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色氨酸及其代谢产物在动脉粥样硬化中的作用及中医药干预研究进展*

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[摘要] 动脉粥样硬化(AS)是众多心血管疾病的病理基础,其进展受到炎症反应的驱动,而色氨酸(Trp)代谢途径在调节炎症中起重要作用。Trp代谢途径包括5-羟色胺(5-HT)途径、犬尿氨酸(Kyn)途径及吲哚途径,其中部分代谢产物在AS的发生和发展中扮演着重要角色。Trp代谢产物不仅影响局部免疫反应,还可调节血管炎症、血栓形成等过程,成为心血管疾病潜在的生物标志物和治疗靶点。中医药作为一种多靶点治疗方式,逐渐成为调节Trp代谢、缓解心血管疾病的研究方向。通过综述Trp及其代谢产物在AS中的作用,评估中医药对Trp代谢途径的干预效果,认为未来通过中医药调控Trp代谢可能成为心血管疾病治疗的新策略。

[关键词] 动脉粥样硬化;心血管疾病;色氨酸代谢;炎症;综述

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The Role of Tryptophan and Its Metabolites in Atherosclerosis and Research Progress of Traditional Chinese Medicine Intervention

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[Abstract] Atherosclerosis (AS) is the pathological basis of many cardiovascular diseases, and its progression is driven by inflammatory responses. The tryptophan (Trp) metabolic pathway plays a critical role in regulating inflammation. The Trp metabolic pathways include the 5-hydroxytryptamine (5-HT) pathway, the kynurene (Kyn) pathway, and the indole pathway. Some of its metabolites play important roles in the occurrence and development of AS. Trp metabolites not only affect the local immune response but also regulate processes such as vascular inflammation and thrombosis, serving as potential biomarkers and therapeutic targets for cardiovascular diseases. As a multi-target therapeutic approach, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) has gradually become a research direction for modulating Trp metabolism and alleviating cardiovascular diseases. By reviewing the role of Trp and its metabolites in AS and evaluating the intervention effect of TCM on the Trp metabolic pathway, it is believed that regulating Trp metabolism through TCM may become a new strategy for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases in the future.

[Keywords] atherosclerosis; cardiovascular diseases; tryptophan metabolism; inflammation; review

心血管疾病的发病率和死亡率处于持续上升阶段,据推算,目前我国心血管疾病患者高达3.3亿^[1]。动脉粥样硬化(atherosclerosis, AS)作为众多心血管疾病的病理基础,本质上是一种累及大动脉和中动脉的慢性炎症性疾病,由内皮细胞通透性增加及内膜低密度脂蛋白胆固醇积累引发^[2]。而炎

症是AS血栓形成事件中的关键驱动因素,从根本上参与AS发生和缺血事件的病理生理^[3]。在导致炎症的可改变危险因素中,氨基酸及其分解代谢产物被认为对炎症有显著影响,其中色氨酸(tryptophan, Trp)代谢相关研究尤其丰富^[4-5]。Trp是大量肠道微生物和宿主代谢物生物合成的前体物质,其分解代

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谢物与心血管疾病相关。研究^[6]证实Trp可作为不良心血管病事件的重要预测因素。2023年葛均波和李兰娟团队均发表文章阐述Trp代谢在动脉粥样硬化性心脏病(atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, ASCVD)中的重要性^[7-8]。近年来关于中医药靶向Trp及其代谢途径的研究逐渐增多,本文旨在梳理近年来Trp及其代谢产物在AS方面的研究进展,总结目前中医药靶向Trp代谢途径治疗心血管疾病的研究,发现未来调控ASCVD的潜在靶点,以期为开展中医药治疗ASCVD相关研究提供一定的参考依据。

1 Trp及其代谢产物概述

Trp是一种仅能通过饮食来源获得的必需氨基酸,是合成多种重要生物活性化合物的前体物质,能够参与神经元功能、机体代谢、炎症反应、氧化应激、免疫反应和肠道稳态等各种病理生理过程^[8]。人体中的Trp水平取决于食物摄入量和几种Trp代谢途径的活性。Trp的代谢主要包括以下3种途径:(1)在中枢神经元或肠嗜铬细胞中经色氨酸羟化酶(tryptophan hydroxylase, TPH)产生5-羟色胺(5-hydroxytryptamine, 5-HT);(2)经色氨酸-2,3-双加氧酶(tryptophan 2,3-dioxygenase, TDO)或吲哚胺2,3-双加氧酶(indoleamine 2, 3-dioxygenase, IDO)介导的犬尿氨酸通路(kynurenine pathway, KP);(3)通过肠道微生物群直接转化为吲哚及其衍生物。(见图1)

