

· 述评 ·

# 脑胶质瘤中的MET基因变异及其作为治疗靶点的临床实践

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**【摘要】** 脑胶质瘤是一种难治性的颅内原发性恶性肿瘤,肝细胞生长因子(HGF)的过表达、MET基因扩增或突变均会导致MET通路的异常激活。作为经典癌症通路, MET通路的高度激活会促进胶质瘤细胞的增殖、迁移及血管生成和其他肿瘤微环境因素的变化,最终导致肿瘤恶性进展或治疗抵抗。基于对MET基因变异及MET通路在脑胶质瘤发生及进展中重要作用的研究和认识,靶向MET通路的抗癌药物被视为脑胶质瘤治疗最有潜力的发展方向之一。目前,已有多种MET靶向药物被成功研发,并开展了多项针对脑胶质瘤适应证的临床试验。现对脑胶质瘤中MET基因变异的发生特点和作用及MET靶向治疗药物的临床试验进行述评。

**【关键词】** 脑胶质瘤; MET基因变异; MET抑制剂; 临床试验

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**Genomic alterations of MET and the clinical practice of treatment targeting MET in glioma** Hu Huimin, Liu Yanwei, Huang Lijie, Jiang Tao

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**【Abstract】** Glioma is a kind of refractory primary intracranial malignant tumor. Overexpression of hepatocyte growth factor (HGF) and amplification or mutation of MET gene will both lead to abnormal activation of MET pathway. Hyperactivation of MET pathway, the canonical oncogenic pathway, promotes the proliferation, migration, angiogenesis and other tumor microenvironment factors of glioma cells, and eventually lead to malignant progression or therapeutic resistance. Based on the research and understanding of MET gene alterations and the important role of MET pathway in the development and progression of glioma, anticancer drugs targeting MET pathway are regarded as one of the most promising development directions of glioma therapy. Currently, a variety of drugs targeting MET had been successfully developed and several clinical trials had been proposed for application of these drugs in glioma treatment. This paper reviews the characteristics and role of MET alterations in glioma, as well as clinical trials of drugs targeting MET pathway.

**【Key words】** Glioma; MET alterations; MET inhibitor; Clinical trial

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胶质瘤是最常见的原发性颅内肿瘤,约占颅内肿瘤的46%。其中恶性程度最高的胶质母细胞瘤(glioblastoma, GBM)的发病率为(5~8)/10万<sup>[1]</sup>。GBM预后极差,经手术切除、放化疗乃至一些新的治疗手段如电场治疗,中位生存期仍<21个月<sup>[2-4]</sup>。脑胶质瘤中总的编码基因的突变数量少,属于“冷肿瘤”,但瘤内遗传学变异的异质性强<sup>[5-6]</sup>。这一特点决定了脑胶质瘤对无差别的放化疗容易产生耐药性。通过基因组学研究揭示脑胶质瘤起源和恶性进

展过程中的关键驱动性基因突变,并给予针对性的靶向抑制是未来治疗脑胶质瘤的新希望。其中针对MET通路开发的靶向治疗的临床实践近年来取得了一定的进展,本文从MET通路异常的致癌机制、在脑胶质瘤中的发生特点以及针对MET的靶向治疗手段的临床试验等方面进行综述。

## 一、MET通路异常的致癌机制

原癌基因MET(MET proto-oncogene)的蛋白产物属受体酪氨酸激酶(receptor tyrosine kinase, RTK)

超家族,是肝细胞生长因子(hepatocyte growth factor, HGF)的受体<sup>[7]</sup>,于20世纪80年代被发现<sup>[8]</sup>。HGF又名分散因子(scatter factor),其和MET结合引发的MET通路激活能够促进细胞运动和对基质的浸润。在胚胎发育阶段,MET通路与上皮组织的形成和维持有密切关系,在成年动物体内,MET通路支持肝再生<sup>[9]</sup>及肾脏<sup>[10-11]</sup>和心脏<sup>[12]</sup>的损伤修复。MET通路的异常激活与多种癌症的起源和恶性进展有关,其异常激活可由MET基因的编码突变、基因扩增或高表达以及HGF的过度表达等多种原因导致<sup>[13]</sup>,在胃癌<sup>[14]</sup>、肺癌<sup>[15]</sup>、肝癌<sup>[16]</sup>及头颈部肿瘤<sup>[17]</sup>等多种肿瘤中均有报道。美国癌症基因组计划公布的数据显示,5%的GBM患者有MET基因扩增,MET基因扩增或高表达的患者生存期更短,但MET的基因突变在胶质瘤中较为罕见<sup>[18-19]</sup>。

