

复发性口腔溃疡患儿血清 IRF4, RANKL 水平与其他免疫学指标相关性及对再复发的预测价值

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摘要: 目的 探究血清干扰素调节因子4 (IRF4)、核因子 κ B受体活化因子配体 (RANKL) 水平与其他免疫学指标相关性及对复发性口腔溃疡患儿再复发的预测价值。方法 选取首都医科大学附属北京朝阳医院2019年1月~2022年6月收治的复发性口腔溃疡患儿80例为病例组, 根据随访结果分为未复发组 ($n=61$) 和复发组 ($n=19$), 另选取同期进行体检的口腔健康志愿者49例为对照组。采用ELISA检测血清IRF4, RANKL水平, 收集并分析患者一般临床资料。Logistic回归分析复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的影响因素, Pearson法分析IRF4, RANKL与免疫学指标的相关性, 绘制受试者工作特征 (ROC) 曲线分析血清IRF4, RANKL水平对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的预测价值。结果 与对照组相比, 复发组、未复发组的IRF4 (9.67 ± 1.03 ng/ml, 7.86 ± 0.92 ng/ml vs 6.19 ± 0.71 ng/ml), RANKL (192.95 ± 19.86 pg/ml, 152.56 ± 15.98 pg/ml vs 83.96 ± 9.85 pg/ml) 水平显著升高, 且与未复发组相比, 复发组的IRF4, RANKL水平显著升高, 差异具有统计学意义 ($F=121.514, 487.250$, 均 $P < 0.05$)。两组患儿的炎症因子白细胞介素-1 β (IL-1 β)、肿瘤坏死因子- α (TNF- α)、白细胞介素-6 (IL-6) 以及CD4⁺, CD4⁺/CD8⁺之间差异具有统计学差异 ($t=6.926 \sim 15.648$, 均 $P < 0.05$)。Logistic回归分析 IRF4 [OR (95%CI): 1.529 (1.079 ~ 2.167)], RANKL [OR (95%CI): 1.421 (1.049 ~ 1.925)], IL-1 β [OR (95%CI): 1.322 (1.007 ~ 1.736)] 均为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的危险因素 (均 $P < 0.05$), CD4⁺ [OR (95%CI): 0.788 (0.641 ~ 0.968)] 为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的保护因素 ($P < 0.05$)。Pearson相关性分析, IRF4, RANKL与炎症因子呈正相关 ($r=0.453 \sim 0.533$, 均 $P < 0.05$), 与CD4⁺ ($r=-0.407, -0.409$) 和CD4⁺/CD8⁺ ($r=-0.425, -0.412$) 呈负相关 (均 $P < 0.05$)。ROC曲线结果显示血清IRF4, RANKL以及联合预测复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的AUC (95%CI) 分别为0.840 (0.741 ~ 0.913), 0.832 (0.732 ~ 0.906), 0.928 (0.847 ~ 0.974), 联合预测显著优于IRF4, RANKL单独预测 ($Z=1.984, 2.071, P=0.047, 0.038$)。结论 复发性口腔溃疡患儿血清IRF4, RANKL水平显著升高, 均为影响患儿治疗后复发的危险因素, 对患儿治疗后复发具有一定辅助预测价值。

关键词: 复发性口腔溃疡; 干扰素调节因子4; 核因子 κ B受体活化因子配体

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Predictive Value of Serum IRF4 and RANKL Levels for Recurrence and Correlation with other Immunological Indicators in Children with Recurrent Oral Ulcers after Treatment

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Abstract: **Objective** To investigate the predictive value of serum interferon regulatory factor 4 (IRF4) and receptor activator of nuclear factor- κ B ligand (RANKL) levels for recurrence and correlation with other immunological indicators in children with recurrent oral ulcers after treatment. **Methods** Eighty children with recurrent oral ulcers admitted to Beijing Chaoyang Hospital, Capital Medical University from January 2019 to June 2022 were collected as the diseased group. They were separated into a nonrecurrent group ($n=61$) and a recurrent group ($n=19$) based on follow-up results. Additionally, 49 oral health volunteers who underwent physical examinations were regarded as the control group. ELISA was applied to detect serum levels of IRF4 and RANKL. General clinical data of patients were collected and analyzed. Multivariate logistic regression was applied to analyze the factors affecting the recurrence of children with recurrent oral ulcers. The Pearson method was applied to analyze the correlation between IRF4, RANKL, and immunological indicators. The receiver operating characteristic (ROC)

