

磷酸腺苷激活的蛋白激酶 (AMPK) 参与了曲格列酮诱导的 HeLa 细胞自噬和凋亡

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摘要:【目的】明确磷酸腺苷激活的蛋白激酶 (AMPK) 在细胞自噬和凋亡中的作用。【方法】利用电镜、荧光显微镜、蛋白免疫杂交、siRNA 干扰、流式细胞计数、MTS 细胞活性检测等对曲格列酮 (troglitazone, TZ) 处理的 HeLa 细胞自噬和凋亡情况进行了检测。【结果】不同检测方法均表明 TZ 增加了 HeLa 细胞的自噬, 这种自噬的发生伴随着 AMPK 的磷酸化的降低; 抑制 AMPK 增加基础细胞自噬, 而阻断了 TZ 引起的自噬标记物 LC3-II 的增加, 同时也减少了 TZ 引起的凋亡分子 PARP 的切割; 用自噬抑制剂 3-MA 和干扰细胞自噬基因, 不仅 PARP 的切割明显地受到抑制, 而且也部分阻断了 TZ 引起的细胞活性丧失。【结论】AMPK 直接参与了 TZ 引起的 HeLa 细胞自噬过程, 这种自噬发生促进了其诱导的细胞凋亡。

关键词: AMPK, 自噬, 凋亡, 曲格列酮

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真核细胞中存在两种蛋白降解方式, 一种是通过蛋白酶体, 另一种就是通过细胞自噬 (autophagy) 的溶酶体降解途径, 只有后者可以对细胞器进行降解。自噬的发生对于细胞成份更新、保持正常的生理状态是至关重要的^[1-2]。然而过度的细胞自噬可以发展成自噬性细胞死亡, 称其为第二类程序性死亡 (凋亡为第一类程序性细胞死亡, 坏死为第三类程序性死亡)^[3-4]。

曲格列酮 (TZ) 是一种人工合成的 PPAR γ (过氧化酶体增殖物激活受体) 的配体, 是第一个用于临床上的治疗二型糖尿病的药物, 但由于其肝毒性大, 已部分停止使用。近来发现, 曲格列酮类化合物还能引起一系列肿瘤细胞的凋亡, 可能在未来的癌

症治疗中发挥重要作用^[5-7]。

磷酸腺苷 (AMP) 激活的蛋白激酶 AMPK α (5'-AMP-activated protein kinase) 是细胞体内的一个感受能量的激酶。能够感受 ATP 的变化, 诱导自噬的发生, 从而进行细胞内物质的降解重新产生能量^[8]。已有研究表明 AMPK 在自噬过程中发挥重要作用, 是酵母自噬所必须的, 但是其在哺乳类细胞自噬中的具体作用机制还有很多不明之处^[9]。

自噬与肿瘤的发生、发展关系密切^[10]。尽管在较多的情况下自噬被认为是保护细胞使之存活的一种机制, 这种保护性自噬可能会抑制一些药物所引起的细胞凋亡^[11-12]。但也存在另一种情况, 即自噬在执行细胞死亡的过程中扮演重要角色^[13], 而这种

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作用有待于深入的研究;具体到自噬与凋亡之间的关系,也需要大量的工作来阐明。在之前的研究中,尽管我们发现 TZ 通过 AMPK 影响猪血管内皮细胞 PAE 的自噬^[14],但是,总感觉还有很多问题值得深入研究;同时,TZ 是否可以同时引起凋亡与自噬以及之间是否有联系,至今还未见报道。因此,本文通过进一步的研究,将继续探讨 AMPK 信号通路在自噬发生过程中的作用,并研究 TZ 所引起的自噬对细胞凋亡的影响,以期能对 AMPK 调节细胞自噬和凋亡,以及细胞自噬和凋亡之间的联系有一个更加清晰的认识;通过此类研究的开展,有助于更加全面的认识程序性细胞死亡,也为通过干预细胞自噬进行临床肿瘤治疗提供理论依据。

1 材料和方法

1.1 材料

1.1.1 细胞和质粒: HeLa 细胞、菌种大肠杆菌 DH5 α 以及 GFP-LC3 质粒本实验室提供, KD-AMPK 质粒购于 Addgene。

1.1.2 药品和抗体: Troglitazone、Compound C、Bafilomycin A1、3-Methyladenine 和多克隆抗 LC3b 抗体购自 Sigma 公司; AMPK α 、PARP、Caspase-3 以及磷酸化 AMPK α 、mTOR 的抗体购自 Cell Signaling 公司; actin、SQSTM1/p62 和 Beclin-1 的抗体、AMPK α 、Beclin-1 (Bec-1)、LC3 特异性 siRNA 和对照 siRNA 购自 Santa Cruz 公司。