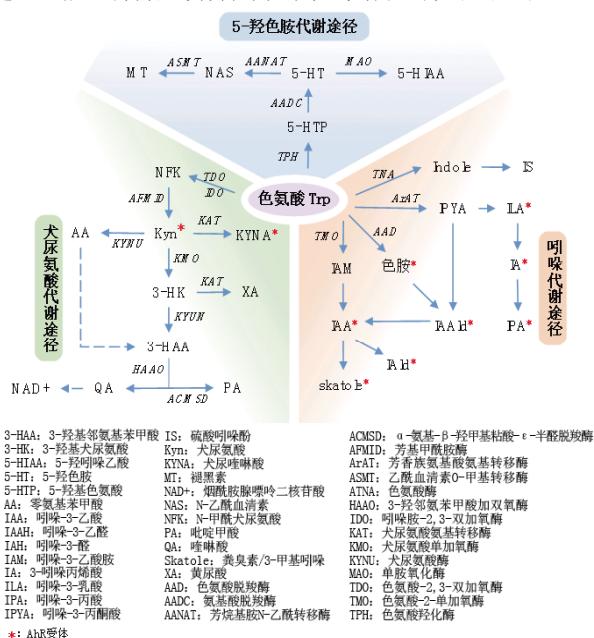


图 1 色氨酸的代谢途径^[8-14]

Trp目前最受关注的代谢途径是5-HT代谢途径,Trp在肠道中通过TPH1转化、芳香氨基酸脱羧酶脱羧形成5-HT。5-HT能够控制血管阻力和血压,并通过调节免疫应答影响细胞因子的释放^[15]。

而在哺乳动物中,超过95%的Trp通过KP通路降解,并产生一系列参与炎症、免疫应答和兴奋性神经传递的代谢物^[8]。TDO、IDO1和IDO2是KP通路中的关键限速酶。IDO存在于各种器官中,但TDO几乎完全在肝脏中表达^[16],肠道中高IDO活性使Trp分解代谢的平衡从微生物衍生的吲哚衍生物转向犬尿氨酸(kynurenine, Kyn)的产生^[17]。Kyn代谢产生神经保护性N-甲基D-天冬氨酸(N-methyl D-aspartate, NMDA)受体拮抗

剂犬尿喹啉酸(kynurenic acid, KYNA)和神经毒性NMDA受体激动剂喹啉酸(quinolinic acid, QA),前者能通过激活在免疫细胞中高度表达的G蛋白偶联受体35(G protein-coupled receptor35, GPR35)调节局部炎症^[18],而后的代谢主要终产物烟酰胺腺嘌呤二核苷酸(nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide, NAD)是与能量代谢相关的细胞反应中的重要辅助因子,被认为是多种疾病潜在的治疗靶标^[19]。

第三条途径则是Trp被肠道微生物群转化为各种分解代谢物,该途径通过影响氧化应激、肠道炎症和激素分泌对宿主健康产生多重影响。Trp分解代谢物通过肠上皮吸收并进入血液。研究^[20]表明,吲哚、IPA和IAA能够与孕烷X受体结合,控制肠道炎症反应,影响黏膜稳态。IAA、IAld、IA、ILA、色胺、3-甲基吲哚能够作用于肠道免疫细胞中的配体依赖性转录因子芳烃受体(aryl hydrocarbon receptor, AhR)。IAA、色胺能够降低巨噬细胞中促炎性细胞因子的表达。IAA能够显著抑制肝细胞中TNF- α 的炎症作用^[21]。色胺还能够抑制IDO1的活性^[20],从而介导多种免疫反应。

肠道菌群在Trp代谢中发挥着至关重要的作用,色氨酸脱羧酶在梭状芽孢杆菌属和乳酸杆菌属中表达,色氨酸酶在许多革兰氏阴性菌和革兰氏阳性菌中广泛表达^[10,14]。肠道菌群是一种特定的AhR刺激源,而色氨酸代谢中多种产物被证实是AhR受体。AhR作为微生物群落的传感器能够调节免疫功能,实现肠道稳态^[22]。

