

技术与方法

藁本内酯衍生物抑制大鼠软骨细胞凋亡和炎症的作用及机制

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摘要 该研究探究藁本内酯衍生物(LIGc)对IL-1 β (10 ng/mL)诱导大鼠软骨细胞凋亡和炎症的作用及机制。将大鼠软骨细胞分为Control组、IL-1 β 组及LIGc高、中、低剂量组。除Control组外,其余组均采用IL-1 β 诱导建立软骨细胞炎症模型, LIGc高、中、低剂量组分别加入0.4、0.2、0.1 μ mol/mL的LIGc干预24 h。CCK-8检测LIGc对大鼠软骨细胞活性的影响; Hoechst 33258染色观察大鼠软骨细胞凋亡情况; Western blot检测细胞中Bcl-2、Caspase-3、TLR4、NF- κ B p65蛋白表达情况; RT-qPCR检测COX-2、HMGB1 mRNA的表达水平。研究发现不同浓度LIGc对大鼠软骨细胞的存活率无显著影响; 与Control组相比, IL-1 β 组细胞凋亡水平明显升高; Caspase-3蛋白表达水平显著升高($P < 0.01$), Bcl-2蛋白表达水平显著降低($P < 0.01$)。COX-2、HMGB1 mRNA表达水平均显著升高($P < 0.01$); TLR4、NF- κ B p65蛋白表达水平显著升高($P < 0.01$)。LIGc干预使得细胞活力显著升高并抑制细胞凋亡, Caspase-3蛋白表达水平显著降低($P < 0.01$), LIGc中、高剂量组Bcl-2蛋白表达水平显著升高($P < 0.01$); COX-2、HMGB1基因表达水平均显著降低($P < 0.01$)。TLR4、NF- κ B p65蛋白表达水平显著降低($P < 0.01$)。因此, LIGc能够抑制IL-1 β 所致的软骨细胞凋亡和炎症反应, 其作用机制可能与抑制TLR4/NF- κ B通路相关。

关键词 软骨细胞; 藁本内酯衍生物; 白细胞介素-1 β ; 凋亡; 炎症反应

The Effect and Mechanism of Ligustilide Cycloprolactam on Inhibiting Apoptosis and Inflammation of Rat Chondrocytes

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Abstract This study investigated the effect and mechanism of LIGc (ligustilide cycloprolactam) on apoptosis and inflammation of rat chondrocytes induced by IL-1 β (10 ng/mL). Rat chondrocytes were divided into Control group, IL-1 β group and LIGc high-dose, medium-dose and low-dose groups. Chondrocyte inflammation model was established by IL-1 β induction in other groups except Control group. LIGc high-dose, medium-dose and low-dose groups were treated with 0.4, 0.2 and 0.1 $\mu\text{mol/mL}$ LIGc for 24 h respectively. The effect of LIGc on the activity of rat chondrocytes was detected by CCK-8. The apoptosis of rat chondrocytes was observed by Hoechst 33258 staining. The protein expressions of Bcl-2, Caspase-3, TLR4 and NF- κB p65 were detected by Western blot. The expression levels of *COX-2* and *HMGB1* mRNA were detected by RT-qPCR. It was found that different concentrations of LIGc had no significant effect on the survival rate of rat chondrocytes. Compared with the Control group, the apoptosis of IL-1 β group was significantly increased. The expression level of Caspase-3 protein was significantly increased ($P < 0.01$), and the expression level of Bcl-2 protein was significantly decreased ($P < 0.01$). The expression levels of *COX-2* and *HMGB1* genes were significantly increased ($P < 0.01$); the expression levels of TLR4 and NF- κB p65 protein were significantly increased ($P < 0.01$). After LIGc intervention, cell viability was significantly increased, cell apoptosis was inhibited, and the expression level of Caspase-3 protein was significantly decreased ($P < 0.01$), the expression level of Bcl-2 protein LIGc (0.4, 0.2 $\mu\text{mol/mL}$) was significantly increased ($P < 0.01$); the expression levels of *COX-2* and *HMGB1* genes were significantly decreased ($P < 0.01$). The expression levels of TLR4 and NF- κB p65 protein were significantly decreased ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, LIGc can inhibit the apoptosis and inflammatory response of chondrocytes induced by IL-1 β , and its mechanism may be related to the inhibition of TLR4/NF- κB pathway.

