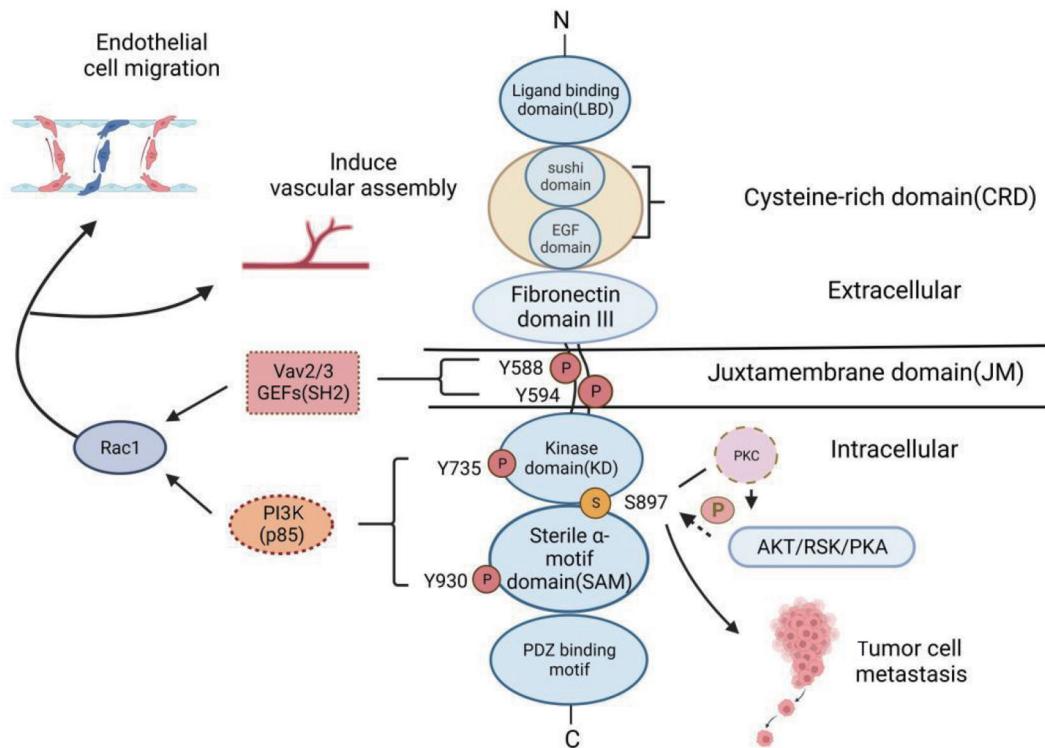


图1 EphA2结构模拟图(created by Biorender)

在更具侵袭性的癌症表型，并与患者的总生存率和无复发生存率都显著负相关^[39, 41-44]。例如在 EphA2 特异性免疫组织化学(IHC)抗体染色的 177 个尿路上皮癌样本中，EphA2 表达率较高的患者生存期更短。在同一患者的原发性和转移性病变部位，EphA2 IHC 检测结果显示，肿瘤相关血管的阳性表达程度与转移程度一致^[45]。在鼻咽癌中，膜联蛋白 1 (ANXA1) 与 EphA2 相互结合，并通过增加 EphA2 的水平和促进 EphA2 致癌信号 (pS897-EphA2) 的活性，促进了鼻咽癌细胞的生长和转移。在鼻咽癌组织中，ANXA1 和 EphA2 的表达水平均显著高于正常鼻咽上皮组织。与单独高表达一种蛋白的患者相比，同时高表达这两种蛋白的患者的无病生存期和总生存期较短。这表明 ANXA1 和 EphA2 的共同高表达与鼻咽癌的恶性程度和患者预后相关^[46]。EphA2 过表达不仅会赋予细胞恶性表型，还会参与细胞耐药恶性进展^[32]。2020 年，Fattet 等^[47]证明 EphA2 参与促进上皮 - 间质转化(EMT) 和维持肿瘤干细胞样特性。KRUPPEL 样因子 5 (KLF5) 是基底样型乳腺癌细胞中 EphA2 的直接转录因子。肿瘤坏死因子 - α (tumor necrosis factor- α , TNF- α) 可以通过激活 KLF5-EphA2 轴促进基底样型乳腺癌干细胞形成。而膀胱癌患者和非膀胱癌患者相比，在膀胱分泌的尿细胞外囊泡(uEV) 中发现 EphA2 是唯一显著上调的基因，EV-EphA2 促进膀胱癌细胞的侵袭和迁移^[48]。研究还发现，EphA2 在乳腺癌组织中过表达，与细胞焦亡呈负相关^[49]。沉默 EphA2 可以有效抑制胃癌细胞的增殖、侵袭能力以及基质金属蛋白酶 9 (MMP-9) 的表达，这为特异性抑制 EphA2 治疗胃癌提供了证据^[50]。因此，EphA2 的过表达已被认为是肿瘤的发生、发展和耐药的重要标志物，并可能作为抗肿瘤治疗的新靶点^[51]，而探寻 EphA2 癌基因驱动肿瘤发展进程的分子机制尤为重要，逐渐成为肿瘤治疗研究热点。

