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· 综述 ·

评估免疫检查点抑制剂治疗非小细胞肺癌预后的生物标志物

Biomarkers for evaluating the prognosis of non-small cell lung cancer treated with immune checkpoint inhibitors

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[摘要] 免疫检查点抑制剂(ICI)是一种备受关注的肿瘤免疫治疗手段,可通过阻断免疫检查点信号转导来恢复甚至增强T淋巴细胞的抗肿瘤免疫反应以达到抗肿瘤的治疗目的。PD-L1表达水平或可作为派姆单抗的一线使用标准;较高的肿瘤突变负荷(TMB)增加癌细胞抗原表达,使后者易被免疫细胞监视定位并清除,被定义为预测ICI疗效的生物标志物;错配修复基因(MMR)与MSI具有高度一致性,在多种实体瘤中具有预后预测作用;肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞联合TNM分期评估非小细胞肺癌患者预后准确性甚至优于病理标准,通过检测炎症因子的基因表达水平评估T细胞炎症基因表达谱可预测ICI的治疗效果;体细胞突变状态与免疫治疗的预后有关;低水平的中性/淋巴细胞比值(NLR)可能是免疫相关不良事件发生的独立预测因素;肠道微生物通过影响TIL水平干预免疫治疗的效果;除此以外还有其他预测因素可供参考。梳理总结预测相关标志物,分析其价值性与局限性,可为临床选择适合患者的治疗方案,也可使患者临床获益达到最大。

[关键词] 非小细胞肺癌;免疫治疗;免疫检查点抑制剂;生物标志物;PD-1/PD-L1;CTLA-4

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肺癌的病死数占所有癌症死亡总数的18%,严重威胁人类生命健康^[1],其中85%左右为NSCLC,发现时大多是晚期,不适合手术治疗,5年生存率仅为5%^[2]。传统放化疗、手术以及靶向治疗的效果均不能让人满意。随着对肿瘤免疫逃逸机制的不断深入研究,免疫检查点抑制剂(immune checkpoint inhibitor, ICI)成为一种备受关注的肿瘤免疫治疗手段,为NSCLC患者带来新的曙光。最具代表性的ICI主要分为两类:CTLA-4抑制剂和PD-1/PD-L1抑制剂^[3],主要通过阻断免疫抑制信号通路、激活免疫系统、恢复甚至增强T淋巴细胞介导的免疫反应,从而加强对肿瘤细胞的杀伤能力^[4-5]。但目前面临一个重要的问题,即如何通过灵敏性与特异性较高的生物标志物鉴别免疫治疗的优势人群,使NSCLC患者免受不必要的治疗和不良反应的影响。本文以ICI的临床研究为基础,对目前已知的ICI治疗获益标志物进行综述,以期更好地指导临床。

1 PD-L1

PD-1/PD-L1阻断剂已被批准为NSCLC的标准治疗方案,通过免疫组化法检测肿瘤细胞PD-L1表达水平,是目前FDA批准的将其阻断剂应用于临床实践的唯一指标^[6]。合并8项临床研究数据的Meta分析结果^[7]显示,与PD-L1阴性患者相比较,PD-L1阳性患者分别在使用派姆单抗,纳武利尤单抗和阿替利珠单抗治疗后的ORR均显著升高[派姆单抗:

0.43(95% CI:0.34~0.51) vs 0.13(95% CI,0.08~0.18),纳武利尤单抗:0.30(95% CI: 0.23~0.38) vs 0.11(95% CI:0.07~0.16),阿替利珠单抗:0.33(95% CI: 0.24~0.41) vs 0.09(95% CI: 0.04~0.14)]。在细胞学组和组织学组中分别以1%和50%为PD-L1的分界点,PD-L1高表达的患者中位PFS显著优于PD-L1低表达的患者(均P<0.01)^[8]。PERETS等^[9]以肿瘤比例评分(tumor proportion score,TPS)作为连续变量评估PD-L1的表达水平,发现PD-L1高的患者在接受quavonlimab(抗CTLA-4单抗)与派姆单抗联合治疗后有更好的最佳总体反应(best overall response, BOR),并且PD-L1水平与患者的PFS显著相关(P=0.015,P=0.037)。RECK等^[10]的研究将派姆单抗治疗与铂双重化疗(卡铂+培美曲塞或吉西他滨或紫杉醇、顺铂+培美曲塞或吉西他滨)进行比较,发现在转移性NSCLC伴PD-L1肿瘤比例评分TPS>50%的患者群体中,派姆单抗组患者中位OS远超化疗组(30.0 vs 14.2个月,P=0.002)。BYLICKI等^[11]研究发现,PD-L1TPS≥50%和TPS≥20%、TPS≥1%的患者