Keywords chondrocytes; LIGc (ligusticum cycloprolactam); IL-1 β (interleukin-1 β); apoptosis; inflammatory response

骨关节炎(osteoarthritis, OA)是以关节软骨退变和炎症反应为主的慢性疾病^[1]。OA的患病率较高,不仅影响中老年人的生活质量而且还会增加额外的医疗支出^[2]。OA的发病机制尚未明确,研究表明,软骨细胞凋亡是软骨退变的重要病理特征,因此寻找保护软骨细胞的药物逐渐成为研究热点。目前OA治疗药物以非甾体类抗炎药为主,但长期应用这些会产生诸多副作用如消化道出血、肾功能不全等^[3-4]。因此,需要寻找能够延缓OA软骨退变,且副作用小的可改善OA病情的药物(disease-modifying osteoarthritis drugs, DMOADs)。中药来源小分子化合物具有安全、有效的优势,可为延缓OA软骨退变和炎症提供新方向。藁本内酯(Z-ligustilide, LIG)是中药当归主要药效标记物,在多种细胞中发挥抗炎、抗凋亡、保护细胞、延缓退变等重要药理作用^[5-6]。研究发现,藁本内酯能够延缓OA大鼠软骨细胞凋亡和炎症,具备治疗OA的研究和应用价值^[7]。然而,藁本内酯常温下可以脱氢、氧化、降解,化学结构不稳定导致成药性差^[8]。ZHANG等^[9]通过在藁本内酯结构中引入手性环丙内酰胺获得藁本内酯衍生物(ligusticum cyclo-

prolactam, LIGc)(图1),其保留了藁本内酯活性,同时具有化学性质稳定、易于保存、制备流程标准化等优势。本研究探讨LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞凋亡和炎症的作用及可能机制,为防治OA提供实验依据。

1 材料与amp;方法

1.1 主要试剂

LIGc由中国科学院兰州化学物理研究所西北特色植物资源化学重点实验室柳军玺研究员制备,相对分子质量为247 g/mol,纯度 $\geq 98\%$ 。大鼠软骨细胞(货号:2021061311501)购于北纳创联生物科技有限公司。IL-1 β (货号:H0921DMEM)购于Peprotech公司。CCK-8试剂(货号:20220507)购于NCM Biotech公司。RIPA裂解液(货号:CR2101120)购于Servicebio公司。RNAex Pro RNA提取试剂(货号:A3A2161)、Evo M-MLV反转录预混型试剂盒(货号:A3A1403)、SYBR Green Pro Taq HS预混型RT-qPCR试剂盒(货号:A3A1983)购于Accurate Biotechnology公司。B淋巴细胞瘤-2(B-cell lymphoma-2, Bcl-2)(货号:GR3232704-

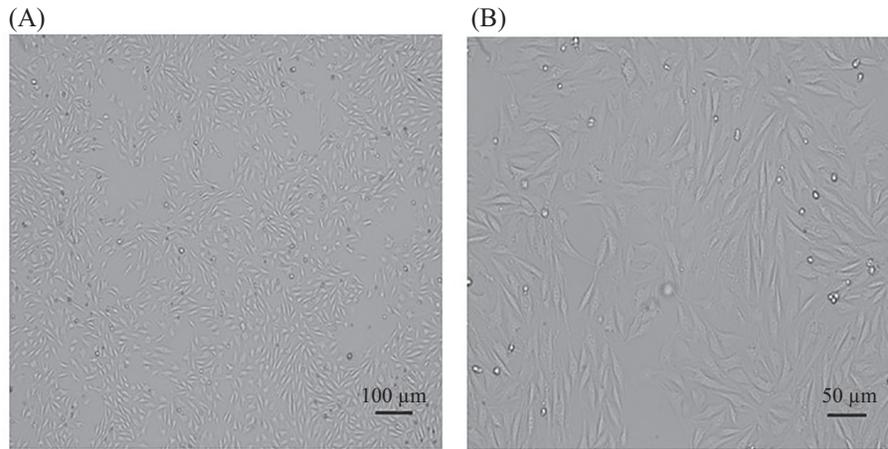


图2 大鼠软骨细胞形态观察

Fig.2 Morphological observation of rat chondrocytes

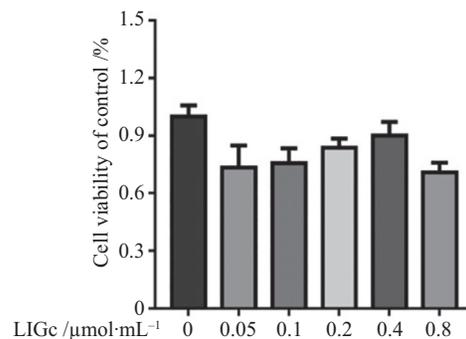


图3 不同浓度LIGc对大鼠关节软骨细胞活力的影响

Fig.3 Effect of different concentrations of LIGc on viability of rat articular chondrocytes