1.1.3 仪器设备: CO₂ 细胞培养箱 (NUAIRE 公司)、小型台式离心机 (Thermo 公司)、台式冷冻高速离心机 (Sigma 公司)、-20 $^{\circ}$ C 低温冰箱 (海尔公司)、-70 $^{\circ}$ C 低温冰箱 (Heraeus 公司)、Trans-Blot 电转仪 (Bio-RAD 公司)、AE-6500 型电泳槽 (ATTO 公司)、JY600C 恒压恒流电泳仪 (JUNYI 公司)、MilliQ plus 超纯水系统 (Millipore 公司)。

1.2 细胞培养及药物处理

HeLa 细胞用 DMEM 含 10% 的胎牛血清培养,当细胞生长接近汇合时进行传代。细胞传代后过夜 (处理时细胞密度为 60% - 70%),换无血清的 DMEM 基础培养基,加入药物进行刺激,待指定时间后冷的 PBS 洗过细胞后,用 TGH 裂解液收集细胞 (TGH 的组成: 1 mL 母液 (1% Triton X-100, 10% 甘油, 50 mmol/L HEPES, pH7.4), 5 mol/L NaCl

20 μ L, 0.5 mol/L EGTA/EDTA 10 μ L, 0.1 mol/L NaF 10 μ L, 0.1 mol/L PMSF 20 μ L, DTT 2 μ L, Na₂VO₄ 2 μ L, Protease inhibitor 1 μ L)。

1.3 转染 GFP-LC3 质粒,进行荧光显微镜观察

用 lipofectamine 2000 转染 GFP-LC3 质粒 DNA, 24 h 后将细胞接种到有盖玻片的 6 孔板中,培养过夜。加入药物处理指定时间后,用 4% 多聚甲醛室温固定 15 min,然后 PBS 洗 2 次,封片。在荧光显微镜下观察,对 GFP-LC3 的阳性点数进行统计。

1.4 电镜样品的制备

培养好的细胞加药处理指定时间,用胰酶消化,4 $^{\circ}$ C、1000 \times g 离心 5 min 收集细胞,冷 PBS 洗涤 2 遍。加入 3% 戊二醛,4 $^{\circ}$ C 固定。送样检验。

1.5 流式细胞样品的制备

细胞用不含 EDTA 的胰酶消化收集 (胰酶消化时间不易过长,以防引起假阳性);用 PBS 洗涤细胞 2 次 (350 \times g, 3 min),计数细胞,每样 0.1 mL 含 1 - 5 $\times 10^5$ 细胞;用 400 μ L Binding Buffer 悬浮细胞;加入 5 μ L Annexin V-FITC,混匀,加入 5 μ L Propidium Iodide,混匀;室温避光反应 10 min;用流式细胞仪检测。

1.6 免疫印迹检测

等量样品经过 8% 或 15% SDS-PAGE 分离蛋白,转膜至 PVDF 膜上,PVDF 膜用封闭液室温封闭 1 h,一抗 4 $^{\circ}$ C 孵育过夜,二抗室温孵育 1 h,将漂洗后的 PVDF 膜进入暗室曝光,适当时间后洗片。扫描记录结果,进行灰度值计算。

1.7 MTS (3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-5-(3-carboxymethoxyphenyl)-2-(4-sulphophenyl)-2H-tetrazolium, inner salt) 检测细胞活性

将 HeLa 细胞接种到 96 孔板中,37 $^{\circ}$ C、5% CO₂ 细胞培养箱中培养过夜。换无酚红无血清 DMEM 培养基,每 3 个孔做平行对照,对照组加有机溶剂 DMSO,加药组加 TZ 分别为 12.5, 25, 50 μ mol/L。处理指定时间后,每孔加配制好的 MTS/PMS 为 20/1 的混合溶液 20 μ L,选择 490 nm 波长,在酶联免疫检测仪上测定各孔光吸收值,记录结果。

2 结果

2.1 曲格列酮促进 HeLa 细胞自噬

透射电子显微镜是检测自噬最可靠的和被广泛

使用的方法^[15]。为了确认 TZ 是否能够引起细胞自噬,我们用 TZ 刺激 HeLa 细胞 4 h,可以观察到细胞内自噬体/自噬溶酶体(双层膜包裹的白色泡状物质)的数量明显增加(图 1-A)。

绿色荧光蛋白 GFP-LC3 是一种自噬体标记物,正常状态下,细胞基础的自噬水平很低,GFP-LC3 呈弥散分布,且大多位于细胞核内。自噬被诱导后,自噬体的数量增加,GFP-LC3 以酯化形式结合在自噬泡上,呈明显的点状分布。荧光显微镜结果显示,TZ 刺激后,GFP-LC3 阳性点数明显增加(图 1-C)。

