

·基础研究·

## 电针对SNI诱导疼痛抑郁模型大鼠海马AcH3/BDNF的影响

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**摘 要:**【目的】观察电针对疼痛抑郁模型大鼠海马脑源性神经营养因子(BDNF)、乙酰化蛋白(AcH3)表达的影响,探讨电针镇痛抗抑郁的作用机制。【方法】雄性SD大鼠随机分为假手术组、模型组、电针组、药物组,每组6只。采用坐骨神经选择损伤术(SNI)建立疼痛抑郁模型。SNI术后1周进行相关干预直至术后6周,电针组于隔日电针百会、印堂2 Hz 30 min 治疗;药物组给予每日10 mg/kg 丙咪嗪腹腔注射;假手术组、模型组给予相同的抓取。术前及术后1、2、3、4、5、6周进行机械缩足反射阈值(PWT)测试,术后6周进行糖水偏好实验和强迫游泳实验行为学测试。行为学结束后取大鼠海马组织,采用Western blot法检测BDNF、AcH3的含量。【结果】与假手术组相比,模型组大鼠PWT、糖水偏好比率下降( $P<0.01$ ),强迫游泳不动时间延长( $P<0.01$ ),海马BDNF、AcH3表达减少( $P<0.05$ ,  $P<0.01$ ),差异有统计学意义,提示疼痛抑郁模型建造成功。SNI术后6周,与模型组比较,电针组和药物PWT升高( $P<0.01$ ),糖水消耗比率升高( $P<0.01$ ),强迫游泳不动时间减少( $P<0.01$ ),差异有统计学意义。与模型组比较,电针组海马AcH3、BDNF的表达增多( $P<0.05$ ),药物组海马AcH3表达增多( $P<0.05$ ),BDNF表达无明显变化。【结论】电针可缓解疼痛抑郁模型大鼠疼痛、抑郁行为症状,其镇痛抗抑郁机制可能与上调海马AcH3、BDNF表达相关。

**关键词:**电针;疼痛;抑郁;乙酰化蛋白;脑源性神经营养因子

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## Effects of Electroacupuncture on Hippocampal AcH3 and BDNF in the Rat Model of SNI-induced Pain-Depression Dyad

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**Abstract:**【Objective】To observe the impacts of electroacupuncture (EA) on the expression of hippocampal brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) and acetylated histone (AcH3) in the rat model of spared nerve injury (SNI), so as to explore the analgesic and antidepressant effects of EA.【Methods】Twenty-four Male SD rats were randomly divided into 4 groups, with 6 in each group. SNI was used to establish the model of pain and depression. All the groups were intervened one week after SNI surgery and persisted 5 weeks. The EA group was treated with EA (2 Hz) for 30 min every other day and imipramine drug group (IMP) group with peritoneal imipramine injection (10 mg/kg) per day. The sham surgery group (SS) and model group (SNI) received the same grasping stimulation. The paw mechanical withdrawal threshold (PWT)

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test was performed before the SNI surgery, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 weeks after surgery, respectively. The forced swimming test (FST) and the sucrose preference test (SPT) were performed 6 weeks after SNI surgery. The Western blot method was employed to detect the expression of BDNF and ACh3 from the rat hippocampal tissue at the end of the behavioral tests. [Results] Compared with the SS group, the SNI group had significantly decreased PWT and sucrose consumption, prolonged FST immobility time (all  $P < 0.01$ ), down-regulated BDNF and ACh3 expression ( $P < 0.05$  &  $P < 0.01$ ) in the hippocampus, which indicated the successful construction of the pain-depression model. Compared with the SNI group, 6 weeks after SNI surgery, the EA and IMP groups had significantly increased PWT and sucrose consumption, and reduced FST immobility time (all  $P < 0.01$ ); the EA group had up-regulated BDNF and ACh3 expression (both  $P < 0.05$ ) in the hippocampus, the IMP group had up-regulated ACh3 ( $P < 0.05$ ) expression but no difference in BDNF expression. [Conclusion] EA could relieve pain and depressive behavioral symptoms in SNI rats. And its analgesic and antidepressant mechanisms may relate to the up-regulation of hippocampal ACh3 and BDNF expression.