2 Trp及其代谢产物与AS的关系及其潜在靶向治疗

AS是一种炎症性改变,由血管细胞和免疫细胞共同参与。在促炎性细胞因子或其他心血管危险因素刺激下,大量的低密度脂蛋白在C反应蛋白(C-reactive protein,CRP)诱导下进入血管内膜,经氧化形成氧化低密度脂蛋白(oxidized low density lipoprotein,oxLDL),诱导内皮细胞表达白细胞黏附分子,促进血液单核细胞和淋巴细胞黏附。单核细胞在炎症刺激下分化为巨噬细胞后,吸收脂质形成泡沫细胞并在动脉内膜大量聚集形成斑块。血管平滑肌细胞分泌的细胞外基质及沉积的胶原纤维在斑块表面形成厚薄不一的纤维帽。斑块不稳定破裂导致血栓形成,从而致使不良心血管病事件发生^[2,23]。

固有免疫和适应性免疫在其中影响着AS过程,细胞间作用刺激多种炎症细胞因子产生,如IL-1 β 、IL-6和TNF- α 等,从而维持或级联放大局部炎症反应^[2,24]。RIDKER P M等^[25]研究表明,单独靶向LDL的治疗可能无法完全降低AS风险,残余炎症风险与主要不良心血管事件显著相关。高敏C反应蛋白(high sensitivity C-reactive protein, hs-CRP)可评估的炎症反应,是未来心血管事件和死亡风险更强的预测因子。基于COLCOT^[26]和LODOCO-2^[27]实验,2023年6月,美国FDA批准低剂量秋水仙碱作为首个用于心血管疾病的抗炎药物,该药物能显著降低患有AS或已具有多种心血管危险因素的成年患者发生心肌梗死、中风、冠状动脉血运重建及心血管死亡的风险。

2.1 5-HT代谢途径与AS

子,在AS的进展过程中具有促进泡沫细胞形成、血管平滑肌增殖和迁移、血管收缩、血小板聚集和血栓形成等作用^[15]。当储存的5-HT从活化的血小板中释放出来时,它可以与血小板

和血管壁细胞成分上的5-HT受体结合,双向调节血管收缩,诱导中性粒细胞脱颗粒,从而加重血栓炎症^[28]。抗抑郁药物选择性5-HT再摄取抑制剂(selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, SSRIs)则可能通过减少血管收缩和血小板聚集,从而降低心血管发病率和死亡率^[29]。

5-HT受体可以分为7类,在人体血管中受体功能存在差异。受体亚型5-HT_{1B}、5-HT_{2A}、5-HT_{2B}和5-HT₇在动静脉的平滑肌和内皮细胞中表达,能够调控血管张力,5-HT_{2A}同时也在心肌细胞、成纤维细胞、血小板中表达,参与血小板活化和聚集^[30]。5-HT合成抑制剂和5-HT_{2A}受体拮抗剂能够协同抑制巨噬细胞的浸润和动脉粥样斑块的形成^[31]。研究^[32]表明,5-HT_{2A}受体拮抗剂盐酸沙格雷酯能够通过抑制5-HT的释放从而减缓血栓的形成、抑制血管收缩,同时能够降低血清中促炎症细胞因子IL-6和hs-CRP的水平,从而减轻血管炎症,延缓AS的进展。

2.2 尿氨酸代谢途径与AS 限速酶IDO可以在白细胞介素-1β(interleukin-1β, IL-1β)、肿瘤坏死因子-α(tumor necrosis factor-α, TNF-α)、干扰素-γ(interferon γ, IFN-γ)等炎症介质的免疫刺激下激活,其中IFN-γ是最有效的诱导剂^[33]。经IDO介导产生的Kyn、KYNA能够激活AhR受体。AhR与配体结合后,增强调节性T细胞(regulatory T cells, Treg)分化,影响免疫调节;激活核转录因子-κB(nuclear factor kappa-B, NF-κB)通路介导巨噬细胞免疫炎症过程,促进泡沫细胞的形成;通过诱导固有淋巴细胞(innate lymphoid cell, ILC)诱导IL-22的产生从而抑制促AS的菌群;同时拮抗缺氧诱导因子-1α(hypoxia-inducible factor-1α, HIF-1α)通路影响脂质代谢,从而加速AS的进展^[34-37]。