与基因的扩增及蛋白的高表达导致通路过度激活的机制不同,MET基因的突变如缺失突变或基因融合常通过改变蛋白结构导致MET通路的异常激活。野生MET的前体蛋白为一个单链,经翻译后剪切分为 $\alpha$ 亚基和 $\beta$ 亚基。两亚基间经二硫键结合成1个MET单体。在正常生理状态下,MET的激活过程和其他受体酪氨酸激酶一样,均需要经过胞外区的配体结合结构域(ligand-binding pocket)与配体发生结合、受体单体间发生二聚化(dimerization)、处于细胞内的激酶区(kinase domain)发生自磷酸化并激活下游通路<sup>[20-21]</sup>三步。MET蛋白单体发生配体结合和二聚化的区域均在胞外的Sema结构域<sup>[22]</sup>。在肿瘤或其他病理状态下,MET基因编码区的变异往往会造成MET蛋白结构的异常改变,从而引起MET信号通路的异常激活和细胞增殖、运动及血管和其他肿瘤微环境状态的改变,最终成为肿瘤发生和进展的驱动因素。除了MET本身的表达水平或突变状态对MET通路的活性及肿瘤进展的影响以外,MET通路还是低氧等其他致癌分子机制的重要下游作用通路<sup>[23]</sup>。

最早关于MET结构变异与致癌性的研究可以追溯到20世纪80年代报道的癌基因易位启动子区(translocated promoter region, TPR)-MET<sup>[8, 24]</sup>。在TPR-MET融合基因中,因剪切变短而失去了胞外区的MET与富含亮氨酸拉链结构的TPR融合。亮氨酸拉链结构使得MET不经与配体结合便可以实现两个单体的二聚化,从而导致MET通路的非配体依赖性激活(ligand-independent activation)。

最早发现于肺癌的MET的14号外显子(MET exon 14, METex14)跳跃也是一个通过改变MET蛋白结构异常激活MET通路的经典突变<sup>[25]</sup>。在

METex14编码产生的蛋白中,14号外显子的跳跃突变导致在MET蛋白的泛素化降解中起到泛素招募作用第1003位酪氨酸的缺失,MET蛋白因降解受阻而维持在高水平,从而引起MET通路的持续激活<sup>[26]</sup>。

同MET扩增和高表达相比,导致结构变化的MET基因变异更容易用简单的检测方法如聚合酶链式反应(polymerase chain reaction, PCR)和一代测序进行临床检测,检测结果也更为准确,因此更易于被临床推广。

## 二、MET通路异常在脑胶质瘤中的发生特点

早在1997年,Koochekpour等<sup>[27]</sup>就发现胶质瘤组织中MET及其配体HGF的染色强度随着胶质瘤恶性程度的增强而升高。抑制胶质瘤中MET或HGF的表达能够增强胶质瘤细胞凋亡,阻抑肿瘤细胞的增殖、运动迁移能力和血管生成强度,从而遏制胶质瘤的恶性进展<sup>[28-30]</sup>。MET通路在胶质瘤研究中一直维持着较高的关注度,其在胶质瘤干细胞干性维持<sup>[31]</sup>、放疗抵抗<sup>[32-33]</sup>和产生化疗耐药性<sup>[34-35]</sup>中的关键作用被逐渐揭示。MET通路还是胶质瘤中其他重要突变及关键信号通路导致肿瘤恶性进展的作用路径。如在GBM中发生率为40%~50%的表皮生长因子受体(epidermal growth factor receptor, EGFR)扩增或突变引起的EGFR信号通路的过度激活,就可以引发MET通路的异常<sup>[36]</sup>;而血管内皮生长因子(vascular endothelial growth factor, VEGF)在胶质瘤中则能通过抑制MET通路的活性阻碍胶质瘤细胞的迁移和对周边正常组织的浸润<sup>[37]</sup>。