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curve was plotted to analyze the predictive value of serum IRF4 and RANKL levels for recurrence in children with recurrent oral ulcers after treatment. **Results** Compared with the control group, the levels of IRF4($9.67 \pm 1.03\text{ng/ml}$, $7.86 \pm 0.92\text{ng/ml}$ vs $6.19 \pm 0.71\text{ng/ml}$) and RANK($192.95 \pm 19.86\text{pg/ml}$, $152.56 \pm 15.98\text{pg/ml}$ vs $83.96 \pm 9.85\text{pg/ml}$) in the non recurrent group and the recurrent group, compared with the non recurrent group, the levels of IRF4 and RANKL in the recurrent group were increased, and the differences were statistically significant ($F=121.514$, 487.250 , all $P<0.05$). There were statistical difference between the two groups in terms of inflammatory factors such as IL-1 β , TNF- α , IL-6 and CD4 $^{+}$, CD4 $^{+}$ /CD8 $^{+}$ ($t=6.926 \sim 15.648$, all $P<0.05$). Logistic regression analysis, IRF4[OR(95%CI): 1.529(1.079 ~ 2.167)], RANKL[OR(95%CI): 1.421(1.049 ~ 1.925)] and IL-1 β [OR(95%CI): 1.322(1.007 ~ 1.736)] were all risk factors for recurrence in children with recurrent oral ulcers (all $P<0.05$), while CD4 $^{+}$ [OR(95%CI): 0.788(0.641 ~ 0.968)] was protective factor for recurrence in children with recurrent oral ulcers ($P<0.05$). Pearson correlation analysis, IRF4, RANKL were positively correlated with inflammatory factors ($r=0.453 \sim 0.533$, all $P<0.05$). CD4 $^{+}$ ($r=-0.407$, -0.409) and CD4 $^{+}$ /CD8 $^{+}$ ($r=-0.425$, -0.412) were positively correlated with inflammatory factors ($P<0.05$), ROC curve results revealed that the AUC(95%CI) of serum IRF4, RANK, and their combination in predicting recurrence in children with recurrent oral ulcers was 0.840(0.741 ~ 0.913), 0.832(0.732 ~ 0.906) and 0.928(0.847 ~ 0.974) respectively. The combined prediction was better than that of IRF4 and RANKL alone prediction ($Z=1.984$, 2.071 , $P=0.047$, 0.038). **Conclusion** The serum levels of IRF4 and RANKL in children with recurrent oral ulcers obviously increase, both of which are risk factors affecting recurrence in children after treatment, and have certain auxiliary predictive values for recurrence in children after treatment.

Keywords: recurrent oral ulcers; interferon regulatory factor 4; receptor activator of nuclear factor- κ B ligand

复发性口腔溃疡是最常见的口腔黏膜疼痛性疾病之一。各种易感因素,如压力、物理或化学创伤、感染、过敏、遗传易感性或营养缺乏,都可能导致复发性口腔溃疡,约有20%的正常人会受到影响。溃疡往往呈周期性发展,愈合后不会留下疤痕^[1-2]。目前还没有针对这种疾病的标准化治疗方法,也没有任何一种治疗方法可以治愈这种疾病。任何治疗的目标都应是减轻疼痛、缩短溃疡持续时间和防止复发^[3-4]。因此,寻找准确高效的相关血清学指标具有重大意义。干扰素调节因子4(interferon regulatory factor 4, IRF4)是免疫的主要调节因子,介导T细胞、B细胞、巨噬细胞和树突状细胞的分化、亲和力成熟和功能^[5],此外,IRF4还是巨噬细胞和树突状细胞中的一种抗炎介质^[6]。核因子 κ B受体活化因子配体(receptor activator of NF- κ B ligand, RANKL)是破骨细胞分化因子以及T细胞和树突状细胞之间相互作用的调节因子,调节多种代谢和细胞过程,其紊乱导致免疫疾病的发生。RANKL可由性激素孕酮、催乳素、维生素D3、甲状旁腺激素相关肽和肿瘤坏死因子- α (TNF- α)、白细胞介素(IL)等细胞因子诱导^[7-8]。目前有关复发性口腔溃疡中IRF4, RANKL的临床报道较少,因此本研究采用酶联免疫吸附试验(ELISA)检测血清IRF4, RANKL水平,并且进一步分析IRF4, RANKL对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的预测价值。