**Key words:** electroacupuncture; pain; depression; acetylated histone; brain-derived neurotrophic factor

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抑郁症是临床上一种常见的心理精神障碍疾病,其临床症状复杂多样,除了心理情感障碍主要症状外还伴发许多躯体障碍如慢性疼痛。慢性疼痛在普通人群的发病率约20.4%<sup>[1]</sup>,而在抑郁患者中其发病率显著升高可高达69%<sup>[2]</sup>。越来越多的研究显示抑郁与疼痛具有高度共患病,长期慢性疼痛极易诱发抑郁、焦虑等情绪障碍,而抑郁状态会加剧疼痛症状,并加大治疗难度,两者互为影响,这给临床诊疗极大地增加了困难<sup>[3]</sup>。单一抗抑郁或镇痛疗效差,联合用药也存在起效慢、副作用大、患者依从性差等不足<sup>[4]</sup>,临床迫切需求一种绿色、安全、有效的治疗措施。本团队前期临床发现针灸对抑郁症有很好的临床疗效<sup>[5-6]</sup>,其机制与上调海马源性神经营养因子(brain-derived neurotrophic factor, BDNF)相关通路有关<sup>[7]</sup>。但BDNF是否参与针刺抗抑郁镇痛作用机制还有待进一步研究。本研究采用坐骨神经选择损伤术(spared nerve injury, SNI)构造慢性疼痛和抑郁共病模型,观察疼痛抑郁模型大鼠海马组织中BDNF与乙酰化蛋白ACh3表达变化,探讨针刺抗抑郁镇痛的作用机制,为针刺治疗慢性疼痛抑郁共病提供实验依据。

## 1 材料与方法

### 1.1 实验动物及分组

SPF级雄性SD大鼠,体质量100~140 g,共24只,购自广东省医学实验动物中心,许可证号SCXK(粤2018-0002),合格证号No.44007200094369,饲养于广东省中医药科学院SPF级的动物房。标准条件饲养:每标准饲养笼饲养5只小鼠,提供SPF级大鼠颗粒饲料和灭菌后自来水自由饮食,饲养空间保持良好通风,控制温度在25℃~27℃,湿度50%~60%,保持12 h的光照/12 h黑暗周期切换等。适应喂养一周后,采用随机数表法将24只SPF SD大鼠分为假手术组、模型组、药物组、电针组,共4组,每组6只。本实验

严格遵循国家科学技术委员会颁布的《实验动物管理条例》以及国家药监局颁布的《实验动物管理实施细则》,并通过广东省中医院实验动物伦理委员会许可(编号2020085)。

### 1.2 主要试剂与仪器

0.18 mm×20 mm一次性无菌针灸针(江苏华佗有限公司),韩式电针仪(南京济生医疗科技有限公司),von frey纤维丝测痛仪(美国IITC life science公司),强迫游泳视频分析系统(上海吉量软件科技有限公司),酶标仪、电泳仪、转膜仪、凝胶成像化学发光成像系统(美国Bio-Rad公司),倒置荧光显微镜(德国Olympus公司)。

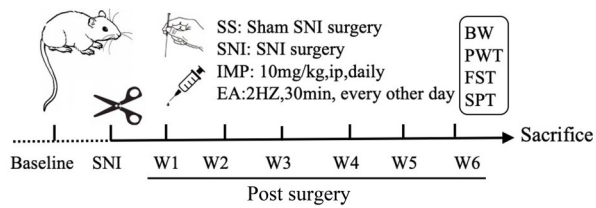
丙咪嗪、BCA试剂盒购自美国Sigma-Aldrich公司, PVDF膜、超高灵敏度ECL发光液购自美国millipore公司, SDS-PAGE凝胶试剂盒购自碧云天生物技术研究所, ACh3、Histone H3、BDNF、GAPDH一抗、二抗购自美国Cell Signaling Technology公司。

### 1.3 造模方法

本实验采用坐骨神经选择损伤(spared nerve injury, SNI)方法建立慢性疼痛抑郁共病模型。参照Wolf等人SNI造模方法,采用2%~3%浓度的异氟烷进行呼吸麻醉。消毒后在左下肢股骨中点切开皮肤,钝性分开股二头肌,暴露坐骨神经及其分支:胫神经、腓总神经、腓肠神经,用5号线结扎并剪断胫神经和腓总神经,保留腓肠神经,分层缝合肌肉及皮肤。假手术组仅暴露坐骨神经及其分支,不进行结扎剪断,其他操作同前,麻醉苏醒后将大鼠放回原笼。