LC3-II 目前是唯一可靠的与完整的自噬体相关的蛋白标记,LC3-II/Actin 比值能很好的反应自噬的变化情况^[16]。p62 又称为 sequestosome 1 (SQSTM1) (下文简写作 p62)作为自噬特异性的底物,当自噬被抑制时,p62 不再降解而积累起来,因此 p62 水平的变化能够直接反映了自噬流的变

化^[15]。我们利用免疫印记检测 TZ 刺激后 HeLa 细胞中 LC3-II 和 p62 的变化。结果显示,TZ 刺激后,LC3-II 的量随时间不断增加(LC3-II/A 的灰度值递增),p62 递减(p62/A 的灰度值递减),说明 TZ 导致 HeLa 细胞自噬流的增强(图 1-B)。

巴弗洛霉素(Bafilomycin A1, Baf A1)是 V 型 H⁺-ATP 酶的特异性抑制剂,能够抑制溶酶体的酸化,从而阻断自噬体与溶酶体的融合,导致自噬不能进行。表现为在其存在的情况下,LC3-II 增加。为了检测自噬流的变化,我们在 Baf A1 存在的情况下检测了 LC3-II 的水平。结果显示,Baf A1 的预处理使 HeLa 细胞中的基础的 LC3-II 水平升高,LC3-II/A (%) 灰度值从 3 升高到 100。比较 TZ 存在的条件下,Baf A1 的处理也增加了 LC3-II 的积累,LC3-II/A (%) 灰度值从 57 升高到 73 (图 1-D)。

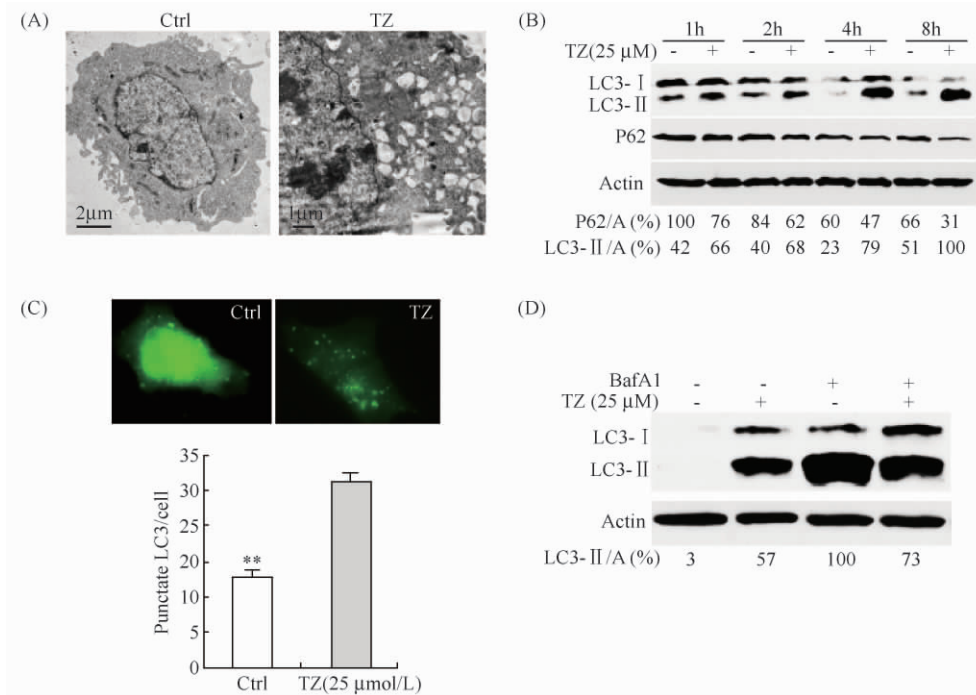


图 1 不同方法检测 TZ 引起 HeLa 细胞的自噬

Fig. 1 TZ enhances autophagy in HeLa cells. A. Electron microscopy was performed on HeLa cells following TZ-treated (25 μmol/L) for 4 h. B. HeLa were treated with TZ (25 μmol/L) for 1, 2, 4 and 8 h before analyzing by immunoblotting with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and the ratios of LC3-II and p62 to actin are presented below the blots. The ratios represent results of three independent experiments. C. HeLa cells were transfected with a plasmid expressing GFP-LC3, and treated with TZ in DMEM medium with DMSO (Ctrl), TZ (25 μmol/L). Following fixation, cells were immediately visualized by fluorescence microscopy. The number of punctate GFP-LC3 in each cell was counted, and at least 100 cells were included for each group. ** indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.01$. D. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (25 μmol/L) for 4 h in the presence of Baf A1 (10 nmol/L).