1 材料与方法

1.1 研究对象 收集首都医科大学附属北京朝阳医院2019年1月~2022年6月收治的复发性口腔溃

疡患儿80例为患病组。纳入标准:①符合复发性口腔溃疡诊断标准^[9],并结合临床诊断确诊;②有反复发作史;③年龄 <12 岁;④3个月内未服用免疫治疗类药物;⑤临床资料完整。排除标准:①并发恶性肿瘤;②并发其他免疫系统疾病;③严重感染;④并发其他口腔疾病;⑤肝肾功能不全;⑥并发溃疡性结肠炎、克罗恩病。另选取同期进行体检的口腔健康志愿者49例为对照组。该研究经医学伦理委员会批准(201801293),所有研究对象及家属均知情同意。

1.2 仪器与试剂 无菌96孔酶标板(杭州欣友生物技术有限公司),无菌磷酸盐缓冲液(上海彩佑实业有限公司),Tecan InfiniteF50酶标仪(上海桑晒生物科技有限公司),Bigfoot全光谱超高速流式细胞分选仪(赛默飞世尔科技),CD4-PerCP抗体(上海岑特生物科技有限公司),CD8-PE抗体(上海科敏生物科技有限公司),IRF4和RANKL ELISA检测试剂盒(上海泽叶生物科技有限公司),IL-1 β , TNF- α 和IL-6 ELISA检测试剂盒(武汉亚科因生物技术有限公司)。

1.3 方法

1.3.1 一般资料收集:收集患儿年龄、性别、病程、溃疡个数、溃疡面积等一般资料。

1.3.2 ELISA检测血清IRF4, RANKL及IL-1 β , TNF- α , IL-6水平:于患儿入组次日及健康志愿者体检当日空腹采血5ml,分装为2ml和3ml,其中2ml离心后收集上清液,采用ELISA检测试剂盒检测IRF4, RANKL及IL-1 β , TNF- α , IL-6水平,具体操作严格按照试剂说明书进行。

1.3.3 流式细胞术检测 CD4⁺, CD8⁺水平: 取 1.3.2 收集的静脉血 3ml 进行肝素抗凝, 采用流式细胞仪测定 CD4⁺, CD8⁺ 水平, 并计算 CD4⁺/CD8⁺^[10]。

1.3.4 随访: 对治疗后的患儿进行为期一年随访, 随访截止时间 2023 年 6 月, 随访率为 100%, 中位数随访时间 9 个月。根据随访结果分为未复发组 ($n=61$) 和复发组 ($n=19$)。

1.4 统计学分析 采用 SPSS 26.00 进行数据统计学分析, 计数资料以 $n(\%)$ 表示, 组间比较采用 χ^2 检验; 经正态分布检验后, 计量资料以 $(\bar{x} \pm s)$ 表示, 两组间比较采用独立样本 t 检验, 三组间比较采用 F 检验, 进一步两两比较采用 SNK- q 检验; Logistic 回归分析复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的影响因素; 采

用 Pearson 相关分析分析 IRF4, RANKL 与炎症因子以及 CD4⁺/CD8⁺, CD4⁺ 相关性; 绘制受试者工作特征 (ROC) 曲线分析血清 IRF4, RANKL 水平对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的预测价值, 曲线下面积 (AUC) 采用 Z 检验。 $P < 0.05$ 为差异具有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 复发性口腔溃疡患儿一般资料分析 见表 1。复发组与未复发组患儿的年龄、性别、溃疡个数、溃疡面积、病程以及 CD8⁺ 比较, 差异无统计学意义 (均 $P > 0.05$), 两组患儿的炎症因子 (IL-1 β , TNF- α , IL-6) 以及 CD4⁺, CD4⁺/CD8⁺ 之间比较, 差异具有统计学意义 (均 $P < 0.05$)。