测发现LIGc对大鼠软骨细胞活力影响无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$)。本文选择0.1、0.2、0.4 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$ 进行后续实验(图3)。

2.3 Hoechst 33258染色观察LIGc对软骨细胞形态及凋亡情况的影响

Hoechst 33258蓝色荧光染色液可透过正常细胞膜,当细胞凋亡DNA结构发生改变时,膜上蛋白泵功能受损,这使得染色液不能被排出细胞外,荧光强度增强。与Control组细胞相比,IL-1 β 组软骨细胞细胞核固缩深染呈亮蓝色,软骨细胞出现典型的凋亡特征;与IL-1 β 组相比较,不同剂量LIGc干预后荧光明显减弱,说明LIGc干预改善了IL-1 β 造成的细胞凋亡损伤,且这呈浓度依赖性(图4)。

2.4 LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞Bcl-2和Caspase-3蛋白表达的影响

与Control组相比,IL-1 β 组软骨细胞Caspase-3蛋白表达水平显著上调($P<0.01$),Bcl-2蛋白表达水平显著下调($P<0.01$)。与IL-1 β 组相比,LIGc(0.4、0.2、

0.1 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$)组Caspase-3蛋白表达水平显著下调($P<0.01$),LIGc(0.4、0.2 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$)组Bcl-2蛋白表达水平显著上调($P<0.01$)(图5A~图5C)。

2.5 LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞环氧合酶2(cyclooxygenase-2, COX-2)和HMGB1 mRNA表达的影响

与Control组相比,IL-1 β 组大鼠软骨细胞HMGB1和COX-2 mRNA表达水平均显著上调($P<0.01$);与IL-1 β 组相比,LIGc(0.4、0.2、0.1 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$)组COX-2 mRNA表达水平均显著下调($P<0.01$),LIGc(0.4 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$)组HMGB1 mRNA表达水平显著下调($P<0.01$)(图6A和图6B)。

2.6 LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞TLR4/NF- κ B通路相关蛋白表达的影响

与Control组相比,IL-1 β 组大鼠软骨细胞TLR4和NF- κ B p65蛋白质表达水平均显著上调($P<0.01$)。与IL-1 β 组相比,LIGc(0.4、0.2、0.1 $\mu\text{mol}/\text{mL}$)组TLR4和NF- κ B p65蛋白质表达水平均显著降低($P<0.01$)(图7A~图7C)。

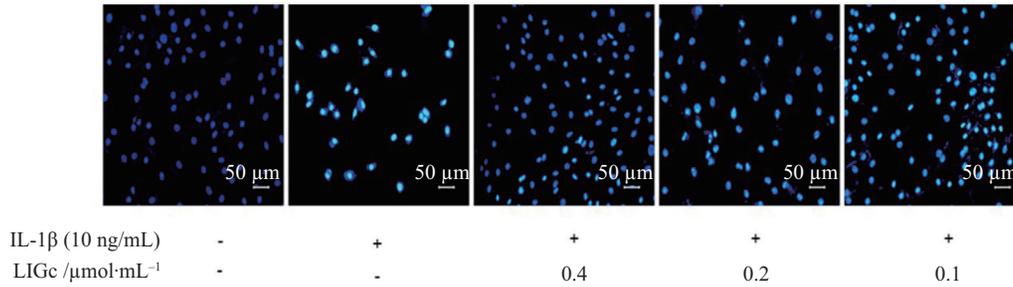


图4 Hoechst 33258染色观察LIGc对软骨细胞凋亡的影响

Fig.4 Hoechst 33258 staining was used to observe the effect of LIGc on chondrocyte apoptosis