2.2 AMPK 特异性抑制剂化合物 C (compound C, Cc) 阻断了曲格列酮引起的 LC3-II 的增加

AMPK 是细胞内的能量感受器,其活化能促进自噬的发生。为了研究 AMPK 信号通路和自噬的关系,我们用曲格列酮对 HeLa 细胞进行了刺激。有意思的是,TZ 存在并没有增加 AMPK 的磷酸化,而是使其磷酸化水平降低(图 2-A);利用 AMPK 的特异性抑制剂化合物 C (compound C, Cc) 抑制 AMPK 的磷酸化之后,基础自噬水平升高,但 TZ 引

起的 LC3-II 却没有进一步的增加,说明 TZ 促进 HeLa 细胞自噬与诱导前 AMPK 的磷酸化水平相关,或者说确实需要 AMPK 的参与(图 2-B);KD-AMPK 质粒是一种无激酶活性,并可导致细胞中组成性的 AMPK 失活的 AMPK 突变体蛋白。我们转染 KD-AMPK 质粒后,进一步证实了 TZ 导致的 HeLa 细胞的自噬需要 AMPK 的参与(图 2-C)。上述数据表明,AMPK 在自噬发生过程中可能会起双向作用。

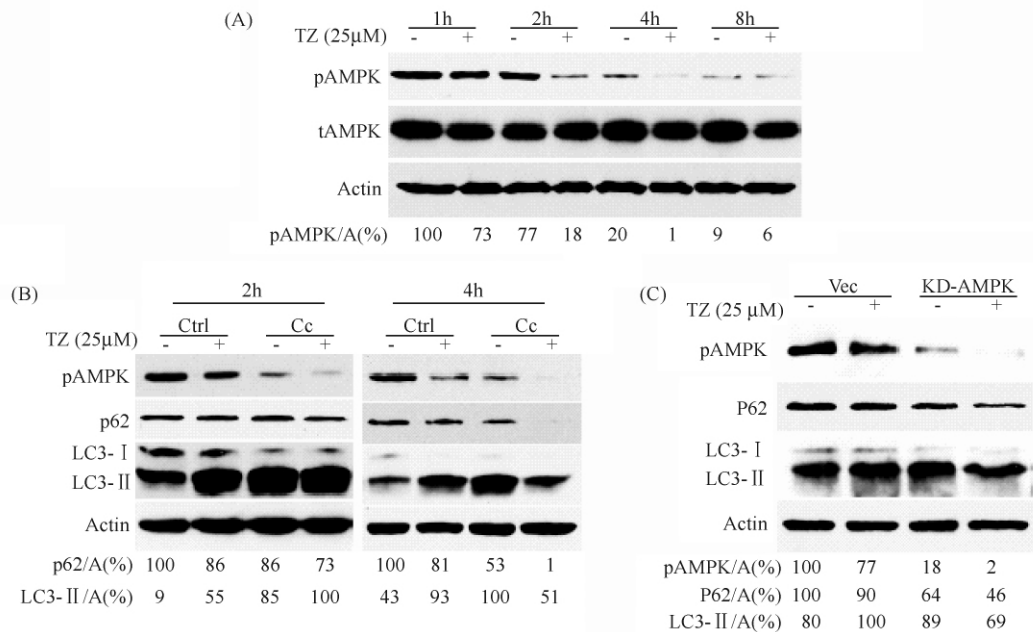


图 2 曲格列酮降低 AMPK 的磷酸化

Fig. 2 Inhibition of AMPK blunts the accumulation of LC3-II caused by TZ. A. Inhibition of AMPK caused by TZ. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (25 μmol/L) for 1, 2, 4 or 8 h before analyzing by immunoblotting with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and the ratios of phosphorylated AMPKα to actin are presented below the blots. The ratios represent the results of three independent experiments. B. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (25 μmol/L) for 2, 4 h in the presence of compound C (Cc, 10 μmol/L) before immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. C. HeLa cells were transfected with a plasmid expressing KD-AMPK.

2.3 曲格列酮引起的细胞自噬早于 Caspase-3 的活化

为了确定曲格列酮引起的细胞死亡方式,我们利用流式细胞技术对 TZ 处理的细胞进行了检测,结果发现,TZ 可以引起 HeLa 细胞除了凋亡以外的其他死亡方式(图 3-A)。利用 MTS (3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-5-(3-carboxymethoxyphenyl)-2-(4-sulfophenyl)-2H-tetrazolium, inner salt) 检测细胞存活率的实验再次证实了 TZ 能引起细胞活性的下降,TZ 处理 HeLa 细胞 6h 后,TZ (12.5, 25, 50

μmol/L) 的活性分别下降 1% (P = 0.021), 10%, 25%;相同浓度处理 12h 后,活性下降 8% (P = 0.004), 14% (P = 0.024), 27% (P = 0.049);24h 后,活性下降了 18% (P = 0.018), 37% (P = 0.025), 71% (P = 0.041)。这种存活率的下降具有显著的时间和浓度依赖性(图 3-B)。

半胱氨酸蛋白酶-3 (caspase-3),是哺乳动物细胞凋亡中的关键蛋白酶,处于凋亡级联反应通路的核心位置,被称为死亡蛋白酶;它可以裂解 PARP,从而介导凋亡。从图 3-C 中可以看出,caspase-3 切