表 1 复发性口腔溃疡患儿一般资料分析 [$n(\%)$, $\bar{x} \pm s$]

类 别		n	未复发组 ($n=61$)	复发组 ($n=19$)	χ^2/t 值	P 值
年龄 (岁)	> 5	46	38 (82.61)	8 (17.39)	2.417	0.120
	≤ 5	34	23 (67.65)	11 (32.35)		
性别	男	39	29 (74.36)	10 (25.64)	0.150	0.698
	女	41	32 (78.05)	9 (21.95)		
溃疡个数 (个)	> 3	39	27 (69.23)	12 (30.77)	2.070	0.150
	≤ 3	41	34 (82.93)	7 (17.07)		
溃疡面积 (mm^2)			3.05 ± 0.34	3.14 ± 0.35	1.001	0.320
病程 (年)			2.88 ± 0.31	3.02 ± 0.35	1.667	0.100
IL-1 β (ng/ml)			0.53 ± 0.06	0.81 ± 0.09	15.648	< 0.001
TNF- α (ng/ml)			134.58 ± 15.64	179.85 ± 19.65	10.348	< 0.001
IL-6 (ng/ml)			75.95 ± 8.21	93.54 ± 10.54	7.606	< 0.001
CD4 ⁺ (%)			38.69 ± 3.97	31.52 ± 3.84	6.926	< 0.001
CD8 ⁺ (%)			23.51 ± 2.54	23.65 ± 2.47	0.211	0.833
CD4 ⁺ /CD8 ⁺			1.64 ± 0.17	1.33 ± 0.15	7.125	< 0.001

2.2 患病组与对照组 IRF4, RANKL 水平比较 对照组、未复发组、复发组 IRF4 ($6.19 \pm 0.71\text{ng/ml}$, $7.86 \pm 0.92\text{ng/ml}$, $9.67 \pm 1.03\text{ng/ml}$), RANKL ($83.96 \pm 9.85\text{pg/ml}$, $152.56 \pm 15.98\text{pg/ml}$, $192.95 \pm 19.86\text{pg/ml}$) 依次升高, 差异具有统计学意义 ($F=121.514$, 497.250 , 均 $P < 0.001$)。与对照组相比, 复发组与未复发组 IRF4, RANKL 水平显著升高 ($q=21.075$, 14.248 ; 38.904 , 34.497), 且复发组的 IRF4, RANKL 水平较未复发组显著升高 ($q=11.275$, 14.831), 差异具有

统计学意义 (均 $P < 0.05$)。

2.3 多因素 Logistic 回归分析影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的因素 见表 2。以患儿治疗后是否复发为因变量 (否 =0, 是 =1), 以患儿 IRF4, RANKL, IL-1 β , CD4⁺ 水平 (均为实测值) 为自变量进行多因素 Logistic 回归分析, 结果显示: IRF4, RANKL, IL-1 β 均为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的危险因素 (均 $P < 0.05$), CD4⁺ 为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的保护因素 ($P < 0.05$)。

表 2 多因素 Logistic 回归分析影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的因素						
因素	β 值	SE 值	Wald 值	P 值	OR 值	95%CI
IRF4	0.425	0.178	5.690	0.017	1.529	1.079 ~ 2.167
RANKL	0.351	0.155	5.139	0.023	1.421	1.049 ~ 1.925
IL-1 β	0.279	0.139	4.033	0.045	1.322	1.007 ~ 1.736
CD4 $^{+}$	-0.238	0.105	5.149	0.023	0.788	0.641 ~ 0.968

2.4 复发性口腔溃疡患儿血清 IRF4, RANKL 与免疫学指标相关性 见表 3。采用 Pearson 相关分析 IRF4,RANKL 与免疫学指标相关性,结果显示,IRF4, RANKL 与炎症因子 (IL-1 β , TNF- α , IL-6) 呈正相关 (均 $P < 0.05$), 与 CD4 $^{+}$, CD4 $^{+}$ /CD8 $^{+}$ 呈负相关 (均 $P < 0.05$)。