KP通路的代谢在AS的进展过程中起着复杂而不固定的作用。IDO可以增加B细胞中抗炎和抗动脉粥样硬化细胞因子IL-10的表达。细胞因子诱导IDO1能够降低Trp储存并增加KP通路的代谢,抑制炎症和细胞免疫反应,从而影响AS的进程^[38],而血管平滑肌中IDO1表达的缺失使Trp代谢减少,加剧了动脉钙化的进程。补充Trp代谢产物邻氨基苯(anthranilic acid, AA)甲酸能够抑制AS中细胞因子的产生。补充Kyn能够有效抑制主动脉钙化,最终达到抑制AS进展的效果^[39]。研究^[40]表明,IDO1抑制剂1-甲基-D-色氨酸(1-methyl-D-tryptophan, 1-MT)能够显著抑制小鼠内源性Trp代谢,影响其固有免疫,导致血管炎症增加和AS加重。有研究^[41-42]却提示,IDO1通过影响泡沫细胞的形成、细胞凋亡、炎症因子的产生在AS的发育阶段产生促进作用,同时1-MT也可以提高血清中的高密度脂蛋白胆固醇水平,减少高脂饮食喂养的ApoE^{-/-}小鼠中主动脉粥样硬化病变的面积。目前的研究尚未形成共识,对于该限速酶还需要进一步研究。

目前,Kyn/Trp比值被证实与心血管疾病发病率相关,Trp代谢物是潜在的心血管疾病生物标志物或致病危险因素^[43]。METGHLCHI S等^[42]研究表明,在人群中,KYNA的血浆水平可作为冠状动脉疾病患者死亡和复发性心肌梗死的预测因素之一,同时KYNA能限制Ldlr^{-/-}Ido1^{-/-}小鼠抗炎因子IL-10的分泌,从而进一步加重AS。

浆细胞样树突状细胞(plasmacytoid dendritic cells, pDCs)

能通过抑制CD4⁺T细胞的增殖从而对AS产生保护作用。在AS的主动脉中,pDCs中IDO-1的表达升高,可诱导局部Treg和IL-10产生,从而达到保护AS和增加斑块稳定性的效应^[44-45]。长链omega-3脂肪酸二十碳五烯酸(EPA)可以增加体内DC中IDO1的表达,从而减少血管炎症和AS^[46]。

2.3 微生物代谢-吲哚相关途径与AS AS患者易出现Trp代谢紊乱,ILA、IS等与不良心血管事件风险显著相关^[47],在晚期AS患者血浆中吲哚、IAld和IPA的浓度显著降低^[47]。代谢产物IAld能够减弱巨噬细胞和中性粒细胞浸润,并抑制炎症细胞因子的表达^[48]。IPA、IA具有抗氧化和抗炎作用,能够促进巨噬细胞产生IL-10。IA可通过抑制外周血单核细胞减少细胞因子IL-1β和IL-6的表达。IPA被证明具有心脏保护作用^[49],可减少TNF的产生^[10]。研究^[50]表明,微生物代谢物IPA/miR-142-5p/ABCA1通路可能是心血管疾病的治疗靶点,膳食IPA补充剂可减缓ApoE小鼠AS斑块的发展。IS是一种尿毒症溶质,能够引发内皮细胞功能障碍,影响血管平滑肌细胞的增殖、迁移和衰老,其血清水平升高与高密度脂蛋白功能障碍、泡沫细胞形成呈正相关^[51]。

同时,高盐高脂饮食和相关的代谢疾病是心血管疾病的危险因素,Trp微生物代谢物的减少是饮食诱导肥胖的代谢标志^[52],而高盐水平也在实验中证实会耗尽能够产生ILA、IAA和IAld的鼠乳杆菌^[53]。

2.4 Trp代谢中的AhR受体与AS 肠道微生物结构和代谢的改变是心血管疾病的标志。肠道微生物群能够产生基于Trp的AhR配体,从而影响肠道稳态和慢性炎症之间的平衡,发生不良心血管事件的人群中能够产生Trp酶的拟杆菌科和乳酸杆菌科的丰度也显著低于健康人群组^[7,54]。通过使用Trp代谢产物,或靶向其受体,或间接操纵肠道微生物群能够直接改变其生物学效应及疾病预后。IAA治疗能够降低脂肪肝小鼠肝脏中炎症因子的表达^[55];饮食中补充Trp能够通过恢复肠道微生物群产生AhR配体来减轻结肠炎的严重程度^[56];乳酸杆菌作为天然产生AhR激动剂已被证实可以改善肠道炎症反应^[57]。