3 EphA2 的调控机制

3.1 经典途径(图2)

EphA2 调控的经典途径包括通过激活酪氨酸激酶结构域而实现的配体依赖型正反两条双向信号通路。当 EphA2 受体与其配体 EphrinA1 结合时，EphrinA1 招募鸟嘌呤核苷酸交换因子 (Vav GEFs) 与 EphA2 受体诱导结合，过表达的 Vav2/3^[52]、磷脂酰肌醇 3- 激酶 (PI3K) 的 p85 调节亚基^[53] 以及表皮生长因子受体 2 (HER2)^[54] 都可与 EphA2 受体相

互作用，使 EphA2 磷酸化，从而诱导促进血管生成、维持内皮细胞迁移的 Rac1、控制应力纤维、局灶性黏连形成以及肌动蛋白细胞骨架收缩的 Ras 同源基因家族成员 A (ras homolog family member A, RhoA) 和驱动细胞前突结构微管、微丝等细胞骨架极性分布的细胞分裂周期蛋白 42 (cell division cycle 42, Cdc42) 激活，从而通过改变肌动蛋白细胞骨架的组织并影响整合素和细胞间黏附分子的活性来控制细胞形态、黏附、迁移和侵袭^[22]。与此相反，EphrinA1 刺激所引导的“正向信号”更多表现的是抑癌作用。EphrinA1 刺激的 EphA2 “正向信号”可以负调控生长因子诱导的 Ras 激活，通过招募 p120RasGAP 抑制 HRas-Raf-MAPK 回路，最终下调 P-ERK 水平，从而抑制 MAPK 途径导致的肿瘤细胞增殖与分化。HRas-Raf-MAPK 途径的激活还可以通过 MEK1 增加 EphA2 的表达，并降低 EphrinA1 的表达^[55-56]，证明了 EphA2 及其同源配体 EphrinA1 在肿瘤细胞中的表达成反比。AKT 激酶 (由受体酪氨酸激酶 RTKs 家族激活) 可以磷酸化 EphA2 羧基末端尾部的 S897，导致 EphA2 配体非依赖信号通路激活进而促使细胞迁移和侵袭增加，EphrinA1 诱导的 EphA2 信号通过使 AKT T308 和 S473 去磷酸化而使 AKT-mTORC1 致癌途径失活，从而降低 EphA2 在 S897 位点的磷酸化，消除了配体非依赖性肿瘤细胞的趋化迁移^[57]。即在胶质母细胞瘤 (GBM) 细胞系中，EphA2 可以分别以配体依赖的“正向信号”或非依赖的方式在 AKT/PKB 的上游 (作为调节因子) 和下游 (作为底物) 发挥作用^[27]。尤其在配体 EphrinA1 过度表达的时候，“正向信号”会影响 EphA2 的致癌能力，导致肌动蛋白板状伪足的回缩以及抑制肿瘤细胞迁移和侵袭^[58]。除了正向信号转导外，EphA2 受体还可以刺激 EphrinA1 分泌细胞中的“反向信号”转导，然而，由于 EphrinA1 缺乏具体的酶结构域，它如何激活细胞内的反向信号转导尚不清楚，还有待进一步探索。

3.2 非经典途径(图2)

EphA2 受体可以独立于 EphrinA1 配体发出信号，例如通过与其他受体系统和细胞质信号分子的串扰。配体非依赖性信号转导与配体依赖性信号转导相比可能具有相反的作用，如当 EphA2 受体胞外区与其配体 EphrinA1 结合时，EphA2 可以不断经过二聚化进一步形成不同程度的四聚体结构，产生由配体结合却不依赖于 EphrinA1 的二聚或寡聚产生的非典型信号输出，信号强弱与四聚体形成大

