

生物节律基因 NPAS2 在肿瘤中的研究

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摘要:生物节律是一种时间跟踪节律性生物系统,生物节律基因调节2%~10%的基因表达,使生物体能够预测环境变化并作出行为和生理功能的反应。神经元 PAS 结构域蛋白 2(NPAS2)作为目前发现的最大的生物节律基因,可控制和调节睡眠、觉醒、内分泌、代谢、细胞增殖和凋亡以及免疫系统过程,参与哺乳动物昼夜节律的周期调控,对于生理内环境稳定的维持至关重要。NPAS2 功能的破坏可导致各种病理过程及疾病的产生,例如糖尿病、抑郁症、心血管问题,尤其可影响多种癌症的发生发展及预后。本文对生物节律基因 NPAS2 进行概述,并对其在生物节律调控中的作用以及在各类疾病尤其在肿瘤发生发展中的作用进行综述。

关键词:生物节律;神经元 PAS 结构域蛋白 2;肿瘤;生理功能

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The Study of Biological Rhythm Gene NPAS2 in Tumors

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Abstract: Biorhythm is a time-tracking biological system in which biorhythm genes regulate 2%–10% of gene expression, enabling organisms to predict environmental changes and respond to behavioral and physiological functions. Neuronal PAS domain protein 2 (NPAS2), as the largest biorhythm gene discovered so far, controls and regulates sleep/wake, endocrine, metabolism, cell proliferation and apoptosis, and immune system, and participates in the periodic regulation of circadian rhythms in mammals, which is crucial for the maintenance of physiological internal environment stability. The destruction of NPAS2 function can lead to various pathological processes and diseases, such as diabetes, depression, cardiovascular problems, especially affecting the occurrence, development, and prognosis of various cancers. This article summarizes the biological rhythm gene NPAS2, and reviews its role in the regulation of biological rhythm and its role in various diseases, especially in the development of tumors.

Key words: Biorhythm; Neuronal PAS domain protein 2; Tumor; Physiological function

生物节律(biorhythm)是几乎存在于地球上所有生物中的调节系统,在许多重要的行为和生理过程中产生 24 h 周期性的节律变化^[1],包括睡眠-觉醒周期、体温周期、激素分泌、心率、血压、排泄等^[2],负责广泛的生理内环境稳态维持^[3]。正常生物节律的破坏对哺乳动物的生理有不利影响^[4],如糖尿病、抑郁症、睡眠障碍、肥胖、心脏病发作和癌症^[5]。目前已经发现包括 NPAS2 在内的 10 种生物核心生物节律基因,该领域正成为生命科学研究的热点。NPAS2 参与哺乳动物昼夜节律的周期调控,对于生理内环境稳定的维持至关重要。NPAS2 功能的破坏可导致各种病理过程及疾病的产生,尤其影响多种癌症的

发生发展及预后。本文对生物节律基因 NPAS2 进行概述,并对其在生物节律调控中的作用以及在各类疾病尤其在肿瘤发生发展中的作用进行综述。

1 NPAS2 概述

NPAS2 是目前发现的最大的核心生物节律基因,长度约为 176.68 Kb,位于人类 2 号染色体(2q11.2)处,编码属于转录因子的基本螺旋-环-螺旋 PAS 结构域(bHLH-PAS)类别的蛋白质^[6]。于 1997 年第一次发现 NPAS2 多肽链,其是由 622 个氨基酸组成,基因序列含有 37 个可转录的外显子,编码 23 段 mRNA^[7]。NPAS2 的 N 端含有其功能性结构域:bHLH 和 PAS,可通过其 PAS 结构域和同样含 PAS 结构域的脑和肌肉 ARNT 样蛋白 1(BMAL1)结合形成 NPAS2/BMAL1 异二聚体,称为时钟转录因子,而其 bHLH 结构域则可结合基因的 E 盒反应元件(E-Box 序列)并驱动下游负时钟调节因子的表达或调节具有多种生物学功能的时钟控制基因的转录;C 端则含有调节其与部分核受体结合功能结构域,这种分子机制通过机体表达,产生周期性的 24 h

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生理节律^[8]。NPAS2 主要存在于哺乳动物的前脑,在一些外周器官如肝脏和皮肤中也有表达,是正昼夜节律反馈回路的重要组成部分。