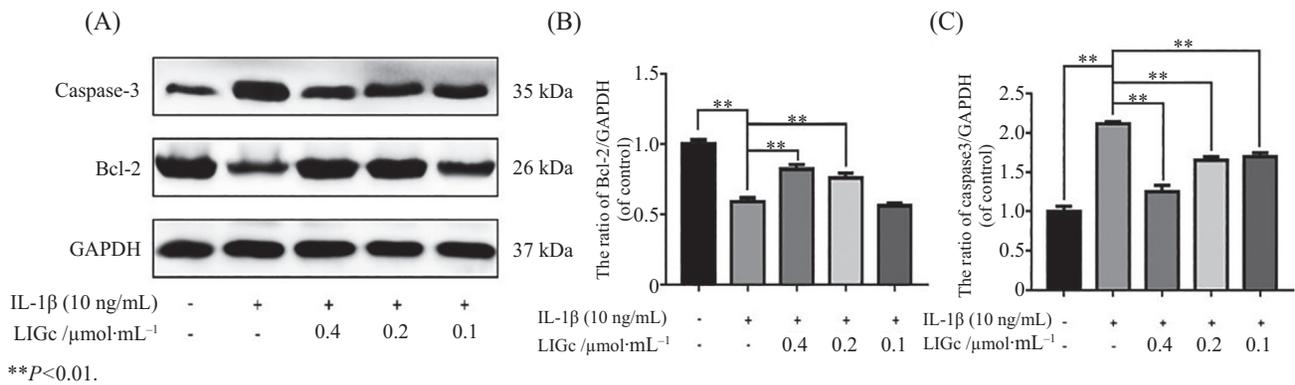


图5 LIGc对IL-1β诱导的软骨细胞Caspase-3和Bcl-2蛋白表达水平的影响

Fig.5 The effect of LIGc on IL-1β-induced Caspase-3 and Bcl-2 protein expression in chondrocytes

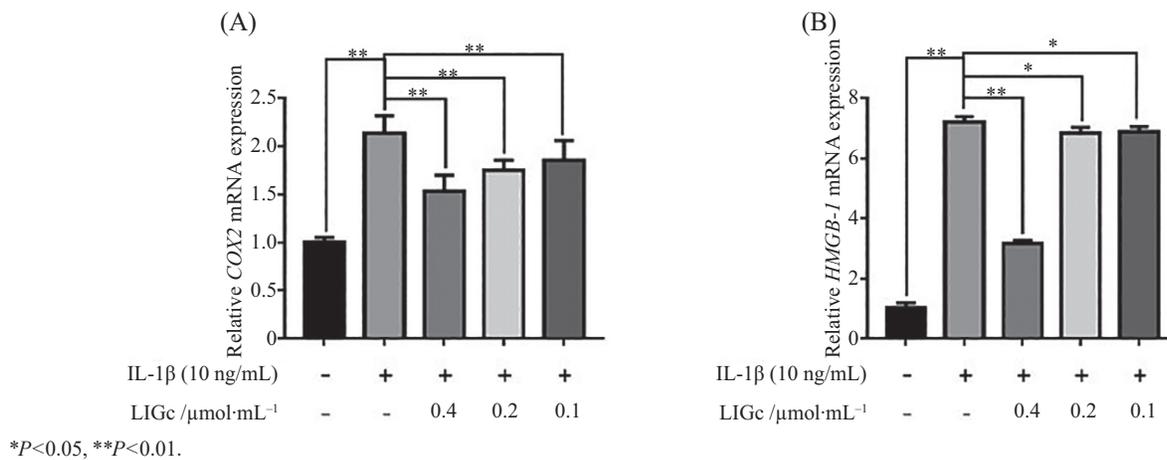


图6 LIGc对IL-1β诱导的软骨细胞HMGB1和COX-2基因表达水平的影响

Fig.6 Effect of LIGc on IL-1β-induced HMGB1 and COX-2 gene expression in chondrocytes

3 讨论

随着人口老龄化的加剧, OA发病率仍有显著增高趋势, 未来对治疗药物需求会越来越大^[10-11]。非甾体类抗炎药物能够缓解OA疼痛等症状, 但因其对心血管及胃肠道有副作用, 故不利于中老年人长期服用。因此, 探索缓解关节疼痛、修复软骨, 改善关节功能的疾病修饰药物(DMOAD)成为OA研究的热

点^[12]。研究发现, 中药单体能改善关节功能, 延缓软骨退变, 在抗OA方面具有较好的研究前景^[13]。

LIG是中药当归的主要活性成分, 属于天然苯酞类化合物, 具有抗炎^[14]、抗氧化应激^[15]、保护软骨细胞^[16]等药理作用。但是, LIG属于天然苯酞类化合物, 其常温环境不稳定的结构导致复合材料的成药性能较差, 因此在OA创新药物的应用中受到限