割出现于 TZ 刺激后的 4 小时,要晚于 TZ 导致的 LC3-II 增加。

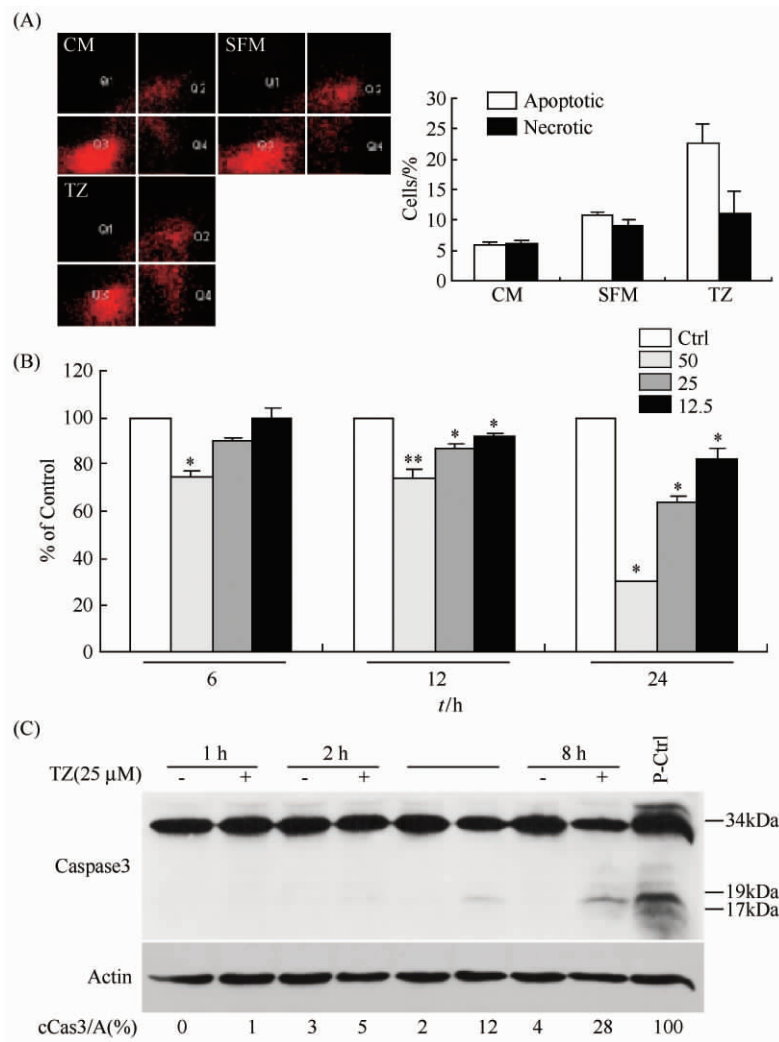


图 3 曲格列酮导致 HeLa 细胞活性下降

Fig. 3 Autophagy caused by TZ precedes the apoptosis. A. Detection of programmed cell death by flow cytometry. HeLa cells were incubated with TZ (25 μmol/L) upon 4 h before flow cytometry analysis. Annexin-V staining is considered as apoptotic, whereas PI positive is measured as necrotic. CM means Complete Medium, SFM means Serum Free Medium. B. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (12.5, 25, 50 μmol/L) for up to 24 h; cell viability was analyzed by MTS assay as described in Materials and Methods. Data are presented as mean ± SD and are representatives of three independent experiments. * indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.05$. ** indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.01$. C. HeLa was treated with TZ (25 μmol/L) for 1, 2, 4 and 8 h before analyzing by immunoblotting with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and the ratio of cleaved caspase-3 (17, 19 kDa) to actin is presented below the blots. The ratios represent results of three independent experiments.

2.4 3-MA 抑制曲格列酮所引起的细胞凋亡和自噬

3-甲基腺嘌呤 (3-Methyladenine, 3-MA) 是自噬的抑制剂, 能通过抑制 III 型 PI3K, 可干扰或阻断自噬体形成。多聚 ADP 核糖聚合酶 (poly ADP-ribose polymerase, PARP) 是一类存在于多数真核

细胞中的蛋白质翻译后修饰酶。在细胞内启动凋亡级联机制时, 发生 caspase 的激活, caspase-3/7 可裂解 PARP, 标志着细胞内发生凋亡。当用 3-MA 预处理细胞后, TZ 引起的 PARP 的切割明显减少, 说明当自噬受到抑制之后, TZ 引起的细胞凋亡也明显减少 (图 4-A)。MTS 实验证明, 当细胞加

