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食管癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 的表达及其临床意义*王 涛 宋 东 马牧原 赵 阳 叶晓锋[△]

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摘要 目的:探讨食管癌组织中 β - 链蛋白(β -catenin)、E 钙黏素(E-cadherin)及金属基质蛋白酶-9(MMP-9)的表达及其临床意义。**方法:**应用免疫组织化学染色法对 60 例食管癌患者癌组织和癌旁组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达进行检测,分析其表达与临床病理特征的关系。所有患者随访 24 个月,观察不同 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达患者的生存情况,并分析食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达的相关性。**结果:**食管患者癌组织中 β -catenin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率高于癌旁组织,E-cadherin 蛋白阳性率低于癌旁组织($P<0.05$)。中低分化、TNM 分期为 III+IV 期、有淋巴结转移者 β -catenin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率高于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者,E-cadherin 蛋白阳性率低于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者($P<0.05$)。经 Log-rank 检验发现,癌组织中 β -catenin(-)、E-cadherin(+)、MMP-9(-)患者生存率高于 β -catenin(+)、E-cadherin(-)、MMP-9(+)患者($P<0.05$)。Spearman 相关分析显示,食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关,与 MMP-9 蛋白表达呈正相关($P<0.05$),MMP-9 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关($P<0.05$)。**结论:**食管癌患者存在 β -catenin、MMP-9 异常高表达,E-cadherin 异常低表达,其表达与食管癌的分化程度、TNM 分期、淋巴结转移有关,检测 β -catenin、MMP-9、E-cadherin 的表达情况有助于预测食管癌患者生存预后。

关键词:食管癌; β - 链蛋白;金属基质蛋白酶-9;E 钙黏素;临床病理特征

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Expression and Clinical Significance of β -catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 in Esophageal Carcinoma*WANG Tao, SONG Dong, MA Mu-yuan, ZHAO Yang, YE Xiao-feng[△]

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ABSTRACT Objective: To investigate the expression and clinical significance of β -catenin (β -catenin), E-cadherin (E-cadherin) and matrix metalloproteinase-9 (MMP-9) in esophageal cancer. **Methods:** Immunohistochemical staining was used to detect the levels of β -catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 proteins in cancer and adjacent tissues of 60 patients with esophageal cancer, and the relationship between the expression level and clinicopathological characteristics was analyzed. All patients were followed up for 24 months, the survival of different levels of β -catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 were observed. The expression of β -Catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 in esophageal cancer were analyzed. **Results:** The positive rate of β -catenin and MMP-9 protein in esophageal cancer were higher than those in adjacent tissues, and the positive rate of E-cadherin protein was lower than that in adjacent tissues ($P<0.05$). The positive rates of β -catenin and MMP-9 protein in patients with moderately low differentiation, TNM stage III+IV, lymph node metastasis were higher than those in patients with high differentiation, clinical stage I+II and no lymph node metastasis, and the positive rates of E-cadherin protein were lower than those in patients with high differentiation, clinical stage I+II and no lymph node metastasis ($P<0.05$). Log-rank test showed that the survival rate of β -catenin (-), E-cadherin (+), MMP-9 (-) patients in cancer tissue were higher than those of β -catenin (+), E-cadherin (-), MMP-9 (-) patients ($P<0.05$). Spearman correlation analysis showed that the expression of β -catenin protein was negatively correlated with that of E-cadherin protein, and it was positively correlated with that of MMP-9 ($P<0.05$). The expression of MMP-9 protein was negatively correlated with the expression of E-cadherin protein ($P<0.05$). **Conclusion:** The abnormal high expression of β -catenin and MMP-9, and the abnormal low expression of E-cadherin in esophageal cancer patients, which are closely related to the tissue differentiation, TNM stage and lymph node metastasis, the detection of β -catenin, MMP-9 and E-cadherin expression situation are helpful to predict the survival prognosis of esophageal cancer patients.

Key words: Esophageal cancer; β -chain protein; Metalloproteinase-9; E-cadherin; Clinicopathological characteristics