### 1.4 干预方法

SNI术后1周,各组给与相关处理:电针组给予隔日电针百会、印堂<sup>[8]</sup>,2 Hz 30min治疗;药物组给予每日10 mg/kg丙咪嗪腹腔注射;假手术组和模型组给予相同的抓取,不电针,不给药。所有大鼠在术后6周结束治疗,并进行行为学评估后处死取材,实验干预及各种指标检测见图1。



W: week; SNI: spared nerve injury; BW: body weight; PWT: paw mechanical withdrawal threshold; FST: forced swimming test; SPT: sucrose preference test.

图1 实验流程

Fig. 1 Flow chart

### 1.5 观察指标及检测方法

机械缩足反射阈值(paw withdrawal threshold, PWT)测定:采用up-down方法测量大鼠术前、术后1、2、3、4、5、6周PWT。操作方法:将大鼠置于底部为1 cm×1 cm的铁丝网的透明的有机玻璃箱中适应30 min。选取Von Frey hair为4.0、6.0、8.0、10.0、15.0和26.0 g的纤维丝对大鼠左侧足底外侧无毛区域(腓肠神经支配区域),记录有无缩足反应(如舔足、抬腿等)。

糖水偏好试验可反映动物快感缺失,是抑郁样行为的良好指标。实验结束后对各组大鼠进行糖水偏好试验。实验共4 d:第1天给予大鼠2瓶1%蔗糖水;第2天给予1瓶1%的蔗糖水、1瓶纯净水;第3天,禁食禁水;第4天给予1瓶1%蔗糖水和1瓶纯净水。实验结束别称量糖水和纯净水的剩余量,糖水偏好率(%)=糖水消耗量/(糖水的消耗量+纯净水的消耗量)×100%。

强迫游泳试验可反映大鼠的绝望程度,是经典的抑郁样行为评估方法。将大鼠放置在透明的圆柱形容器(直径20 cm,高50 cm),水深35 cm,水温保持在(24.0±1.0)℃。将大鼠放于水中6 min,记录观察后5 min不动时间(不动标准为大鼠漂浮在水面,身体停止挣扎)。

Western blot测定大鼠海马AcH3、BDNF蛋白表达量。实验干预和行为学评估结束后采用腹腔注射乌拉坦(1.5 g/kg)深度麻醉处死大鼠,取出海马组织,RIPA裂解液冰上裂解30 min,而后冰上超声匀化组织,然后4℃10 000×g离心10 min。将离心后的上清转移至1.5 mL EP管中,-80℃冻存。应用BCA方法测量总蛋白浓度,取30 μg蛋白上样量进行SDS-PAGE(12%分离胶和5%浓缩胶)电泳,然后再电转将蛋白转移至PVDF膜上,5%BSA室温封闭约1 h。按1:1 000比例稀释一抗(GAPDH、AcH3、Histone H3、BDNF)4℃孵育过夜。TBST 3次10 min洗膜后加入相对应二抗,室温轻摇60 min。洗膜后将ECL显色液滴加在PVDF膜上,然后放入凝胶成像化学发光成像系统曝光显影。BDNF与GAPDH,AcH3与Histone H3的比值作为相对表达量。

### 1.6 统计方法

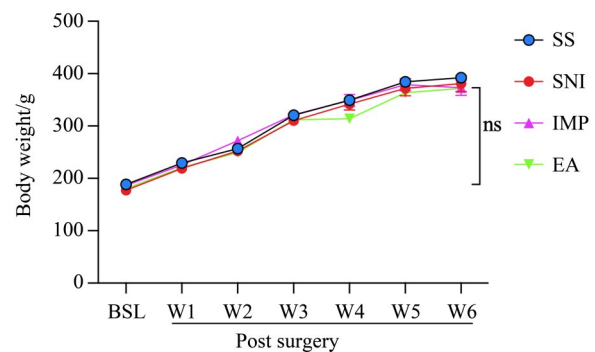
采用GraphPad prism Version 9.1.1(223)进行统计分