入 3-MA 后, TZ (12.5, 25, 50 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) 加药组的细胞活性分别升高了 36% ($P = 0.0034$), 23% ($P = 0.0037$), 29% ($P = 0.0037$), 说明 3-MA 能抑制 TZ 所导致的细胞活性的降低 (图 4-B)。上述结果表明, 自噬能够促进细胞凋亡发生。为了进一步验证细胞自噬对凋亡的影响, 我们干扰自噬相关基因 Beclin 1 (Bec-1) 和 LC3。结果发现, 当

干扰了 LC3, TZ (12.5, 25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) 加药组的细胞活性分别升高了 33% ($P = 0.038$), 21% ($P = 0.019$); 干扰了 Bec-1 后, 加药组细胞活性升高了 8% ($P = 0.047$), 4% ($P = 0.047$)。说明自噬基因的缺失, 会部分抑制 TZ 导致的细胞活性的丧失, 表明自噬对 TZ 引起的细胞凋亡具有贡献作用 (图 4-C, 图 4-D)。

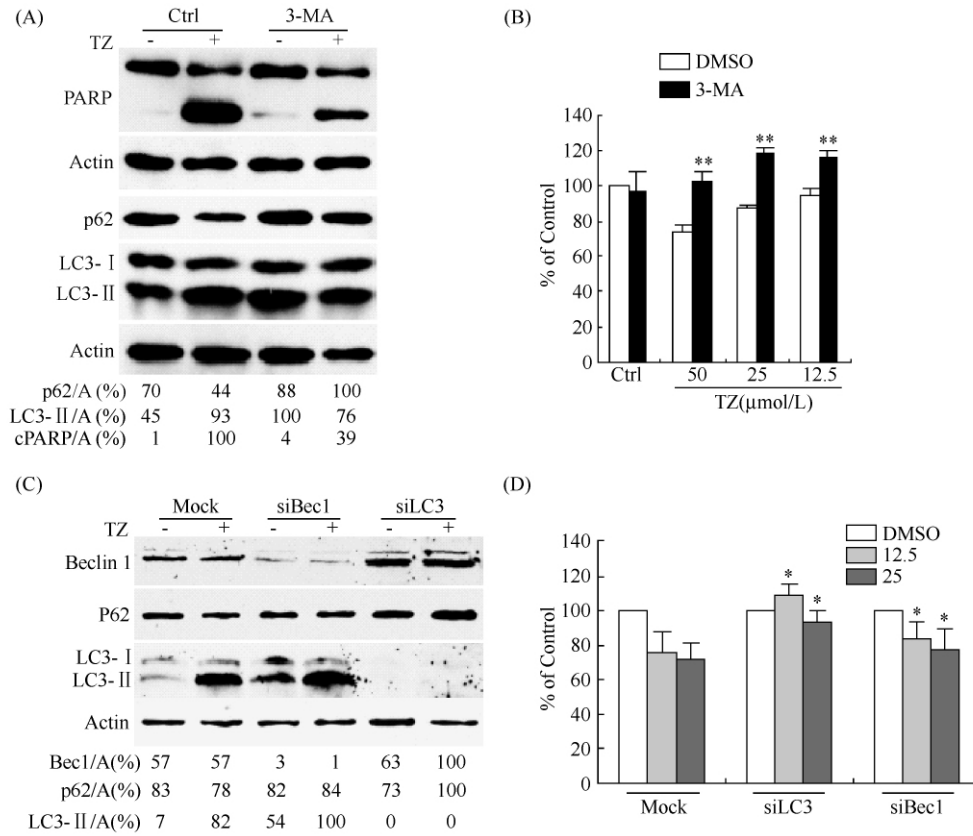


图 4 自噬对其他类型细胞死亡的影响

Fig. 4 Autophagy caused by TZ contributes to apoptosis. A. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for 4 h in the presence of 3-MA (5 mmol/L) before immunoblotting analysis with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and the ratios of cPARP, p62 and LC3-II to actin are presented below the blots representing the results of two independent experiments. B. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (12.5, 25, 50 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for up to 4 h in the presence of 3-MA (5 mmol/L), cell viability was analyzed by MTS assay as described in Materials and Methods. Data are presented as mean \pm SD and are representatives of three independent experiments. ** indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.01$. C. HeLa cells were transfected with control (Mock) or Bec-1 and LC3 siRNA; 48 h after transfection, cells were treated with TZ (25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for 2 h before immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. D. HeLa cells in (C) were treated with TZ (12.5, 25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for up to 4 h; cell viability was analyzed by MTS assay as described in Materials and Methods. Data are presented as mean \pm SD and are representatives of three independent experiments. * indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.05$.