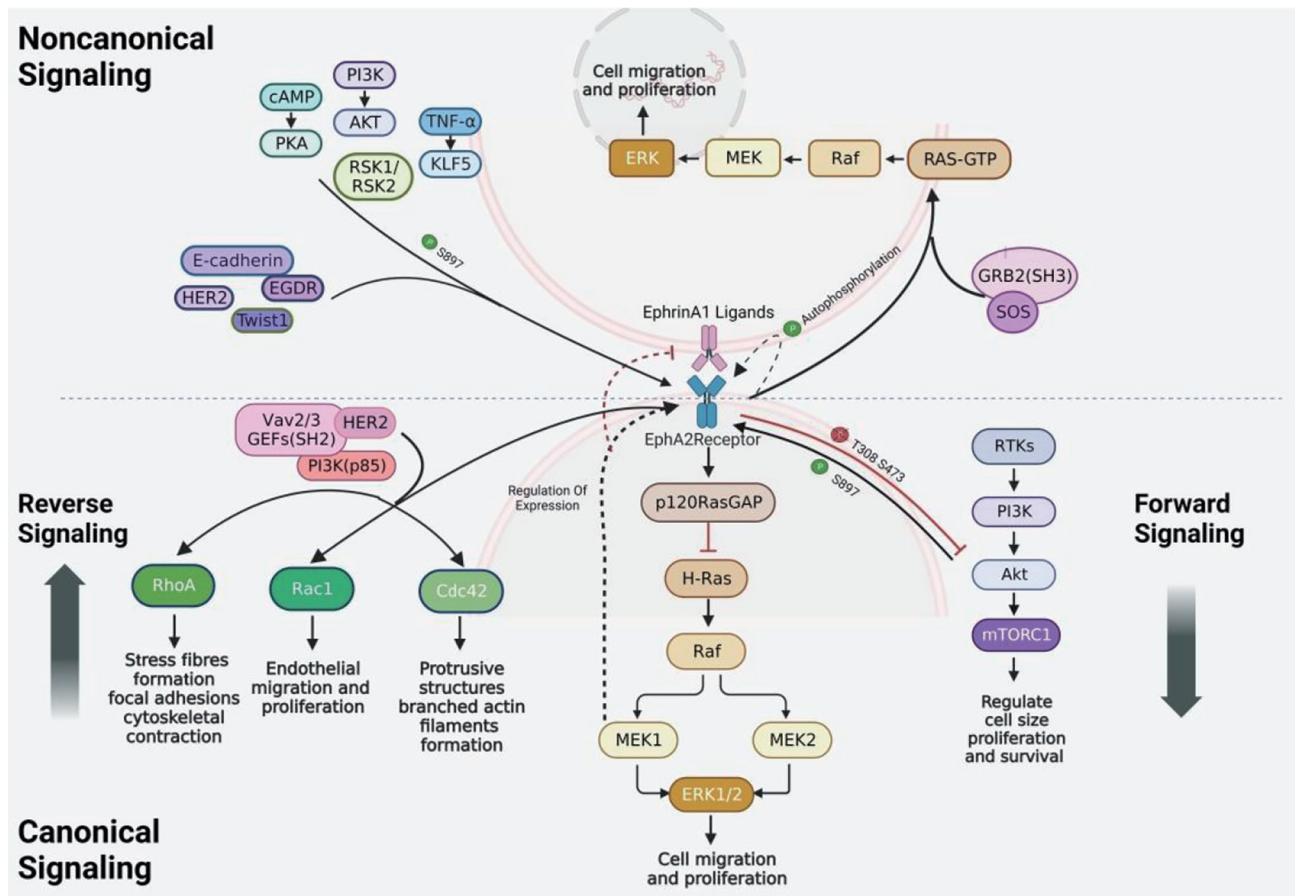


图2 EphA2相关信号通路的经典及非经典途径(created by Biorender)