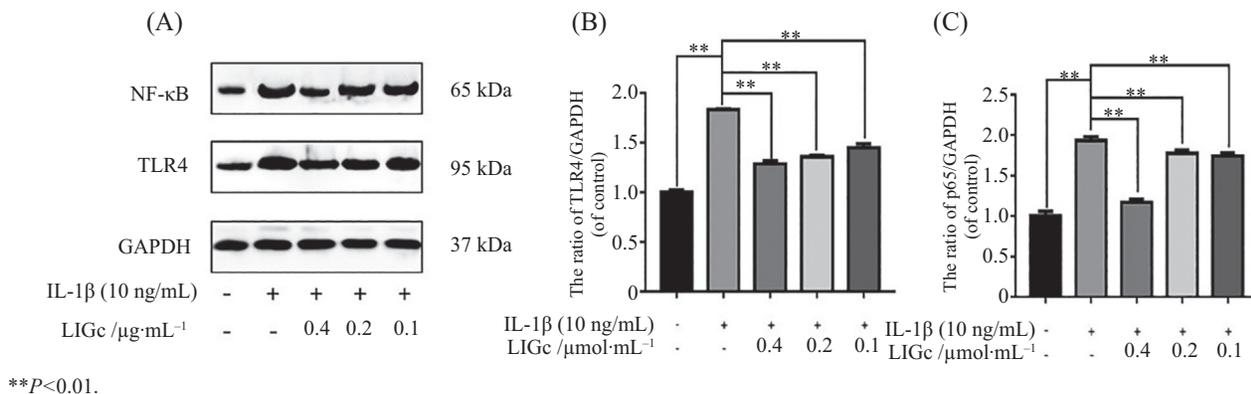


图7 LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞TLR4和NF- κ B p65蛋白表达水平的影响
Fig.7 Effect of LIGc on IL-1 β -induced TLR4 and NF- κ B p65 protein expression in chondrocytes

制。ZHANG等^[9]研究发现, LIGc保留了LIG活性, 同时具有化学性质稳定、生物口服利用度高、毒副作用小的优势, 为当归的高值利用和小分子药物开发奠定基础。前期研究发现, LIGc对神经炎症疾病具有药理活性^[17]。然而, 关于其对OA的作用还未见报道。本研究首次探讨LIGc对IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞凋亡和炎症的影响。

在OA的发展过程中, 炎症因子在软骨细胞凋亡中发挥重要作用, 其中IL-1 β 导致细胞膜通透性增强, 释放凋亡相关分子导致软骨细胞凋亡^[18-19]。Bcl-2具有抑制细胞凋亡的作用, Caspase-3是引起细胞凋亡的关键酶。本研究采用10 ng/mL的IL-1 β 建立软骨细胞炎症损伤模型。研究发现, LIGc能抑制IL-1 β 诱导的软骨细胞活力下降, 同时能抑制Caspase-3蛋白表达($P < 0.01$), 促进Bcl-2蛋白表达($P < 0.01$), 抑制软骨细胞凋亡。因此, LIGc抑制Caspase-3表达、促进Bcl-2表达发挥保护软骨细胞的作用。高迁移率蛋白B1(high mobility group box 1 HMGB1)作为OA病理过程中重要的损伤相关分子模式分子(damage-associated molecular pattern, DAMP)促进炎症因子释放并导致细胞凋亡^[20-21]。炎症和关节疼痛等均与COX-2有关, COX-2促进前列腺素E2(prostaglandin E2, PGE2)释放导致关节疼痛和软骨损伤^[22]。HMGB1和COX-2在OA软骨细胞凋亡和炎症过程中具有重要作用^[23-24]。本研究显示, IL-1 β 促进HMGB1和COX2基因表达明显升高, 与对照组间均有显著性差异。因此, LIGc能抑制HMGB1和COX-2基因表达, 抑制炎症反应保护软骨细胞。TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路在调控OA软骨退变和炎症过程中具有重要作用^[25]。NF- κ B p65是与炎症反应关系密切的转录因子, 能

够调控下游细胞因子的表达以及细胞凋亡过程^[26]。本研究发现, LIGc降低大鼠软骨细胞炎症模型中TLR4、NF- κ B p65的表达水平, 表明LIGc可能通过TLR4/NF- κ B通路来抑制软骨细胞凋亡。

综上所述, LIGc具有延缓IL-1 β 诱导的大鼠软骨细胞炎症反应和保护软骨细胞的作用, 其机制可能与TLR4/NF- κ B信号通路相关。但需要进一步通过体内实验研究LIGc对OA软骨组织的影响和作用机制, 为进一步探索LIGc治疗OA的作用及机制提供新依据。

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