析,数据以均数±标准误表示,体质量和PWT数据采用重复测量方差分析,其余指标采用单因素方差分析,两两比较采用Tukey's检验, $P<0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

## 2 结果

### 2.1 各组大鼠体质量比较

如图2所示,各组大鼠体质量在SNI术前及术后1、2、3、4、5、6周经重复测量方差分析,组间效应差异无统计学( $F=0.8647$ , $P=0.4756$ ),时间效应差异有统计学意义( $F=694.8$ , $P<0.0001$ ),组间、时点交互效应差异无统计学意义( $F=1.348$ , $P=0.1713$ ),表明各组大鼠体质量在各时点差异均无统计学意义。



W: week; SS: the SNI surgery group; SNI: the model group; IMP: the imipramine drug group; EA: the electro-acupuncture group; BSL: baseline. Data are presented as means ± SEM ( $n=6$ /group), ns stands for no significance.

图2 各组大鼠体质量的比较

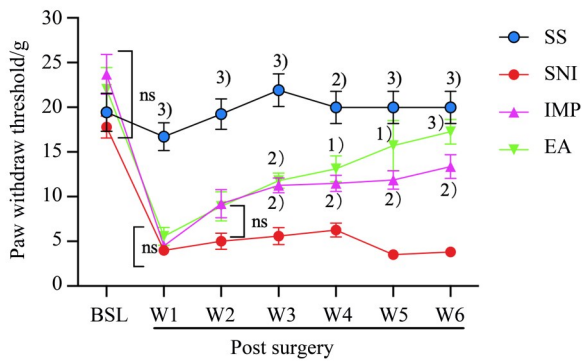
Fig. 2 Body weight between groups

### 2.2 EA增加SNI大鼠PWT

各组各时点大鼠PWT采用重复测量方差分析,组间效应( $F=33.45$ , $P<0.0001$ )、时点效应( $F=39.89$ , $P<0.0001$ )、组间×时点交互效应( $F=6.032$ , $P<0.0001$ )差异均有统计学意义;进一步采用Turkey法做两两比较,发现各组大鼠PWT在SNI术前差异均无统计学意义(SS vs SNI,  $P=0.9036$ ; SS vs IMP,  $P=0.5428$ ; SS vs EA,  $P=0.8572$ ; IMP vs EA,  $P=0.9552$ ; SNI vs IMP,  $P=0.1739$ ; SNI vs EA,  $P=0.4568$ ),SNI术后1周,模型组PWT与假手术组比较( $P=0.0008$ )下降,差异有统计学意义,与电针组( $P=0.5596$ )和药物组( $P=0.9166$ )无明显变化,差异无统计学意义。经过电针或药物干预后,从SNI术后第3周,与模型组比较,电针组( $P=0.0032$ )和药物组( $P=0.0054$ )PWT开始出现上升,一直到SNI术后第6周都逐渐上升,差异有统计学意义,如图3所示。

### 2.3 EA增加SNI大鼠糖水偏好率

如图4所示,SNI术后6周,各组数据经单因素方差分

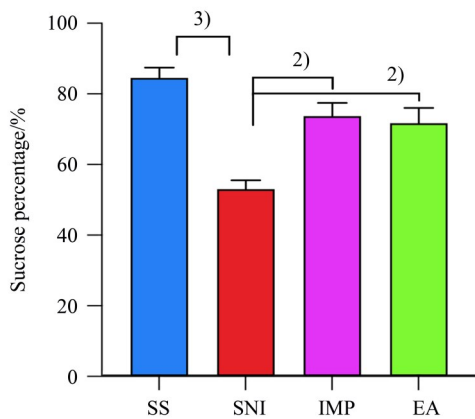


W: week ;The PWT was performed at before and after 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 weeks of surgery. PWT: paw mechanical withdrawal threshold. Data are presented as means ± SEM (n=6/group). Compared with SNI, 1) P<0.05, 2) P<0.01, 3) P<0.001, ns stands for no significance.