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前言

食管癌是消化系统常见的恶性肿瘤,根据统计我国每年因食管癌死亡的患者约有 15 万人,其发病率在我国恶性肿瘤中位居第 5 位,病死率位居第 4 位,严重影响人们健康与生活^[1]。食管癌早期症状和体征多不明显,患者确诊时往往已处于中晚期,从而导致食管癌生存率较低,如何早期诊断食管癌患者并判断预后是临床医生面临的重要问题。研究表明,食管癌的发生和发展是一个多基因参与、多步骤的复杂过程^[2,3]。 β -链蛋白(β -catenin)是一种重要的黏附因子,主要介导细胞间的黏附作用,可以起到促进肿瘤浸润和转移作用^[4]。E 钙黏素(E-cadherin)是一种细胞黏着蛋白,在细胞识别、迁移和分化中发挥重要作用^[5]。金属基质蛋白酶-9 (Matrix metalloproteinase-9, MMP-9)是金属基质蛋白酶家族的重要成员,可以降解细胞外基质内的弹性纤维和明胶,在肿瘤浸润和转移中发挥重要的作用^[6]。本研究分析食管癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 的表达及其临床意义,旨在为食管癌的诊断和治疗提供依据。

1 资料与方法

1.1 一般资料

收集 2014 年 6 月~2017 年 6 月到我行手术治疗的 60 例食管癌患者的手术标本,纳入标准:(1)所有患者均经手术切除并由病理检查确诊为食管鳞癌;(2)患者初次治疗,术前未经放、化疗及免疫治疗;(3)同时有癌组织和癌旁组织标本;(4)患者对研究知情同意,临床资料完整。排除标准:(1)合并其他系统恶性肿瘤;(2)合并自身免疫疾病和免疫功能异常;(3)合并重度感染、内分泌疾病和血液系统疾病。男性 38 例,女性 22 例,年龄 38~79 岁,平均(59.78 $\pm$ 8.29)岁;分化程度:低分化 14 例、中分化 26 例、高分化 20 例。TNM 分期:I 期 7 例、II 期 28 例、III 期 21 例、IV 期 4 例;有淋巴结转移 19 例,无淋巴结转移 41 例。本研究经医院伦理委员会同意。

1.2 主要试剂

鼠抗人 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 单克隆抗体(购自美国 Abcam 公司);免疫组化试剂盒(购自美国 Zymed 公司);

3%过氧化氢、DAB 显色剂、酶标羊抗鼠聚合物(购自武汉博士德生物有限公司)。

1.3 方法

所有患者均行手术切除治疗,在手术中取病变处癌组织及癌旁组织,经 10%中性甲醛固定,石蜡包埋,制成 4 μ m 厚度连续切片。将切片常规二甲苯脱蜡,100%、95%、90%、85%、80%、75%、70%梯度乙醇水化,PBS 冲洗后,高温高压抗原修复 10 min,应用 3%过氧化氢去除内源性过氧化物酶,加入山羊血清,然后分别加入鼠抗人 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 单克隆一抗,4℃下过夜,加入生物学二抗,加入 DAB 进行显色,苏木素复染,70%、75%、80%、85%、90%、95%、100%梯度乙醇脱水透明,中性树胶封片后在显微镜下观察。用 PBS 代替生物学一抗进行阴性对照。

1.4 结果判别

β -catenin 阳性表达位于细胞膜,E-cadherin 阳性表达位于细胞膜和细胞质,MMP-9 阳性表达位于细胞质,当出现黄色、棕黄色或棕褐色颗粒为阳性。采用半定量积分法^[7]对结果进行赋分,将每个切片在 400 倍高倍镜下随机观察 10 个视野进行均值后依据以下方案进行赋分:(1)细胞所占百分比计分:无,0 分; $\leq$ 25%,1 分;26~50%,2 分;51~75%,3 分; $>$ 75%,4 分;(2)染色程度计分:无着色 0 分,淡黄色 1 分,棕黄色 2 分,黄褐色 3 分。将两项结果乘积作为总分, $\geq$ 4 分为阳性, $<$ 4 分为阴性。

1.5 统计学处理

数据采用 SPSS25.0 软件处理与分析,计数资料以[n(%)]表示,实施 χ^2 检验,应用 Log_rank 检验分析生存状况,并应用 Spearman 相关分析分析数据的相关性, $P<0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 食管癌组织和癌旁组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况比较

食管患者癌组织中 β -catenin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率高于癌旁组织,E-cadherin 蛋白阳性率低于癌旁组织 ($P<0.05$),见表 1。

表 1 食管癌组织和癌旁组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况比较

Table 1 Comparison of expression of β -Catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 in esophageal cancer and adjacent tissues

Groups	n	β -catenin		E-cadherin		MMP-9	
		Positive number	Positive rate(%)	Positive number	Positive rate(%)	Positive number	Positive rate(%)
Cancer tissues	60	43	71.67	16	26.67	40	66.67
Adjacent tissues	60	9	15.00	41	68.33	11	18.33
χ^2			39.231		20.886		28.679
P			0.000		0.000		0.000

2.2 食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况与临床病理特征的关系

中低分化、TNM 分期为 III+IV 期、有淋巴结转移者 β -catenin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率高于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者,E-cadherin 蛋白阳性率低于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者 ($P<0.05$),不同性别、年龄者