就引发MET通路异常的形式来看,4%~5%的GBM中存在MET基因的扩增<sup>[18-19, 38]</sup>,约6%的高级别胶质瘤中存在MET第7外显子和第8外显子的缺失突变<sup>[39]</sup>。国际癌症基因组联盟(International Cancer Genome Consortium, ICGC)通过其儿童脑瘤研究计划在儿童胶质母细胞瘤中发现了内质网-高尔基体运输调节子(trafficking from ER to Golgi regulator, TFG)-MET和CAP-Gly区组成的连接蛋白2(CAP-Gly domain containing linker protein 2, CLIP2)-MET这两种MET的融合基因突变,并提出MET相关的融合基因突变可能是治疗儿童脑胶质瘤的潜在靶点<sup>[40]</sup>。Frampton等<sup>[26]</sup>在0.4%的脑胶质瘤中发现存在METex14突变。

中国脑胶质瘤协作组(Chinese Glioma Cooperative Group, CGCG)通过对272例脑胶质瘤全转录组测序,发现了1个涉及MET的基因突变——同在7号染色体上的蛋白酪氨酸磷酸酶受体型Z1(protein tyrosine phosphatase receptor type Z1, PTPRZ1)基因的外显子1、2、3、8分别与MET的外显子2发生融合,

这是国际上包括胶质瘤在内的各系统肿瘤中首次报道PTPRZ1-MET融合<sup>[41]</sup>。该融合通常和METex14同时发生在继发胶质母细胞瘤中,这两种MET基因变异的发生率约为14%<sup>[42]</sup>。虽然都经过手术和术后放化疗的标准治疗,但与未发生基因融合的患者相比,携带该融合基因的患者生存期显著更短,提示融合基因阳性患者可能对放疗或化疗的治疗反应更差。PTPRZ1-MET会引起MET通路的过度激活并促进胶质瘤的恶性进展。Stransky等<sup>[43]</sup>在研究中验证了PTPRZ1-MET融合基因在脑胶质瘤中的存在。

通过对中国脑胶质瘤数据库、美国癌症基因组计划数据库及韩国三星医学研究中心胶质瘤样本的遗传学变异发生频率进行分析,发现PTPRZ1-MET融合基因特异性地发生于继发胶质母细胞瘤中。对配对样本的研究还发现了以下情形:同一患者处于低级别胶质瘤时期肿瘤组织中没有PTPRZ1-MET融合基因,而进展到继发胶质母细胞瘤后肿瘤组织中出现了该融合基因,并且伴随着MET通路及其下游信号转导和转录激活因子3(signal transducer and activator of transcription 3, STAT3)通路的激活及更强烈的细胞增殖和血管生成。通过以上临床发现结合动物成瘤模型实验可判断PTPRZ1-MET融合基因是驱动低级别胶质瘤级别进展的重要遗传学突变<sup>[42]</sup>。

### 三、MET通路抑制在脑胶质瘤治疗中的临床试验

上述MET通路在脑胶质瘤恶性进展中关键驱动作用的研究凸显了其作为胶质瘤潜在治疗靶点的价值。最近十多年来,已经有一些治疗方案探索和新药开发试验将抑制MET通路(含MET及其配体HGF)作为阻遏脑胶质瘤进展的方法和手段。这些药物根据药物性质可以分为两类,一类是以中和或封闭MET或HGF为目标的抗体类药物,另一类是以抑制MET激酶活性为目标的小分子化合物抑制剂<sup>[44]</sup>。

1. 抗体类MET通路抑制药物的临床试验:HGF的抗体YYB-101在胶质瘤小鼠原位模型中表现出对MET通路的抑制作用。与单用替莫唑胺相比,YYB-101与替莫唑胺联合应用能够显著缓解肿瘤进展并延长小鼠的生存期<sup>[45-46]</sup>。HGF抗体Rilotumumab(AMG102)虽然在临床前试验中表现出一定的抑肿瘤效果,但是在单独给药和与贝伐单抗(bevacizumab)的联合给药的临床试验中均表现不佳,不但没有体现出显著的抑制肿瘤生长的效果,而且可能具有较大的毒性<sup>[47-48]</sup>。人源化MET单抗Onartuzumab在临床前研究中表现出抑制肿瘤的效果,但在复发GBM患者中进行的与贝伐单抗联合的临床二期试验中,抑癌效果并未优于安慰剂组<sup>[49-50]</sup>。