图3 EA增加SNI大鼠机械缩足反射阈值

Fig. 3 EA improve the PWT in SNI-induce rats

析显示差异有统计学意义( $F=14.05, P<0.0001$ )。进一步采用Tukey法两两比较,与假手术组比较,模型组大鼠糖水消耗量百分比下降( $P<0.0001$ )。与模型组比较,电针组( $P=0.0059$ )和药物组( $P=0.0024$ )大鼠糖水消耗量百分比上升。



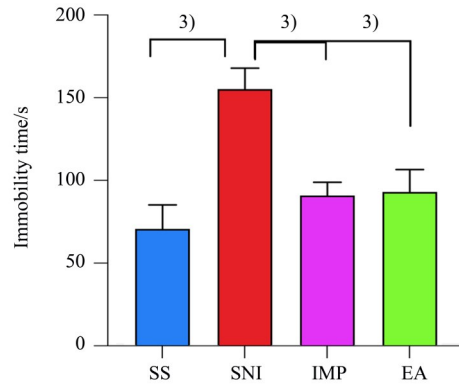
The sucrose preference test was performed after 6 weeks of SNI surgery. Data are presented as means ± SEM (n=6/group). 1) P<0.05, 2) P<0.01, 3) P<0.001, ns stands for no significance.

图4 EA增加SNI大鼠糖水偏好率

Fig. 4 EA improve the sucrose percentage in SNI-induce rats

2.4 EA降低SNI大鼠强迫游泳不动时间

如图5所示,SNI术后6周,各组数据经单因素方差分析显示差异有统计学意义( $F=34.21, P<0.0001$ )。进一步采用Tukey法两两比较,与假手术组比较,模型组大鼠强迫游泳不动时间延长( $P<0.0001$ )。与模型组比较,电针组( $P<0.0001$ )和药物组( $P<0.0001$ )大鼠强迫游泳不动时间均减少。



The forced swim test was performed after 6 weeks of SNI surgery. Data are presented as means ± SEM (n=6/group). 1) P<0.05, 2) P<0.01, 3) P<0.001, ns stands for no significance.

图5 EA降低SNI大鼠强迫游泳不动时间

Fig. 5 EA reduced the immobility time in the forced swim test

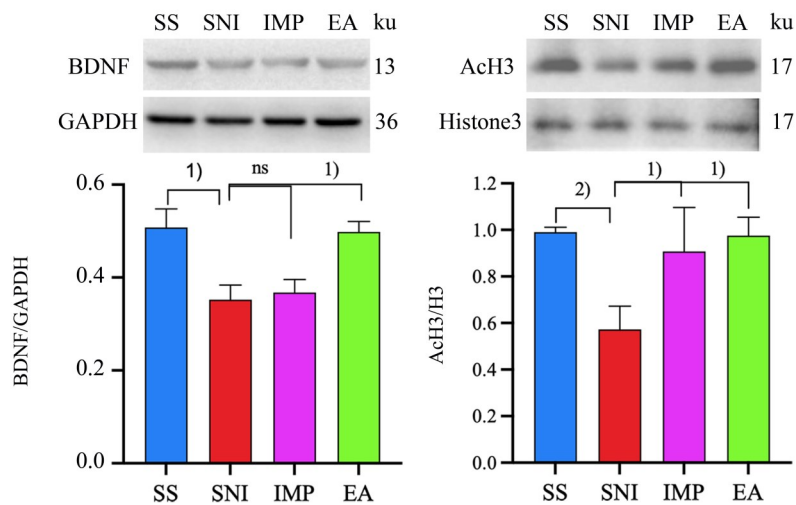
2.5 EA上调SNI大鼠海马BDNF、ACh3蛋白表达

如图6所示,各组BDNF( $F=7.097, P=0.0121$ )、ACh3( $F=8.753, P=0.0066$ )蛋白相对表达量采用单因素方差分析,结果显示差异有统计学意义。进一步采用Tukey法两两比较,与假手术组比较,模型组大鼠海马BDNF( $P=0.0316$ )、ACh3( $P=0.0092$ )表达水平降低,差异有统计学意义。与模型组比较,电针组大鼠海马BDNF( $P=0.0428$ )、ACh3( $P=0.0111$ )均上升,差异有统计学意义,药物组ACh3( $P=0.0294$ )上升,但BDNF表达无差异( $P=0.985$ )。