β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率比较无统计学差异 ($P>0.05$),见表 2。

2.3 不同 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况的食管癌患者生存期比较

所有患者均完成 2 年(24 个月)的随访,至随访结束存活 38 例,死亡 22 例, β -catenin(+)、 β -catenin(-)患者生存率分别

为 55.81% (24/43)、82.35% (14/17), E-cadherin (+)、E-cadherin (-) 患者生存率分别为 87.50% (14/16)、54.55% (24/44), MMP-9 (+)、MMP-9 (-) 生存率分别为 55.00% (22/40)、80.00% (16/20), 经 Log_rank 检验发现, 癌组织中 β -catenin (-)、E-cadherin (+)、MMP-9 (-) 患者生存率高于 β -catenin (+)、E-cadherin (-)、MMP-9 (+) 患者 ($P < 0.05$), 见图 1。

表 2 食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况与临床病理特征的关系

Table 2 The relationship between the expression of β -Catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 protein and the clinicopathological characteristics in esophageal cancer

Clinicopatho-logical characteristics	n	β -catenin		χ^2	P	E-cadherin		χ^2	P	MMP-9		χ^2	P
		Positive number	Positive rate(%)			Positive number	Positive rate (%)			Positive number	Positive rate(%)		
Gender													
Male	38	28	73.68	0.208	0.649	10	26.32	0.007	0.93	25	65.79	0.036	0.850
Female	22	15	68.18			6	27.27			15	68.18		
Age(years)													
<60	33	24	72.73	0.041	0.840	9	27.27	0.518	0.47	21	63.64	0.303	0.582
≥ 60	27	19	70.37			7	25.93			19	70.37		
Tissue differentiation													
Moderately low differentiation	40	33	82.50	6.936	0.008	6	15.00	8.352	0.00	33	82.50	13.538	0.000
High differentiation	20	10	50.00			10	50.00			7	35.00		
TNM stage													
Stage I+II	35	21	60.00	5.631	0.018	14	40.00	7.636	0.00	18	51.43	8.777	0.003
Stage III+IV	25	22	88.00			2	8.00			22	88.00		
Lymph node metastasis													
Yes	19	18	94.74	7.288	0.007	1	5.26	6.514	0.01	18	94.74	9.859	0.002
No	41	25	60.98			15	36.59			22	53.66		

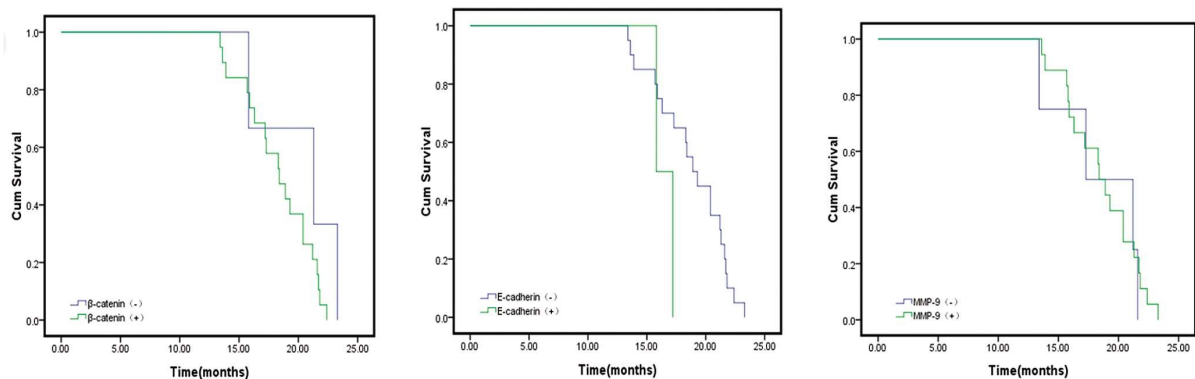


图 1 不同 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况的食管癌患者生存曲线

Fig. 1 Survival curve of esophageal cancer patients with different expression of β -Catenin, E-cadherin and MMP-9 protein

2.4 食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达的相关性

Spearman 相关分析显示, 食管癌患者癌组织中 β -catenin 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关 ($rs = -0.783, P = 0.000$), 与 MMP-9 蛋白表达呈正相关 ($rs = 0.632, P = 0.004$), MMP-9 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关 ($rs = -0.602, P = 0.007$)。