2.5 AMPK 参与曲格列酮所引起的细胞凋亡和自噬

为了探讨 AMPK 信号通路是否参与了 TZ 所引

起的细胞凋亡, 我们在 AMPK 抑制剂存在的情况下检测了 PARP 的切割。结果发现, 抑制 AMPK 减少了 TZ 引起的 PARP 的切割, 说明 AMPK 不仅参与

TZ 引起的自噬,也调控 TZ 所引起的细胞凋亡(图 5-A,图 5-C)。利用 MTS 检测,我们发现,在使用了 AMPK 的抑制剂 Cc 之后,加药组 TZ (12.5, 25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) 细胞存活率分别升高了 13% ($P=0.037$),

14% ($P=0.008$) (图 5-B)。相同的实验结果在干扰了 AMPK 之后也得到了证实,加药组 TZ (12.5, 25, 50 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) 的细胞活性升高了 10% ($P=0.032$), 6% ($P=0.044$), 20% ($P=0.024$) (图 5-D)。

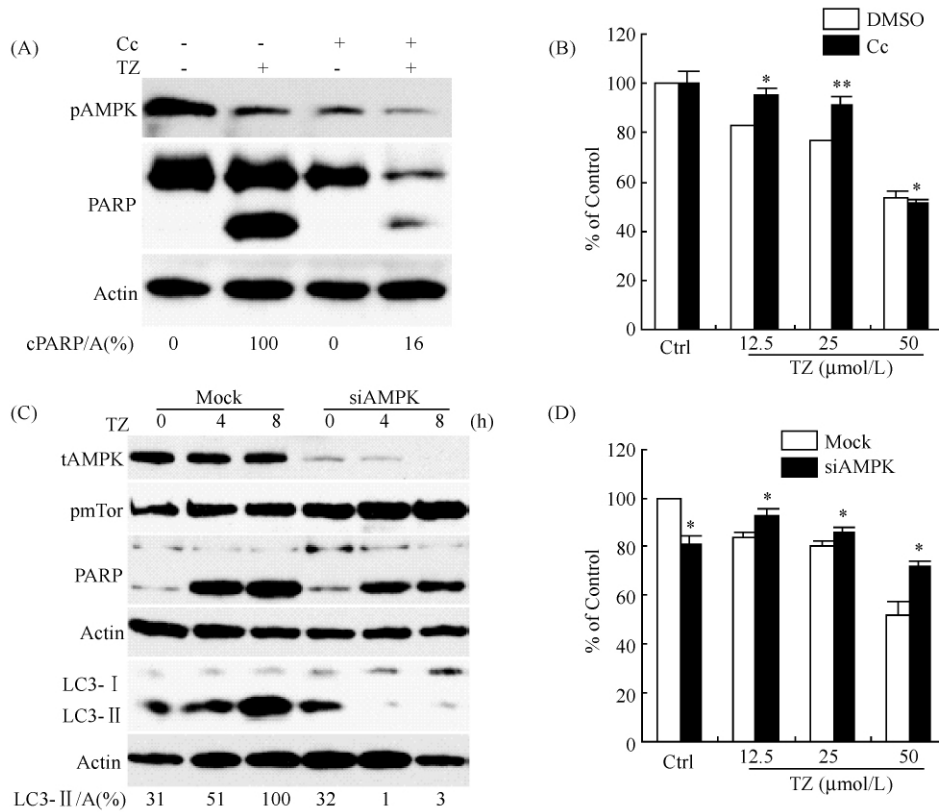


图 5 AMPK 参与 TZ 所诱导的细胞凋亡和自噬

Fig. 5 AMPK involves in TZ-dependent autophagy and apoptosis. A. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for 2 h in the presence of compound C (Cc, 10 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) before immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and the ratios of cPARP to actin are presented below the blots representing the results of two independent experiments. B. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (12.5, 25, 50 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for up to 4 h in the presence of DMSO or compound C (Cc, 10 $\mu\text{mol/L}$); cell viability was analyzed by MTS assay as described in Materials and Methods. Data are presented as mean \pm SD and are representatives of three independent experiments. * indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.05$. ** indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.01$. C. HeLa cells were transfected with control (Mock) or AMPK siRNA; 48 h after transfection, cells were treated with TZ (25 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for 2 h before immunoblot analysis with the indicated antibodies. Densitometry was performed for quantification, and LC3-II to actin is presented below the blots representing the results of two independent experiments. D. HeLa cells were treated with TZ (12.5, 25, 50 $\mu\text{mol/L}$) for up to 4 h with DMSO or compound C (Cc, 10 $\mu\text{mol/L}$); cell viability was analyzed by MTS assay as described in Materials and Methods. Data are presented as mean \pm SD and are representatives of three independent experiments. * indicates a significant difference between the groups at level $P < 0.05$.