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经派姆单抗治疗后,OS均优于化疗组,分别为20.0 vs 12.2个月、17.7 vs 13.0个月、16.7 vs 12.1个月($P=0.000\ 3, P=0.002\ 0, P=0.001\ 8$),且TPS越高OS越长;然而只有PD-L1 TPS $\geqslant 50\%$ 的患者在接受免疫治疗与化疗后OS差异具有统计学意义。因此,PD-L1 TPS $\geqslant 50\%$ 是一线使用派姆单抗的标准。

虽然PD-L1表达水平的高低对预测药物疗效具有一定价值,但仍有局限。首先,肿瘤细胞和免疫细胞均可表达PD-L1,其表达水平受多种调控通路及炎症因子的影响,并且具有高度的异质性^[12-15];其次,PD-L1的检测缺乏统一的标准,不同的临床试验所用的试剂、检测平台不同,因而对阳性的定义不同^[16];最后,PD-L1抑制剂使用的标准不同,一线使用派姆单抗的标准是PD-L1 TPS $\geqslant 50\%$,而二线使用PD-1/PD-L1抑制剂的标准尚未统一,如派姆单抗治疗需要PD-L1 TPS $\geqslant 1\%$,而纳武利尤单抗和阿特朱单抗治疗则无需确认PD-L1表达^[17]。如何为患者选择最合适的治疗药物还需要进一步研究。

2 肿瘤突变负荷(tumor mutation burden, TMB)

肿瘤基因组中每个编码区的突变总数(包括碱基替换和短插入/缺失)被定义为TMB^[18]。高TMB的肿瘤细胞表达多种新抗原,新抗原越多、免疫系统定位和破坏肿瘤细胞的概率就越高。大量研究^[19-21]证实,TMB较高的患者对ICI治疗更敏感。因此,TMB被定义为预测ICI疗效的生物标志物。目前TMB的检测途径有两种,一种是检测组织TMB(tissue TMB,tTMB),该方法具有侵入性;另一种途径是采用患者血浆检测肿瘤循环DNA(circulating tumor DNA, ctDNA)的血液TMB(blood TMB,bTMB)^[22]。

2.1 tTMB

NSCLC患者经ICI治疗(单用抗PD-1/抗PD-L1治疗或抗PD-1/抗PD-L1联合抗CTLA-4治疗)后,tTMB水平高的患者,其PFS、OS、ORR、DCR均显著高于tTMB水平低的患者^[15,23]。READY等^[20]研究显示,接受纳武利尤单抗联合伊匹单抗治疗的NSCLC患者中,tTMB $>10\text{ mut/Mb}$ 的亚组ORR与中位PFS均优于TMR $<10\text{ mut/Mb}$ 的亚组,ORR分别为44%和12%,中位PFS分别为7.1和2.6个月,且疗效与PD-L1的表达水平无关。研究^[24]发现,在tTMB $>10\text{ mut/Mb}$ 的亚组中,纳武利尤单抗联合伊匹单抗治疗组与含铂双药化疗组(基于肿瘤组织学类型)比,患者PFS、ORR、缓解持续时间(duration of response, DOR),明显延长与升高,但对于TMB $<10\text{ mut/Mb}$ 的患者,免疫治疗与化疗相比未能延长中位PFS。另一方面,PAZ-ARES等^[25]研究结果显示,无论是派姆