3 讨论

食管癌的病因复杂, 目前仍未完全明确, 流行病学研究表明维生素缺乏、真菌感染、亚硝酸盐和遗传因素等均是影响食管癌发生的相关因素^[8,9]。食管癌的发病率在不同地区、民族间存在较大的差异, 而我国是食管癌的高发地区^[10]。目前临床上对食管癌主要采用以手术切除为主的综合治疗方法, 通过治疗可以将肿瘤病灶切除, 术后根据患者情况选择放化疗, 即便如此食管癌患者治疗后 5 年存活率仍然较低。造成食管癌患者生存率低的主要原因有: (1) 食管癌早期缺乏特异性的临床表现

和有效的诊断指标,大多数患者就诊时已处于中晚期^[11-13];(2)食管癌治疗后肿瘤复发率和转移率较高,复发和转移是导致患者死亡的主要原因^[14-16]。因此,研究食管癌发生、发展的机制,并寻找食管癌诊断和预后判断的有效指标对于指导临床治疗具有重要的意义。

β -catenin 最早作为一种黏附分子被发现,研究表明 β -catenin 可以介导细胞间的黏附作用^[17]。近年来有学者发现, β -catenin 可以与 E-cadherin 形成复合物,并进一步激活 Wnt 信号通路,调节细胞的增殖和分化^[18]。Mao XM 等发现, β -catenin 与 E-cadherin 的结合是细胞恶性转化的关键环节,并进一步促进肿瘤的浸润和转移^[19]。E-cadherin 是一种钙离子依赖性跨膜糖蛋白,在介导上皮细胞连接中起到重要作用^[20,21]。研究表明 E-cadherin 是一种肿瘤转移抑制因子,当其表达降低时,可以导致细胞上皮间质转化,加快肿瘤发展进程^[22]。E-cadherin 还通过阻断 Wnt 信号通路,促进细胞分化,抑制肿瘤发生^[23]。MMP-9 可以通过降解细胞外基质内的弹性纤维和明胶,导致细胞外基质受损,促进肿瘤细胞通过基底膜,从而促进肿瘤细胞的浸润和转移^[24]。Xia T 等报道,MMP-9 可以破坏肿瘤细胞周围的细胞外基质及血管内皮细胞,促进肿瘤向血管内扩散,从而增加肿瘤的转移几率^[25]。本研究对食管癌患者癌组织和癌旁组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 蛋白表达情况进行了分析,结果显示在食管癌组织中存在 β -catenin、MMP-9 蛋白异常高表达和 E-cadherin 蛋白异常低表达,表明 β -catenin、E-cadherin 及 MMP-9 在食管癌发生和发展中起到了重要作用,分析其原因可能是 β -catenin 通过与 E-cadherin 结合导致 E-cadherin 失活,并进一步激活 Wnt 信号通路,抑制食管细胞分化,促进食管癌的发生、发展^[26,27],而 MMP-9 可能通过激活某些信号通路促进食管癌发生^[28]。进一步分析发现,中低分化、TNM 分期为 III+IV 期、有淋巴结转移者 β -catenin 及 MMP-9 蛋白阳性率高于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者,E-cadherin 蛋白阳性率低于高分化、TNM 分期为 I+II 期、无淋巴结转移者,表明 β -catenin、MMP-9 蛋白异常高表达可以促进食管癌的发展和转移,而 E-cadherin 蛋白异常低表达可以促进食管癌的发展和转移。分析其原因可能是 MMP-9 通过降解细胞外基质、破坏血管内皮促进食管癌细胞的浸润和转移;而 β -catenin 则通过与 E-cadherin 结合,激活 Wnt 信号通路,并导致上皮间质转化,促进食管癌细胞的浸润和转移^[29,30]。本研究结果还发现,癌组织中 β -catenin (-)、E-cadherin (+)、MMP-9 (-) 患者生存率高于 β -catenin (+)、E-cadherin (-)、MMP-9 (+) 患者。提示食管癌组织中 β -catenin、E-cadherin、MMP-9 表达情况与食管癌预后有密切关系,可能对食管癌预后判断提供帮助。此外, β -catenin 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关,与 MMP-9 蛋白表达呈正相关,MMP-9 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关,则提示三者在食管癌发生、发展中可能具有协同作用。 β -catenin 可以通过与 E-cadherin 结合导致 E-cadherin 表达抑制可能是两者呈负相关的主要原因,而 MMP-9 蛋白表达与 E-cadherin 蛋白表达呈负相关具体机制尚需进一步研究证实。

综上所述,食管癌患者存在 β -catenin、MMP-9 异常高表达,E-cadherin 异常低表达,其水平与分化程度、TNM 分期、淋

巴结转移有关,检测 β -catenin、E-cadherin、MMP-9 表达情况有助于预测食管癌患者的生存预后。

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