小呈正相关,且四聚体可为同型或异型受体,这意味着Eph受体亚型激活可促进其他受体亚型募集,进一步增加了信号调节的复杂性。EphA2的高阶聚集增强了受体的酪氨酸残基的自磷酸化,通过激活生长因子受体结合蛋白2(growth factor receptor bound protein 2, Grb2),使其两个SH3结构域与SOS(son of sevenless)结合,调节SOS及其下游效应器Ras GTP,进一步激活MAPK-ERK通路^[59]。EphA2受体在许多癌症中被广泛上调,在EphrinA1低表达或共表达的EphrinA1不能激活正向信号的情况下,EphA2是一种明显的癌基因,促进肿瘤的存活和转移,并在获得性耐药和维持肿瘤干细胞样特性方面起着正向调控作用^[60]。核糖体S6激酶(RSK)中的RSK1和RSK2^[25]、cAMP活化的PKA^[26]、PI3K/AKT信号通路磷酸化的AKT^[27]和TNF-α激活的KLF5^[61],均可通过丝氨酸/苏氨酸激酶介导磷酸化EphA2胞内区的SAM与KD连接结构域的S897^[2, 62],这与E-钙黏蛋白^[63]、EGFR^[64]、HER2^[54]、扭曲家族bHLH转录因子1(twist family bHLH transcription factor 1, Twist1)^[65]在没有配体结合和激

酶激活的情况下,通过与其他表面受体的串扰改变下游信号的传导途径都属于非经典途径。

EphA2复杂的信号通路可以调节多种生物学过程,这些生物学过程在肿瘤发展中具有重要意义^[66],尤其是非经典途径,控制着肿瘤的迁移、增殖、干细胞特性和耐药性,从而促进肿瘤的恶性进展。由于前期研究直接上上游因子的信息还有待完善,因此,深入探究EphA2受体和EphrinA1配体的结合方式和信号转导过程,对理解肿瘤的生物学行为并基于此开发更加合适的癌症诊断和治疗方案都极为重要。

4 EphA2的靶向治疗

EphA2/EphrinA1系统可以通过不同机制来抑制EphA2的致癌功能,从而实现治疗目的。

4.1 降低EphA2的表达

通过降低EphA2的表达来抑制其致癌功能的手段,包括EphA2的靶向药物、RNA干扰技术(RNAi)和小分子抑制剂。研究表明具有激动性的EphA2靶向药物(如YSA肽或其优化版本123B9)

可以作为潜在的治疗策略，其中，二聚体 123B9 可以与紫杉醇结合，并在乳腺癌模型、胰腺癌异种移植模型和黑色素瘤肺定植和转移模型中显示出非常有效的靶向循环肿瘤细胞和抑制肺转移的效果^[67-68]。研究证明包裹 siRNA 的纳米脂质体(DOPC) 在卵巢癌原位小鼠模型中联合化疗时导致肿瘤中 EphA2 表达降低，并显著抑制肿瘤生长^[69]；ALW-II -41-27 作为一种酪氨酸激酶的小分子抑制剂，可以通过显著降低 MDA-MB-231 细胞中 EphA2 Y588 位点的磷酸化^[70]，也可以通过降低 Y772 位点磷酸化抑制 Shp2/ERK-1/2 通路使鼻咽癌细胞增殖被抑制^[71]，还可以通过抑制 RhoA/ROCK 途径有效地减少肿瘤细胞的增殖和侵袭，并促进凋亡^[72]。口服酪氨酸激酶抑制剂安罗替尼靶向血管内皮生长因子受体(VEGFR)、血小板衍生生长因子受体(PDGFR)、成纤维细胞生长因子受体(FGFR) 和干细胞因子受体(c-Kit)，通过抑制 VEGF 受体酪氨酸激酶(包括 VEGFR1、VEGFR2、VEGFR3) 磷酸化，抑制 VEGF 下游通路信号分子 AKT 和 ERK1/2 激活，有效抑制肿瘤血管生成、转移和生长^[73]。Wee1 激酶抑制剂 MK1775 与 EphA2 靶向治疗联合应用，抑制 AKT 信号转导增强了哺乳动物雷帕霉素靶蛋白(mammalian target of rapamycin, mTOR)活性，促进肿瘤细胞自噬^[74]。