2. 小分子化合物类MET抑制剂的临床试验:与单抗类抗癌药相比,酪氨酸激酶抑制类小分子化合物(tyrosine kinase inhibitors, TKI)的开发和生产成本更低,患者的用药方式更为舒适(多为口服),且性质稳定,便于储存和运输<sup>[51]</sup>。小分子化合物类药物根据靶向激酶类受体的结构位置分为3种类型,一类是靶向于激酶区三磷酸腺苷(adenosine triphosphate, ATP)结合区(ATP binding pocket)的活性结构域,第二类靶向于激酶区ATP结合区的非活性结构域,第三类是靶向于非ATP结合区的非ATP竞争性抑制剂<sup>[52]</sup>。

克唑替尼(crizotinib)是经美国食品与药品监督管理局认证用于治疗间变性淋巴瘤激酶(anaplastic lymphoma kinase, ALK)突变肿瘤的小分子抑制剂。其抑制位点并不特异,除了ALK还对MET及ROS原癌基因1(ROS proto-oncogene 1, ROS1)的激酶活性有抑制作用<sup>[53]</sup>。目前,使用克唑替尼作为辅助疗法治疗成人GBM的临床试验正在进行(NCT02270034)。

卡博替尼(cabozantinib)能够同时抑制MET和VEGFR2的活性,但在其治疗未经抗血管生成治疗的GBM患者的临床试验(NCT00704288)中,虽对肿瘤进展有一定的遏制作用,但未达到预设目标<sup>[54]</sup>。

Hu等<sup>[42]</sup>发现了特异性抑制MET通路的小分子化合物伯瑞替尼(PLB-1001)。LANCE激酶活性检测(LANCE ultra kinase assays)显示,在100种激酶中伯瑞替尼显示出对MET激酶活性的高特异性抑制。伯瑞替尼对表达PTPRZ1-MET或METex14引起的人类星形胶质细胞系(human astrocytes, HA)中的MET通路及下游STAT3通路的激活都能实现显著抑制,其抑制效果同已上市的MET/ALK/ROS1多靶点抑制剂克唑替尼类似。但伯瑞替尼作为能够特异性抑制MET激活的单靶点抑制剂在药物安全性方面较双/多靶点药物更具优势。药物通透性及作为P-糖蛋白(P-glycoprotein)底物外排效率研究中,伯瑞替尼相较其他3种MET抑制剂(克唑替尼、卡博替尼和Foretinib)具有更高的细胞透过性和更低的外排率,这一结果表明伯瑞替尼作为预期用来治疗颅内肿瘤的药物具有良好的血-脑脊液屏障透过性。伯瑞替尼作为PTPRZ1-MET阳性的继发胶质母细胞瘤和世界卫生组织(World Health Organization, WHO) III级胶质瘤患者替莫唑胺耐药后的二线药物的一期临床试验已经完成,临床二期试验正在进行中。一期试验中该药物体现出较好的安全性且已有部分患者获益。对临床一期试验中体现为部分缓解但最终复发的患者,通过比较伯瑞替尼治疗前手术切除的肿瘤组织和最终复发后的肿瘤组织的全基因组和全转录组测序数据建立了肿瘤耐药进化树,发现磷

脂酰肌醇3-激酶(phosphoinositide-3-kinase, PI3K)-丝氨酸-苏氨酸激酶(Akt)-雷帕霉素靶蛋白激酶(mammalian target of rapamycin, mTOR)通路的活性在伯瑞替尼治疗后期增加,这可能是导致肿瘤最终对伯瑞替尼靶向治疗耐药和复发的重要原因。

#### 四、小结与展望

脑胶质瘤的标准治疗方案近十多年来没有变化,患者的生存时间和生活质量仍然处于非常不理想的水平。尽管在临床治疗方面进展微弱,但近十多年人们对脑胶质瘤的认识却突飞猛进,尤其是分子生物学层面的研究引发了胶质瘤分子病理诊断的提出和应用。基因组学层面的研究揭示了包含MET基因变异在内的一系列胶质瘤进展的驱动型基因突变,并由此指导了以相应突变为治疗靶点的临床试验。这些临床试验使一些患者受益,临床实践的反馈也进一步验证了分子病理学和基因组学对脑胶质瘤治疗的指导作用。与此同时,脑胶质瘤的靶向治疗应用中也广泛存在着药物进入血-脑脊液屏障效率低及肿瘤在治疗过程中进化出耐药性等问题。因此未来可能在小分子化合物的开发和选择及靶向治疗耐药后的基因组分子进化分析等方面产生突破性成果。

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