单抗组还是化疗组,tTMB表达水平与RR、PFS和OS均无相关。

2.2 bTMB

一项回顾性研究表明,接受抗PD-1抗体治疗的晚期NSCLC患者中bTMB低($<6\text{ mut/Mb}$)的患者PFS和ORR显著短于bTMB高($<6\text{ mut/Mb}$)的患者($P<0.01, P=0.02$)^[26]。RIZVI等^[27]研究发现在bTMB $\geqslant 20\text{ mut/Mb}$ 的NSCLC患者中,度伐利尤单抗联合曲美木单抗治疗在改善患者OS和24个月OS率方面,优于以铂为基础的双重化疗(21.9 vs 10.0个月,48.1% vs 19.4%)。然而JIANG等^[28]通过评估动态bTMB(ΔbTMB)变化预测NSCLC患者免疫治疗的效果,发现 $\Delta\text{bTMB}\geqslant 0$ (与治疗前相比水平升高或不变)患者的PFS和OS明显短于 $\Delta\text{bTMB}<0$ 的患者($P<0.001, P<0.001$)。并且治疗中bTMB低且 $\Delta\text{bTMB}<0$ 的患者PFS和OS最长,治疗中bTMB低且 $\Delta\text{bTMB}<0$ 或 $\Delta\text{bTMB}\geqslant 0$ 的患者具有中等PFS和OS,而治疗中bTMB高且 $\Delta\text{bTMB}>0$ 的患者PFS和OS最差^[28]。

然而无论是tTMB还是bTMB,用于预测ICI的疗效均有一定的局限性。不同的临床试验所选用的TMB阈值、检测方法和技术不同,且TMB具有较大的异质性,选取部位不同,检测结果也不一致^[29]。此外,tTMB检测成本高、耗时长,在临床实践中具有一定的局限性^[23]。bTMB检测的限制条件更多,首先,由于ctDNA输入量低、肿瘤DNA脱落率低,因而不易被检测到^[27];其次,血液中ctDNA必须包含等位基因频率 $\geqslant 1\%$ 的突变,才能得到有效评分^[30];bTMB计算仅基于单核苷酸变异(single nucleotide variants, SNV),以致于bTMB检测可能会遗漏有大量缺失、突变但SNV相对较少的肿瘤患者^[30]。

3 错配修复基因(mismatch repair gene, MMR)和MSI

MMR突变导致微卫星序列中发生复制错误的DNA无法修复,引起MSI^[16],MMR缺陷(MMR deficiency, dMMR)和高水平微卫星不稳定性(microsatellite instability-high, MSI-H)之间存在较高的一致性,二者几乎可以互换使用。MSI-H肿瘤细胞表达大量的新抗原,更易被免疫系统识别、清除^[31]。在众多预测指标中,dMMR和MSI-H表现出独特的优势,具有dMMR或MSI-H的肿瘤对ICI敏感,特别是对PD-1和PD-L1抑制剂敏感^[32]。FDA批准派姆单抗可用于治疗转移性和不可切除的MSI-H、dMMR实体瘤,该方案与患者年龄、肿瘤部位和组织病理学类型无关^[33]。相关临床研究^[34]证实,在消化道和妇科肿瘤中MSI-H可作为免疫治疗的预后标志物。



OLIVARES 等^[35]研究发现, dMMR 的 NSCLC 患者进行免疫治疗后可以获得更好的 OR ($P=0.045$)。然而, dMMR/MSI-H 在肺癌中的发生率仅为 0.4%^[36], 十分罕见。此外, MSI 的检测频率标准尚未统一, 还需要对 MSI 的定义、基因的分析数量以及微卫星标记的类型进行标准化规定^[37]。dMMR/MIS-H 作为临床评估肺癌 ICI 尤其抗 PD-1/PD-L1 治疗疗效的生物标志物仍需进一步研究。

4 TIL 和 T 细胞炎症基因表达谱(gene expression profiles, GEP)

肿瘤微环境(tumor microenvironment, TME)是免疫系统与肿瘤相互作用的关键, 在肿瘤的发生发展、侵袭转移中发挥重要作用。TIL 是存在于 TME 中的一种参与抗肿瘤免疫反应的淋巴细胞^[38-39]。TIL 与肿瘤的免疫治疗密切相关, 甚至可作为预测标志物来评估 ICI 的疗效。相关研究^[40]证实, 在免疫治疗中, 高浸润 TIL (>10%) 的 NSCLC 患者, 其 OS 和 PFS 均显著优于低浸润 TIL (<10%) 的患者 ($P=0.007$, $P<0.0001$), 并且 TIL 联合 TNM 分期评估 NSCLC 患者预后, 其准确性甚至优于病理标准^[41]。