3 讨论

抑郁症和慢性疼痛临床常常相伴发生,且两者相互促进,机制复杂多样,这给研究带来了困难。良好的动物模型是研究疾病发病机制与疗效验证的前提和基础,本研究采用神经病理性疼痛模型诱导的疼痛抑郁共病模型。SNI是常用的神经病理性痛动物模型,手术操作简单,重复效果好,成功率高,术后患肢痛敏感稳定。动物模型研究也显示SNI术后可诱导动物出现焦虑、抑郁样情绪,且该模型诱导疼痛和抑郁样行为持续时间长,并且行为学表现稳定<sup>[9-10]</sup>。基于此,我们选择了该模型,并选择了术后6周作为疼痛抑郁的评价点,这一时间点也得到了其他研究者的支持和使用<sup>[11-12]</sup>。我们的结果显示SNI术后6周,模型组机械痛阈值、糖水偏好率显著降低,强迫游泳不动时间显著延长,提示疼痛抑郁共病模型建造成功。

针灸镇痛作用已得到全球的认可和推广,近年来其抗抑郁作用也逐渐得到国内外的认可。2016年美国医师协会的“抑郁症非药物治疗指南”及我国《中国抑郁障碍防治指南》中都推荐针灸可作为治疗轻中度抑郁症的非药物疗



The BDNF and ACh3 protein in hippocampal was detected after sacrifice. Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM ( $n=3/\text{group}$ ). 1)  $P<0.05$ , 2)  $P<0.01$ , 3)  $P<0.001$ .

图6 EA上调大鼠海马BDNF ACh3蛋白表达

Fig. 6 EA upregulated hippocampal BDNF ACh3 levels in SNI-induced rats

法。本团队自2000年着手于抑郁相关病症的临床及机制研究,发现针灸对抑郁障碍及其相关病症具有良好的临床效果。我们前期临床研究发现针刺百会、印堂、合谷、太冲穴较常规针刺止痛能显著改善抑郁伴颈痛患者HAMD抑郁量表、NPQ颈痛量表的评分<sup>[13]</sup>。前期动物实验研究选用慢性不可预知温和应激抑郁模型,发现针刺百会、印堂可显著上调糖水偏好率,缩短新环境延迟进食时间,提示针刺百会、印堂可改善抑郁样行为<sup>[7]</sup>。这与前期电针合谷、太冲穴得到类似结果<sup>[14-15]</sup>。此外,在其它抑郁模型研究中也发现针刺百会、印堂穴可显著改善糖水偏好率、强迫游泳不动时间等抑郁样行为<sup>[16-17]</sup>。本研究也发现电针百会、印堂后,电针组较模型组糖水偏好率显著上升,强迫游泳不动时间显著减少,提示电针可有效缓解SNI引起的抑郁样行为。除此之外,电针还显著改善了SNI引起痛觉异常,且效果更甚于丙咪嗪。丙咪嗪是一种三环类抗抑郁药,其还可以缓解慢性神经痛。不少研究显示丙咪嗪在抑郁慢性疼痛共病模型中展示出良好的镇痛和改善抑郁样行为<sup>[18-19]</sup>,故本研究选择丙咪嗪作为阳性对照药物。针刺镇痛作用广泛,不局限于某一种疼痛,有研究显示其对炎性疼痛、癌痛均有好的镇痛效果<sup>[20-21]</sup>。本研究显示电针可有效缓解SNI引起的疼痛和抑郁样行为,且效果不亚于丙咪嗪。

海马是学习、记忆及情绪反应的中枢。神经影像学及尸检发现抑郁患者海马神经元丢失、体积萎缩,更有研究显示抑郁症状发作次数与海马萎缩程度呈正相,而经抗抑郁治疗后腹侧海马(调节压力、焦虑)神经发生优先于背侧海马(调节空间学习记忆)<sup>[22]</sup>。慢性疼痛患者也存在海马体积缩小,且不受疼痛类型的影响<sup>[23]</sup>。在SNI小鼠模型中也发现海马神经发生减弱以及海马神经突触可塑性的改变<sup>[23]</sup>。

炎性疼痛模型中也发现单侧弗氏剂注射足趾可引起双侧海马神经发生减弱<sup>[24]</sup>。海马CA1区和齿状回的神经元会对疼痛刺激作出回应,同时参与顽固性神经疼痛的处理,而在海马齿状回注射利多卡因可产生显著镇痛作用<sup>[25]</sup>。由此可见,海马神经发生减弱、突触可塑性改变是抑郁、疼痛的共同发病机制。