2 NPAS2 在生物节律调控中的作用

生物节律在分子水平上是由时钟基因通过一系列相互交织的自动调节的正、负转录/翻译反馈环产生的^[9]。人类有两种类型的生物节律时钟:中枢和外周,位于下丘脑视交叉上核的主时钟和几乎在所有外周组织和细胞中普遍存在的外周时钟^[10]。主时钟通过来自视网膜的光信号、温度、饮食和社会现象的日常节律等产生自主信号,经过复杂的下游神经体液通路,不断与环境信号(主要是光周期)耦合^[11]。而位于周围组织中的外周时钟也受昼夜节律行为(如体温和食物摄入)影响产生的间接信号^[12],在组织特异性功能的调节中发挥作用。它基本上是基于几个核心生物节律基因的典型反馈环:CLOCK、NPAS2 和 BMAL1 形成一个昼夜节律正反馈环(CPFL),激活隐色素(Cry1, Cry2)和周期因子(Per1, Per2, Per3)的转录,Cry/Per 复合物又抑制 CPFL 的转录。此外,CPFL 的功能也能被其他生物节律基因调节,建立了一个相当精确的分子时钟^[13],调节生物体的细胞代谢、增殖、分化、DNA 损伤修复、凋亡和自噬,维持哺乳动物生物节律。因此,NPAS2 缺乏会导致与生物节律相关的其他基因表达的改变,造成生物节律系统方面的缺陷。

3 NPAS2 在各类疾病中的作用

生物节律是一种时间跟踪节律性生物系统,使生物体能够预测环境变化(如食物供应),并允许它们改变自己的行为 and 生理功能。生物节律基因通过在分子水平上控制和调节睡眠和觉醒、内分泌活动、代谢、细胞增殖和凋亡以及免疫系统,协调细胞、组织和器官的活动,从而有序地进行合作,并表现明显的昼夜节律^[14]。在哺乳动物基因组中,生物节律基因调节 2%~10% 的基因的表达,称为时钟控制基因^[15],以上研究结果表明哺乳动物体内存在广泛的生物节律基因调控。睡眠剥夺、时差、夜班工作和非自然光照都是昼夜节律紊乱的潜在原因,昼夜节律紊乱与糖尿病、抑郁症、心血管问题和癌症等多种疾病的风险有关^[16]。

3.1 NPAS2 与肿瘤 人体昼夜节律机制的破坏可能受到 3 个因素的影响:遗传缺陷、身体老化和生活方式(包括轮班工作制度),这些因素共同或单独可能导致生物节律失调,表现为细胞周期改变、凋亡减

少、细胞代谢改变和褪黑素合成紊乱,在肿瘤的发生发展和抑制中起到直接或间接的作用。各种动物和体外研究发现^[17,18],NPAS2 可以调节癌基因(如 c-myc)、肿瘤抑制基因(如 p53 和 p21)和转录因子等的表达,从而调节细胞周期、凋亡、DNA 损伤和修复系统、侵袭和转移、致癌物代谢和/或解毒等过程。DNA 的修复维持遗传稳定性,保护 DNA 免受内部和外部刺激,一旦人类生物节律基因发生突变(由于自发突变、长期熬夜或其他环境因素),则可能导致不可逆转的紊乱和 DNA 修复能力的丧失。国际癌症研究机构(IARC)在 2007 年将“涉及昼夜节律破坏的轮班工作”归类为可能对人类致癌(2A 组)的因素之一^[19]。流行病学研究表明,正常昼夜节律的破坏可能增加多种癌症的风险,如乳腺癌^[20]、前列腺癌^[21]、结直肠癌^[22]、非小细胞肺癌^[23]、肝癌^[24]、胃癌^[25]、卵巢癌^[26]、甲状腺癌^[27]、黑色素瘤^[28]和子宫内膜癌^[29,30]等。

另有实验数据表明^[31,32],NPAS2 的低表达加速细胞生长和肿瘤细胞周期进展,在癌症的进展中起着独特和关键的作用,且生物节律基因多态性与多种癌症风险相关。例如,夜班妇女患乳腺癌的风险较高,而昼夜节律不规则的乳腺癌患者预后更差^[20];生物节律的破坏促进了肺癌的发生,为肺癌患者有希望的诊断标志^[33],也可作为非小细胞肺癌的独立预后标志^[34];昼夜节律紊乱影响脂肪肉瘤患者的生存率,在软组织肉瘤患者易感性或预后中也起决定性作用^[35];NPAS2 调节作为膀胱癌标志物的几个基因的表达,并进一步降低膀胱癌细胞的迁移能力^[36];研究发现,生物节律基因包括 NPAS2 可能是参与识别肝细胞癌免疫浸润调节因子^[37,38];生物节律的变化增加了内分泌组织不同癌症的风险,因为这些组织需要每天进行增殖以进行活动,相当一部分内分泌信号是由生物节律基因控制的^[39];正常前列腺癌的发展取决于雄激素水平,NPAS2 可能与双氢睾酮相互作用,从而影响雄激素受体依赖性信号通路,导致前列腺癌的发生^[40],而在夜班工人中观察到侵袭性前列腺癌与 NPAS2 存在显著关联,NPAS2 表达下调与前列腺癌患者无进展生存期缩短密切相关^[41];NPAS2 低表达促进结直肠癌细胞增殖和侵袭,并增加细胞伤口愈合能力,表明 NPAS2 具有关键的肿瘤抑制作用,其高表达与总生存期(OS)呈正相关^[22],生物钟可能是结肠直肠癌进展的控制点^[42];昼夜节律途径的破坏也可导致白血病细胞增殖受损、髓样细胞分化增强和白血病干细胞耗竭^[43]。