目前用 TIL 评估 ICI 疗效的方式包括:(1)TIL 中特定 T 细胞的数量或密度;(2)TIL 中不同种 T 细胞之间的比值;(3)TIL 中特定 T 细胞的密度与不同种 T 细胞之间的比值联合等。肿瘤基质浸润淋巴细胞(stromal tumor-infiltrating lymphocyte, sTIL)中 CD8⁺ 或 CD4⁺ TIL 细胞高浸润的 NSCLC 患者的中位 OS 均显著高于中、低浸润患者 ($P=0.035$, $P=0.010$)^[42]。还有研究发现, 在接受抗 PD-1 治疗的患者群体中, Treg 细胞浸润高的患者具有更长的 PFS 和 OS ($P=0.008$, $P=0.01$), 并且享有持久的临床益处(durable clinical benefit, DCB)^[43]。当 CD8⁺/CD4⁺ TIL 细胞比值>2 时, NSCLC 患者对免疫治疗的应答率较高(43%~50%, $P=0.035$)^[44]。也有研究^[45]显示, CD3⁺ TIL 细胞数量 617.5 个/mm² 和 FOXP3⁺/CD8⁺ TIL 细胞比例 25%, 是应答者和非应答者之间的最佳区分点, 分别与预后呈正、负相关^[45]。但在 PD-L1 阳性肿瘤亚组内, CD8⁺ T 细胞高浸润(≥ 575 个/mm²)组与 CD8⁺ T 细胞低浸润(<575 个/mm²)组相比, 中位 DFS 和中位 OS 的 DFS 没有显著差异^[46]。由于缺乏统一的评估标准和区分点, TIL 尚不能作为预测标志物用于临床, 还需要继续探索、制定标准化的方法来评估和量化肿瘤中的免疫浸润水平^[47]。

细胞因子是细胞间传递信号的物质, 在肿瘤相关性炎症方面发挥重要作用。PD-1/PD-L1 表达被阻断后, T 细胞、NK 细胞、巨噬细胞以及肿瘤浸润树突

状细胞等免疫细胞被激活, 炎症因子的分泌增加, 而 IFN-γ 和 IL-2 等炎症因子能够促进 PD-L1 的表达^[13]。这提示 ICI 启动后免疫细胞被激活, 炎症因子可作为一种生物标志物, 用于预测癌症对免疫治疗的反应。此外, 通过检测炎症因子的基因表达水平评估 T 细胞炎性 GEP 亦可预测 ICI 的治疗效果^[48-49]。AYERS 等^[48]获取了 18 个基因(TIGIT、CD27、CD8A、LAG3、CXCR6 等)的 T 细胞炎症 GEP, 用于预测实体瘤对派姆单抗的治疗反应。相比于 PD-L1 免疫组化检测, GEP 能够更敏感地预测患者疗效应答。CRISTESCU 等^[50]的研究也表明 TMB 和 T 细胞炎症 GEP 是对派姆单抗反应的独立预测指标。与 T 细胞炎症 GEP 评分低的患者相比, T 细胞炎症 GEP 评分高的患者的 PFS 较长^[50]。

5 体细胞突变

体细胞突变基因表达特定抗原会增强肿瘤细胞的免疫原性, 从而更易被 T 淋巴细胞识别并清除^[51]。而免疫疗法能增强 T 淋巴细胞的抗肿瘤毒性^[52], 理论上此类患者对免疫疗法有较好的反应, 但目前研究对此尚未得出明确结论。