4.2 促进EphA2的降解

与 EphA2 相互作用的人工配体或抗体可以通过促进内化和降解来抑制信号。如重组 EphrinA1 与人 IgG Fc 融合二聚得到的 EphrinA1-Fc 具有类似 Ephrin 的特征，并诱导 EphA2 磷酸化抑制胰腺导管腺癌细胞的细胞活力和侵袭^[75]。这种方法可以避免一些副作用，因为它并不直接影响 EphA2 的转录或翻译。抗 EphA2 单克隆抗体 DS-8895a 是一种能够识别 EphA2 细胞外近膜区的抗体，因此能够结合全长和截短形式的 EphA2 蛋白，DS-8895a 在乳腺癌和胃癌小鼠模型中能够显著抑制肿瘤的生长，具有治疗表达 EphA2 的乳腺癌和胃癌的潜力^[76]。E3 泛素连接酶 c-Cbl 过表达降低了 EphA2 蛋白的水平，可能是通过有泛素连接酶作用的锌指结构域增加 EphA2 的泛素化水平，从而促进 EphA2 的降解^[77]。格尔德霉素是一种热休克蛋白 90(Hsp90) 的拮抗剂，它可以抑制 EphA2 受体二聚化和自磷酸化，显著降低其稳定性，有潜力用于治疗与 EphA2 相关的肿瘤^[78]。

4.3 阻断内源性EphA2激活

石胆酸(LCA) 可竞争性和可逆性地抑制 EphA2-

EphrinA1 的结合且不降低 EphA2 的激酶活性。分子建模研究表明，LCA 通过将环戊烷 α 全氢菲骨架插入疏水的 EphA2 受体配体结合通道，模拟 EphrinA1 与 EphA2 相互作用，生成涉及精氨酸 103(Arg103) 的盐桥，Arg103 是 EphrinA1 识别的必需氨基酸残基^[79]。这种方法可以避免干扰 EphA2 的正常生理功能，并具有更广泛的治疗靶点。

4.4 基于EphA2的联合疗法

新型 EphA2 靶向脂质体(EphA2-ILs-DTXp) 与抗 PD-1 的联合应用可以显著增加 CD8⁺ T 细胞在肿瘤组织中的浸润，协同提高免疫细胞对肿瘤的浸润和杀伤能力^[80]。ALW-II -41-27 与表柔比星(EPI) 联用，可以通过降低宫颈癌细胞周期素依赖性激酶 6(CDK6) 的 mRNA 和蛋白表达，增加细胞对 EPI 的敏感性^[81]，也可以通过抑制 KLF5-EphA2 通路恢复基底样型乳腺癌对紫杉醇(PTX) 和顺铂(DDP) 的敏感性^[61](图 3)。

基于上述临床前研究，有些靶向疗法已进入临床试验，如安罗替尼、DS-8895a、BT5528 和纳米脂质体(DOPC) 包裹 siRNA。遗憾的是，EphA2 靶向疗法成功的临床结果并不多，检测中出现不良事件的原因尚不清楚(表 1)。

此外，比起化疗无差别杀伤分裂的细胞，靶向药虽然提高了特异性，但靶向药抑制细胞增殖的本质绝非只影响肿瘤细胞，对正常细胞同样如此。近期研究发现他莫昔芬以雌激素受体 α(ERα) 非依赖方式激活丝裂原活化蛋白激酶(MAPK)，通过 MEK-ERK-RSK 途径，在 HeLa 细胞中诱导 EphA2 的 S897 快速磷酸化，显著增强 ERα 阴性的 MDA-MB-231 乳腺癌细胞的迁移能力，同时他莫昔芬早已被证明会增加子宫内膜肿瘤发展的风险^[87]。尽管他莫昔芬用于 ERα 阳性患者的化疗已有很长的历史，具有预期的肿瘤抑制作用，但它可能表现出促肿瘤活性这一结果将有助于更详细地阐明他莫昔芬致癌作用的机制，从而提高他莫昔芬治疗癌症的安全性^[88]。另有研究通过将靶标与“类药”索拉非尼进行比较，揭示了瑞戈非尼诱导的肝损伤主要是由于其非治疗靶点 EphA2，EphA2 的 S897 磷酸化抑制通过 ERK-MDM 途径导致 p53 异常积累，进而导致线粒体功能失调引发细胞凋亡，联合五味子丙素可恢复 EphA2 的 S897 磷酸化，可能是一种安全有效的癌症治疗策略^[89]。因此，寻找高特异性靶点的抗肿瘤药物，一直都是努力的方向和研究的重点。