3 中医药干预Trp及其代谢产物的研究

AS的发病机制复杂,涉及多种细胞、多条通路。中药因其多成分、多靶点的特点能够弥补化学药物在这方面的不足。目前临幊上常用的抗炎药物,存在靶向单一、毒副作用多等不足,在与常规降脂药合用中更易因药物互相作用出现不良反应。目前已有秋水仙碱与降脂药物合用存在风险的报道^[58]。能够靶向Trp代谢的药物盐酸沙格雷酯也易出现胃肠道反应、肝酶升高、血压变化和皮疹等不良反应^[32]。而利用中药提取物进行靶向治疗是当今中医新药研究的热点。中医药治疗以临床疗效为基础,经过了长期的临床实践验证,对于疾病有确切的治疗作用。目前对于Trp代谢的研究日趋增多,中药复方及单体已被证明能够通过调节Trp代谢参与机体肠道菌群代谢及炎症反应,从而影响各种疾病的发生发展。

3.1 5-HT代谢途径 荷药汤由荷药、槟榔、大黄、黄芩等药物组成,具有清热燥湿、调和气血的功效,主治湿热病疾。研究^[59]表明荷药汤能够通过调节肠道菌群代谢影响5-HT的表达。5-HT的减少能够降低T淋巴细胞中蛋白激酶C和NF-κB信号通路的激活,减少NF-κB、IL-1β、IL-2、IL-6、IFN-γ等细胞因

子的分泌,从而缓解局部结肠炎症。苍艾挥发油是一种由艾叶、苍术、藿香芳香类药物提炼的复方挥发油制剂,具有抗菌、免疫调节的作用。实验^[60]表明它能够显著下调大鼠前额叶皮层中Trp代谢酶IDO的表达,进而抑制Trp和5-HT的消耗,增加Trp、KYNA、5-HT和5-HIAA的水平,抑制犬尿氨酸通路使Trp更多地通过5-HT途径代谢。人参皂苷是人参提取物的主要成分,能显著抑制KP中IDO酶的活性,降低各种促炎性细胞因子的mRNA水平^[61]。

3.2 犬尿氨酸代谢途径 生脉饮由人参、麦冬、五味子三味中药组成,具有益气滋阴、扶助心气的功效,对于多种心系疾病有良好的治疗效果。代谢组学及在体实验^[62]表明,生脉饮能够抑制大鼠心肌组织中IDO的表达,并显著下调血清中IL-1 β 、IFN- γ 、IL-18、TNF- α 的表达水平,通过调节色氨酸代谢,抑制心肌纤维化,改善慢性心力衰竭大鼠的心功能从而治疗慢性心力衰竭。莱菔硫素能够抑制心肌缺血再灌注损伤大鼠血清中炎症因子IL-1 β 、IL-6、TNF- α 的表达,降低心肌细胞中IDO、TRP、KYN、KYN/TRP的水平,减少心肌细胞凋亡,缓解机体炎症反应,对心肌损伤有保护作用^[63]。艾草提取物可以增加哮喘小鼠肺泡灌洗液中IDO-1的活性,促进Trp向犬尿氨酸的转化,并调节Treg/Th17免疫的失衡从而发挥其治疗作用^[64]。厚朴中的和厚朴酚能够抑制LPS诱导的IDO活化和QA的增加,显著降低Kyn/Trp和犬尿氨酸/犬尿酸比值,且能降低Trp代谢的关键酶IDO1基因和蛋白质表达水平^[65]。红花中的木质素能够通过抑制人外周血单核细胞中T细胞/巨噬细胞活化级联反应,显著抑制IDO酶活性,分解Trp,减少Trp沿着KP方向的转化^[66]。

3.3 微生物代谢-吲哚相关途径 人参皂苷Rg₁是人参的主要成分。实验^[67]表明其能够有效降低溃疡性结肠炎小鼠粪便中乳酸菌、拟杆菌属等肠道菌群的丰度,升高血清中ILA、IPA、IAld的含量,有效减轻结肠炎症。山柰提取物山柰酚能够通过调节肠道菌群,有效逆转Trp的代谢,降低IAA的水平,提高Trp水平,从而调节免疫反应和肠道稳态^[68]。白芍总苷是白芍的药理活性成分,具有抗炎和免疫调节活性。实验^[69]表明白芍总苷能够通过逆转肠道菌群紊乱,减少ILA的表达,从而改善溃疡性结肠炎小鼠的结肠损伤及炎症紊乱。