临床研究^[53]数据表明, ALK 重排和 EGFR 突变的患者从 ICI 中获益甚微。但 Meta 分析显示, 无论 PD-L1 表达与否, 派姆单抗联合化疗相比单用化疗都能显著改善野生型 EGFR(EGFR-WT) 或 ALK(ALK-WT) NSCLC 患者的 PFS 和 OS, 并且具有可控的安全性和耐受性^[54]。因此, 派姆单抗联合化疗被推荐为治疗晚期 EGFR-WT 或 ALK-WT NSCLC 一线方案。而 YAMADA 等^[55]研究发现, 与普通 EGFR 突变(如外显子 19 缺失和外显子 21 的 L858R 突变)的患者相比, 外显子 18 的 G719X 突变和外显子 20 插入的 EGFR 突变患者经免疫治疗后, 具有更好的 ORR、DCR、PFS 和 TTF[(71% vs 35.7%), (57% vs 7%), (256 vs 50) 天, (256 vs 48) 天]。

TP53 和 KRAS 突变在促进 PD-L1 表达、TIL 浸润和增强肿瘤免疫原性等方面具有显著意义^[56]。与 KRAS-WT 患者相比, 派姆单抗显著延长 TP53/KRAS-MUT 患者的中位 PFS(TP53-MUT vs KRAS-MUT vs KRAS-WT: 14.5 vs 14.7 vs 3.5 个月, $P=0.012$), 并且在治疗期间大多数 TP53-MUT 患者享有持久的临床益处(durable clinical benefit, DCB)^[56]。Meta 分析也证实, ICI 与多西紫杉醇化疗相比, 显著提高了 KRAS-MUT NSCLC 患者的 OS, 但对于 KRAS-WT NSCLC 患者, ICI 治疗则未必优于化疗^[57]。在接受 ICI 治疗的 NSCLC 患者中, TP53/KMT2C-MUT 患者具有更长的 PFS 和更持久 DCB, 并且 TP53 突变



联合 KMT2C 或 KRAS 突变能增强预测效果, 从而扩大 ICI 治疗的获益的人群^[58]。除此之外, 通过生物信息学方法研究发现 PTPRD, ZFHX3, PAK7 等基因突变也是 ICI 的预后标志物^[59-61]。由此可知, 体细胞的突变状态与 ICI 治疗的预后有关, 但用于评估预后的驱动基因还需要进一步的研究验证。

6 中性/淋巴细胞比值 (neutrophil to leukocyte ratio, NLR)

中性粒细胞升高会抑制免疫系统抗肿瘤反应, 促进肿瘤血管生成并加速肿瘤增殖^[62]; 而淋巴细胞数量的降低, 会减弱淋巴细胞介导的免疫反应, 因此 NLR 的变化可以反映机体的抗肿瘤状态, 可能成为预测 ICI 治疗效果的标志物。

晚期 NSCLC 患者经 ICI 治疗后, 其 PFS 和 OS 与 NLR 水平呈正相关^[63]。PAVAN 等^[64]通过多变量分析证实, 免疫治疗后 NLR<3 的 NSCLC 患者的 DCR、中位 PFS 与 OS 均优于 NLR≥3 的患者。多中心临床试验数据显示, 与 NLR>5 的 NSCLC 亚组相比, 纳武利尤单抗可以显著改善 NLR<5 患者的 PFS 和 OS (7.0 vs 15.0 个月, $P=0.028$; 4.0 vs 6.0 个月, $P=0.001$)^[65]。此外, 还有研究以 2.6 为基线, 经派姆单抗治疗后, NIR<2.6 的 NSCLC 患者具有更高的 ORR ($P<0.01$), 以及更长的 PFS ($P<0.01$) 和 OS ($P<0.01$)^[66]。

综上, NLR 降低可能预示着机体有较好抗肿瘤效果和对免疫治疗的良好反应, 而 NLR 升高则是 NSCLC 的不良预后指标。然而, 临床关于 NLR 的研究还是有限的, 其截断值的选择尚未有统一标准, 并且有研究^[67]显示低 NLR 是免疫相关不良事件(irAE)发生的独立预测因素。因此, NLR 作为预测指标还需要进一步研究。

7 肠道菌群(gut microbiota, GM)

GM 通过代谢与人体形成复杂的相互作用, 并在体内维持相对稳定的丰度和多样性。研究^[68-69]显示 GM 可以影响人体的免疫动力, 在无菌小鼠中进行的粪便微生物群移植实验发现, 与移植对 PD-1 抑制剂无反应的小鼠粪便相比, 移植了对 PD-1 抑制剂有反应的小鼠粪便后, 无菌小鼠的肿瘤显著减小。