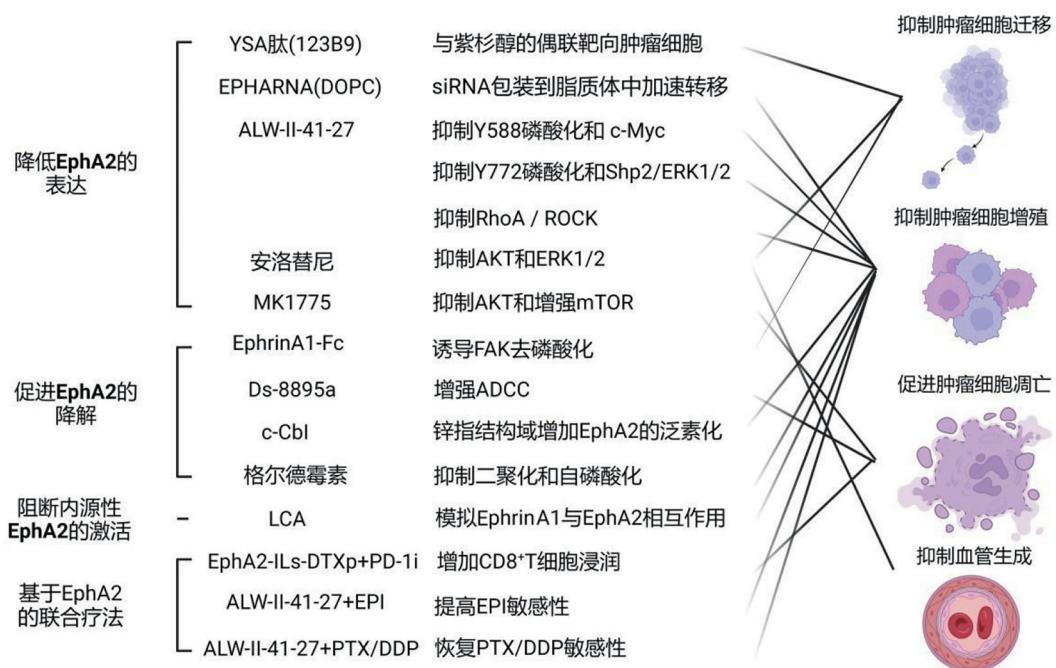


图3 EphA2靶向治疗方案(created by Biorender)

表1 EphA2靶向治疗癌症的部分临床试验

药品名称	试验登记号	阶段	适应症	状态	参考
siRNA-EphA2-DOPC	NCT01591356	1	晚期实体瘤	招募	[82]
Anlotinib	NCT02332499	3	转移性结直肠癌	已完成	[83]
DS-8895a	NCT02252211	1	恶性实体瘤/转移性EphA2 ⁺ 的癌症	已完成	[84]
DS-8895a	NCT02004717	1	实体瘤	已完成	[85]
BT5528	NCT04180371	1/2	晚期实体瘤	招募	[86]

5 结论与未来方向

随着研究的进展和对 EphA2 效应相关机制认识的深入, 大量前期研究数据证明 EphA2 在多种细胞、分子和药物靶向与常规疗法联合使用中起到提高疗效的优势作用, 这为 EphA2 作为靶向药物精准防治提供了确凿依据和重要理论支撑, 但是 EphA2 的确切信号机制, 特别是 EphA2-EphrinA1 反向信号的作用, 仍属于未知领域并存在诸多争议, 同时 EphA2 受体信号常与其他受体、激酶相关, 共同影响上下游信号通路, 这使靶向策略更具有复杂性。同时综述中的研究均为临床前工作, 通过简化 EphA2-EphrinA1 信号通路从而突出了 EphA2 抑制后的有益效果, 所以投入临床仍需考虑下调 EphA2 会影响正向和反向信号, 以及对其他 Eph 受体和致癌信号的代偿性刺激, 从而潜在地改变细胞的生物学性能。尽管还存在这些问题有待解决, 靶向 EphA2 和程序性死亡配体 1 (programmed cell death-

ligand 1, PD-L1) 多位点联合用药以及开发多肽偶联药物的下一代靶向治疗都在积极进行中, 未来进一步研究将会精确阐明 EphA2-EphrinA1 信号与其他信号途径的串扰, 使 EphA2 作为癌症新的治疗靶点更有价值与前途。

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