3 讨论

在该研究中的一个重要发现就是, TZ 引起的细

胞自噬伴随着 AMPK 的降低;而抑制了 AMPK 的磷酸化可以增加细胞的基础自噬,但不能继续提高 TZ 导致的 LC3-II 的增加,这样 AMPK 对自噬的调节应该是具有刺激依赖的特点。同时,我们认为除了经

典的 AMPK 激活从而增加自噬外, 还存在着非典型的 AMPK 调节自噬的信号。比较我们之前在猪血管内皮细胞中的研究^[14], 我们认为, AMPK 调节自噬也与细胞种类有关。同时也不能排除, AMPK 对自噬的调节具有双向作用, 这与之前的报道有相似之处。例如, 之前的研究数据表明, 在哺乳动物细胞和酵母中, 自噬的发生需要 AMPK 的参与^[17], 而另外的研究也发现, AMPK 的激活会抑制自噬的发生^[18]。AMPK 的这种作用, 可能与其反馈调控 mTOR 和其他信号通路有关^[19]。

通常情况下, AMPK 的活化会抑制 mTOR 信号通路^[20]。在该研究中, 我们也发现干扰 AMPK 或者应用其抑制剂会增加 mTOR 的表达以及增加 TZ 刺激时 mTOR 下游底物 S6K1 的磷酸化水平 (结果未列出), 这样, AMPK 受到抑制时所导致的 mTOR 信号通路的激活将抑制 TZ 引起的自噬。不过近期有研究发现, 在人胶质瘤 U251 细胞系中, Cc 可以通过抑制 Akt/mTOR 信号引起保护性细胞自噬, 并认为其引起的自噬不依赖于 Cc 抑制 AMPK 的磷酸化^[21]。同时, 他们认为 Cc 的作用与细胞类型、用量以及处理条件等因素相关。因此, 有理由相信, AMPK 参与的细胞自噬不仅具有细胞依赖的特点, 而且, AMPK 与 Akt/mTOR 信号间的交叉串扰 (cross-talk) 对该蛋白在自噬中的调节作用也是至关重要的, 这需要今后的深入研究来进一步明确。

AMPK α 是细胞体内的一个感受能量的激酶。能够感受 ATP/AMP 比率, 其是否参与 TZ 类活化物引起的细胞凋亡, 目前还未见报道。在另外的一些研究中发现, AMPK 的激活会增加细胞的凋亡^[22-23]。在本实验室之前的研究中也发现, TZ 能引起 HeLa 细胞的自噬和混合型细胞死亡^[24]。在该研究中, 我们进一步明确, TZ 所增加的自噬要早于其诱导的凋亡发生, 这两个过程均有 AMPK 的参与, 因此, 我们推测, AMPK 调节细胞的凋亡有可能会通过影响细胞自噬来发生。随着研究的逐渐深入, 人们普遍认识到细胞自噬和凋亡间存在着密切的联系。如一些调节凋亡的基因也可以调节自噬, 而反之, 调节自噬的基因对凋亡也有影响。具体到凋亡与自噬的关系, 目前认为存在三种情况: 平行关系, 自噬促进凋亡, 自噬抑制凋亡^[25-26]。

很多研究发现噻唑烷二酮类药物能够诱导肿瘤细胞的凋亡, 并且找到很多介导其抗肿瘤作用的关

键信号机制。而自噬过程又是一个非常复杂的网络系统, 许多新的组分参与自噬的全过程^[27]。这是我们今后的工作所要重点研究的。我们的结果表明该类化合物中的曲格列酮能够通过 AMPK 信号通路来促进 HeLa 细胞的自噬, 而后者早于并促进凋亡的发生, 这些发现不仅能丰富对于噻唑烷二酮类药物抗肿瘤机制的理解, 更为我们深入探讨 AMPK 信号通路在肿瘤细胞自噬过程中发挥的作用以及更好的开发利用此类化合物, 为可能的临床应用提供理论依据。

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AMP-activated protein kinase- α is involved in the autophagy and apoptosis caused by troglitazone

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Abstract: [Objective] To reveal the mechanism of AMPK signaling in the autophagy and apoptosis caused by troglitazone (TZ). [Methods] To investigate the effect of TZ on alteration of autophagy and apoptosis in HeLa cells, fluorescence microscopy, electron microscopy, western-blotting, siRNA interference, flow cytometry and MTS assay were used. [Results] TZ attenuated AMP-activated protein kinase- α (AMPK α) phosphorylation, and stimulates autophagic process in HeLa cells. TZ induced the accumulation of microtubule-associated protein 1 light chain 3-II (LC3-II), and degradation of sequestosome 1 (SQSTM1/p62), two markers of autophagy, occurring prior to the caspase activation. Compound C, an AMPK inhibitor, increased basal and inhibits TZ-stimulated LC3-II content and TZ-dependent PARP cleavage. Knockdown of the gene encoding autophagic proteins and AMPK conferred the cells resistance to apoptosis by TZ. [Conclusion] Taken together, these data demonstrate that AMPK is involved in TZ promote autophagy, which precedes and contributes to caspase-dependent apoptosis.

Keywords: AMPK, Autophagy, Apoptosis, Troglitazone

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