3.4 Trp代谢中的AhR受体 Trp及其代谢衍生物通过配体受体结合方式激动AhR从而发挥免疫调节作用,AhR多个器官均有表达,不同的配体来源对AhR及其下游发挥的作用是多样的。外源性配体,如卤代芳烃、多环芳烃、2,3,7,8-四氯二苯并对二噁英等大多数会引起毒性作用,而天然配体、肠道菌群以及通过肠道菌群代谢的吲哚类似物,对于人类AhR具有更好的亲和力,在激活AhR后通常发挥免疫调节作用^[70]。

中药及其提取物在此方面有非常大的应用前景,如黄芩、黄连、苦参等被证明具有高AhR配体活性^[71],姜黄素、槲皮素、大豆苷元、染料木黄酮等被报道为AhR的天然配体^[72],一些中药复方和中药有效成分也被证明能够通过调控Trp的代谢介导AhR的活性。保元汤由人参、黄芪、甘草、肉桂组成,具有补气升阳固脱之功效,主治虚损劳怯,元气不足。实验^[73]表明保元汤能够有效改善心肌肥厚大鼠肠道菌群的失调,降低NF- κ B、TNF- α 和IL-6的表达,从而发挥心脏保护作用。葛根芩连汤由

葛根、黄芩、黄连、甘草组成,具有清热燥湿之功效。研究^[74]表明葛根芩连汤能够调节肠道菌群相关的Trp代谢产物,从而激活AhR并介导IL-22的产生,在溃疡性小鼠中发挥抗炎修复肠道屏障的功能。黄连中的小檗碱可增强微生物的Trp代谢,调节吲哚乙酸水平,最终通过触发AhR信号通路调节紧密连接蛋白来保护肠道屏障功能^[75]。姜黄中的姜黄素能够促进炎症诱导的IDO-KYN/KYNA通路的表达,并变构方式调节内源性配体与AhR的结合,促进AhR激活,从而抑制NF- κ B的激活,减弱炎性星形胶质细胞的增生^[76]。

4 小 结

AS进展的病理变化包括心肌梗死、缺血性心脏病、中风和外周动脉疾病,这些不良结局会限制病患的日常活动甚至危及生命。高脂质浓度、炎症被认为是AS的主要影响因素^[2]。残余炎症风险与主要不良心血管事件显著相关,然而并非所有抗炎措施都能够产生临床益处。CANTOS实验^[77]中卡那单抗能够靶向IL-1 β 先天免疫通路从而发挥抗炎治疗作用,显著降低心肌梗死患者的心血管事件复发率;而CIRT实验^[78]表明每周低剂量甲氨蝶呤抗炎治疗在不稳定性心绞痛人群中并未发挥抗炎作用,也没有改善心血管结局,而癌症发生率却高于安慰剂组。因此,能否降低心血管事件风险可能仍取决于药物是否靶向目标通路,寻找抗AS的有效目标通路有待进一步探索,寻找成本可接受且低副作用风险的靶向药物存在巨大挑战。

而Trp作为一种日常饮食摄入来源的氨基酸,与炎症的发生发展密切相关。现有的研究表明通过调控Trp分解代谢产物能够介导AS发生发展中血管稳态及免疫细胞功能的调节,且通过给予氨基酸、限速酶抑制剂及代谢肠道菌群,可以纠正内环境的变化,从而影响AS的进展,或为未来药物调控提供潜在靶点。目前对于AS的抗炎治疗的推广仍不够深入,现有的药物选择也十分有限,且对于已经多种药物干预的病人而言药物负担过重。且基于现有较为权威的研究结果分析,多靶点的抗炎治疗似乎优于单靶点的干预^[79],中医药因其“多靶点多通路”的特点在此方面具有独特优势。

本文综述了一些中药复方及有效成分在多种炎症性疾病中对于Trp的代谢及下游通路的影响,其对于AS的发生发展具有一定的作用。中药复方药物成分复杂,现有的研究中中药多为成方汤剂,有效成分往往不够明确,使研究结果多呈现于表征上的增减,然而其中是否存在因果效应往往缺少深究。相较于复方,单味中药的有效成分及治疗靶点则相对清晰,然而目前现有的研究对于具体的调控机制还未完全阐明。未来中医药研究应结合临床用药选取药物,明确分析其中有效成分,通过大数据分析富集主要作用通路,再进一步开展基础实验。目前对于中药复方或单体靶向Trp代谢的研究日趋增多,但对于针对心血管方向的研究仍较为局限。目前临幊上红曲米已被开发成为常用降脂药物从而起到抗AS的效用,诸如此类的中药单体研究还有待进一步深入。如何挖掘中药对于AS产生的药理学效应,能否发现作用于AS的有效药物亟待进一步研究。

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