相反,也有研究发现^[44],NPAS2 在肝细胞癌(HCC)中上调,其高表达与 HCC 患者的侵袭性临床特征和低 OS 相关,上调细胞分裂周期 25A 的表达、抑制线粒体依赖性内在凋亡以促进 HCC 细胞存活,表明 NPAS2 作为癌基因促进肝癌细胞增殖参与肝癌发生的关键过程。此外,NPAS2 对糖代谢的重新编程和肝癌的进展有重要作用,表明 NPAS2 可能作为一个重要的治疗靶点,使导致 HCC 进展的葡萄糖代谢异常正常化^[24]。这些矛盾可以解释为 NPAS2 的表达水平和功能是肿瘤类型特异性的,在急性髓系白血病中也观察到了这些结果^[45]。

NPAS2 的表达水平与癌症预后和化疗敏感性也有关,被认为是人类恶性肿瘤的潜在风险生物标志物^[46]。许多抗癌药物在给药时会发生显著变化,其生物行为,如吸收、分布、代谢和消除都遵循昼夜节律。研究发现^[47],抗癌药物在不同的给药时间内表现出不同的抗癌活性和不良反应。另有研究发现^[48],NPAS2 水平与神经祖细胞 NPC 细胞的放射抗性相关。因此,NPAS2 基因具有作为恶性疾病的一个有希望的靶点或可行的预后指标的潜力。

3.2 NPAS2 与其他疾病 除肿瘤之外,生物节律的破坏还可导致很多病理性疾病的发生、发展,如心血管疾病^[49]、糖尿病、抑郁症、帕金森病^[50]、不孕症和伤口愈合受损^[51]等。在 NPAS2 缺陷小鼠中,发现行为适应性和睡眠的昼夜节律模式发生改变^[52]。心血管疾病^[53]及肾脏疾病^[54]都是功能性和节律性的,由于器官由异质性细胞群组成,因此可能存在不同细胞类型的细胞特异性昼夜节律形式和表达模式^[55]。研究表明^[56],NPAS2 在皮肤成纤维细胞中高度表达,NPAS2 缺陷的成纤维细胞加速皮肤伤口愈合和真皮胶原重建。NPAS2 通过肝星状细胞中转录因子 Hes1 的直接转录激活促进肝纤维化^[57]。NPAS2 过表达对小鼠心脏成纤维细胞增殖、迁移和胶原生成的影响^[49]。

各种免疫系统成分也受生物节律基因的影响,表现为细胞因子表达的每日节律性变化、巨噬细胞聚集到炎症部位、中性粒细胞成熟或吞噬作用。因此,生物节律紊乱可导致炎症的增强^[58]。研究发现^[59],炎症性肠病患者结肠粘膜内炎症细胞的核心生物节律蛋白表达降低,表明昼夜节律失调是炎症性肠病发生的促因。另有研究发现^[60],肠道微生物群也会影响宿主生物钟。生物节律紊乱与代谢综合征(如肥胖和 2 型糖尿病)的发病率增加有关^[61]。生物节

律基因控制着关键的生理功能和能量平衡。Aslam M 等^[62]研究发现,生物节律基因的表达与餐后甘油三酯和胰岛素抵抗等参数之间有显著相关性。且 O'Neil DS 等^[63]研究也发现,肝脏中 NPAS2 的表达是母体高脂肪饮食在胎儿发育期间引起代谢紊乱的关键。

4 总结

总之,NPAS2 作为目前发现的最大的生物节律基因,参与哺乳动物昼夜节律的周期调控,对于生理内环境稳定的维持至关重要,其功能的破坏与各种病理过程及疾病的产生尤其是癌症的发生发展和预后甚至化疗敏感性及抗癌药物密切相关,其作为恶性疾病的一个有希望的靶点及可行的预后指标前景远大。

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