免疫抑制剂治疗 NSCLC 患者的预后与 GM 的丰度之间存在关系^[70-71]。GM 中梭菌属、乳球菌科或粪肠球菌属含量高的患者, 对抗 PD-L1 治疗有积极的反应; 然而, 类杆菌属含量高的患者对抗 PD-L1 治疗反应迟钝^[68]。其中, CD4⁺ 和 CD8⁺ T 细胞水平与梭菌属、乳球菌科或粪肠球菌属丰度成正相关, Treg 和髓源性抑制细胞(myeloid-derived suppressor cell, MDSC) 与

类杆菌属丰度呈正相关^[68]。还有研究^[69, 72]发现, 黏蛋白原杆菌、无乳杆菌、与梭状芽孢杆菌目 UCG 001 菌株在受益于免疫治疗的患者粪便中富集, 这提示, 肠道微生物通过影响 TIL 水平干预免疫治疗的效果。GM 多样性(尤其是 α 多样性) 水平与患者预后密切相关, GM 的多样性越高, 患者的 PFS 越长^[73]。抗生素(antibiotics, ATB) 的使用, 会导致肠道菌群失调, 破坏 GM 的平衡及多样性, 进而对 ICI 疗效产生不利影响^[74]。DEROSA 等^[75]研究也证实了接受 ICI 治疗的 NSCLC 患者中, ATB 组比无 ATB 组的中位 PFS 和中位 OS 均显著降低(1.9 vs 3.8 个月; 7.9 vs 24.6 个月)。有研究^[76-77]报道, 在 NSCLC 患者中, ATB 的使用与 ICI 治疗后患者的中位 OS 无关, 可能因为 GM 具有自我调节能力, 免疫治疗过程中, 其组分及功能会逐步恢复。

用肠道菌群来评估 ICI 疗效还有诸多问题需要解决, 如缺乏统一的预测菌群, 收集并确定 GM 组成的方法和技术, 因此对肠道菌群的研究还需要继续完善。

8 其他

临床研究^[78-79]表明, 吸烟与 KRAS 突变和高 TMB 密切相关, 提示吸烟可能是基因突变的诱导因素, 肿瘤细胞的免疫原性增强, 使其对免疫治疗更加敏感。因此, 吸烟史也可以作为评估免疫检查抑制剂的预测因子。NG 等^[80]研究发现, 吸烟状态可能是单一 PD-1/PD-L1 抑制剂治疗效果最重要的预测因素。WANG 等^[78]研究发现, 吸烟状态与 ORR 增加显著相关, 并且既往吸烟和现在吸烟的 NSCLC 患者的 PFS 和 OS 显著优于未吸烟患者。除此之外, ICI 单药治疗前和早期血清白蛋白的下降与晚期非小细胞肺癌的 OS 显著相关^[81]。糖皮质激素的使用也会影响免疫治疗的疗效, 皮质醇通过降低细胞因子(如 CCL5、IL-8 和 IL-6) 的表达水平, 来抑制单核细胞(包括 T 细胞和 CD8⁺ T 细胞) 向肿瘤的迁移, 从而抑制抗肿瘤免疫应答^[49]。临床试验^[82]证实在 NSCLC 免疫治疗开始时使用强的松(10 mg) 与使用强的松(0~10 mg) 相比, 开始时使用强的松(10 mg) 的患者 ORR、中位 PFS 与中位 OS 均显著降低[(10.8% vs 19.7%), 2.0 vs 3.4 个月, 4.9 vs 11.2 个月]。这提示糖皮质激素的使用可能是 NSCLC 的不良预后指标。

9 总结

免疫疗法开创了治疗 NSCLC 的新模式, 与传统的治疗方法相比, 单用 ICI, 或联合放化疗, 可以显著提高 NSCLC 患者 ORR, 并延长的 PFS、OS。但大多



数患者对ICI的治疗不敏感,因此,需要可靠的预测标志物去筛选优势人群。目前已知的生物标志物尚有各自的局限,不能成为最佳的预后标志物。因此,寻找最佳预后标志物成为新的研究方向。相信在未来,免疫疗法会成为更精准有效的治疗方式,为NSCLC患者带来更好的临床效益。

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