BDNF是神经营养因子家族的重要成员,可促进突触的生长、维持神经元的生存、提高神经的可塑性、促进神经发生尤其是海马神经发生。疼痛抑郁模型大鼠海马萎缩,海马及前额皮质BDNF阳性神经元显著降低<sup>[26-27]</sup>。慢性炎症性疼痛大鼠模型海马中BDNF的也显著减少,这种减少是产生抑郁样行为的重要因素<sup>[24]</sup>,而恢复BDNF表达可有效缓解抑郁疼痛症状<sup>[28]</sup>。值得注意的是,在某些疼痛研究中,BDNF是高表达的,如脊髓背根节,其被认为是痛敏因子<sup>[11]</sup>。这是由于BDNF在中枢神经系统的不同位置产生不同作用所导致的。近年来抗抑郁研究热点的快速抗抑郁药物氯胺酮其在24h内就可改善抑郁疼痛共病大鼠模型抑郁症状,与恢复海马、内侧前额皮质、前扣带回皮质内BDNF相关<sup>[29]</sup>。故恢复海马BDNF表达水平可作为慢性疼痛抑郁共病治疗的潜在靶点。本研究也发现SNI术后6周的大鼠海马BDNF下降,提示疼痛抑郁共病模型大鼠存在海马突触可塑性变化,而电针可上调海马BDNF表达,促进突触可塑性。我们前期研究也显示电针抗抑郁作用机制与上调前额、海马BDNF表达,增加突触相关蛋白PSD95、Synapsin I和GluR1表达水平,增加树突棘密度,促进突触可塑性相关<sup>[7,14]</sup>。本研究中药组(丙咪嗪)BDNF表达与模型组无显著差异,提示丙咪嗪缓解疼痛抑郁共病模型的作用机制不同,其可能通过其他途径如抑制海马炎症因子之类<sup>[18]</sup>。

BDNF的表达受到多方面因素的调控。随着表观遗传的兴起,越来越多研究发现疾病是基因与环境相互作用的病理产物。表观遗传(如DNA甲基化、组蛋白修饰、非编码RNA等)也参与调控BDNF。其中,组蛋白乙酰化修饰由组蛋白乙酰转移酶(histone acetyltransferase, HAT)和组蛋白去乙酰化酶(histone deacetylase, HDAC)共同协调。组蛋白乙酰化能激活基因表达,而去乙酰化则可沉默基因表达。孤养模型大鼠和慢性社会应激模型大鼠海马BDNF启动子H3、H4组蛋白显著去乙酰化(即AcH3、AcH4低表达),甚至单次束缚应激可显著降低海马BDNF启动子AcH3表达,进而抑制BDNF表达,而使用艾司西酞普兰可逆转这一变化,这也是艾司西酞普兰抗抑郁机制之一<sup>[30]</sup>。此外,Erburu<sup>[31]</sup>等人也发现单胺抗抑郁药(氟西汀、丙咪嗪)通过上调前额AcH3、AcH4,促进BDNF表达,改善慢性社会挫败应激小鼠模型抑郁样行为。本研究中也发现SNI术后6周

AcH3下调,而电针可上调AcH3、BDNF的表达,提示电针可能通过上调乙酰化蛋白表达促进BDNF表达。这一结果也得到了其他研究的支持,Jiang<sup>[32]</sup>等人发现针刺可逆转慢性温和性刺激大鼠模型海马AcH3表达,促进血清、海马BDNF表达,实现抗抑郁效应。

综上所述,我们的研究表明,电针在SNI诱导的慢性疼痛抑郁模型中有抗抑郁镇痛作用,其机制可能与上调海马乙酰化蛋白AcH3,促进BDNF表达,从而促进海马突触可塑性相关。本研究为电针治疗慢性疼痛抑郁提供了新的思路,但仍存在不足之处。首先,我们目前对乙酰化蛋白AcH3和BDNF之间的关系研究得比较粗浅,后续将深化研究AcH3是如何促进BDNF转录翻译,促进海马突触可塑性变化;其次,临床慢性疼痛抑郁共病的因素复杂多变,后续将通过多种动物模型研究电针治疗慢性疼痛抑郁科学机制,为临床推广针刺治疗疼痛抑郁共病提供实验依据。

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