2.5 血清 IRF4, RANKL 对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的预测价值 见表 4 和图 1。以患儿治疗后是否复发为因变量 (否 =0, 是 =1), 以患儿 IRF4, RANKL 水平为自变量, 行 ROC 分析。结果显示: 血清 IRF4, RANKL 单独预测复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的 AUC 分别为 0.840, 0.832, 灵敏度分别为 89.47%, 84.21%, 特异度分别为 73.77%, 73.77%; 而两者联合预测的 AUC 为 0.928,

灵敏度和特异度分别为 78.95%, 93.44%, 联合预测显著优于 IRF4, RANKL 单独预测 ($Z=2.071$, 1.984 , $P=0.047$, 0.038)。

表 3 复发性口腔溃疡患儿血清 IRF4, RANKL 与免疫学指标相关性				
项目	IRF4		RANKL	
	r	P	r	P
CD4 $^{+}$ /CD8 $^{+}$	-0.425	< 0.05	-0.412	< 0.05
IL-1 β	0.512	< 0.05	0.533	< 0.05
TNF- α	0.498	< 0.05	0.472	< 0.05
IL-6	0.462	< 0.05	0.453	< 0.05
CD4 $^{+}$	-0.407	< 0.05	-0.409	< 0.05

表 4 血清 IRF4, RANKL 对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的预测价值						
项目	AUC	灵敏度 (%)	特异度 (%)	截断值	约登指数	95%CI
IRF4	0.840	89.47	73.77	8.68 ng/ml	0.632	0.741 ~ 0.913
RANKL	0.832	84.21	73.77	171.09 pg/ml	0.580	0.732 ~ 0.906
联合检测	0.928	78.95	93.44	-	0.724	0.847 ~ 0.974

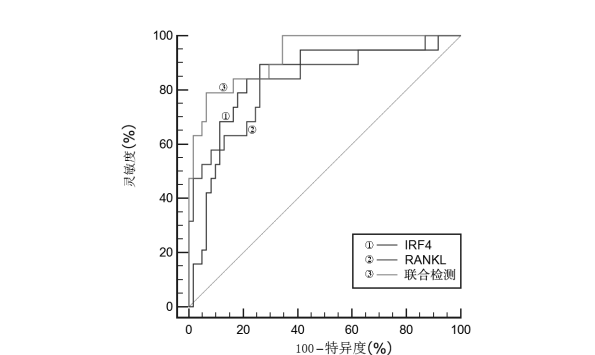


图 1 血清 IRF4, RANKL 预测复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发的 ROC 曲线

3 讨论

口腔溃疡是世界上最常见的口腔黏膜疾病。在全球人群中,口腔溃疡的发病率为 5% ~ 20%^[11]。复发性口腔溃疡会对患者的生活质量产生影响,其特征是口腔活动黏膜炎症性疾病,反复发作单个或多个疼痛性溃疡,具有明显的红斑边缘和黄灰色伪膜中心,多发于唇、舌、颊、软腭等无角化或角化程度较差的黏膜,少见于牙龈、硬腭等角化程度较

高的部位^[12-13]。复发性口腔溃疡也是儿童常见的口腔黏膜疾病之一,在儿童中患病率高达 39%,并且 90% 的患儿父母复发性口腔溃疡基因检测呈阳性^[13]。目前,有研究发现除免疫紊乱外,创伤、营养缺乏、食物过敏、遗传、压力、微生物因素、激素缺陷和基础疾病也是其诱发因素^[14]。轻型复发性口腔溃疡的病程为 10 ~ 14 天,影响 80% 的患者,重型复发性口腔溃疡可能发展为恶性溃疡或严重疾病,须高度重视^[15-16]。目前,还没有治愈复发性口腔溃疡的方法,主要治疗原则为缓解疼痛、减少炎症和促进伤口愈合^[17]。因此需寻找相关的血清学指标,预防治疗后再次复发。

干扰素调节因子家族 (IRFs) 是一个转录因子家族,在先天和适应性免疫反应等方面发挥重要作用,包括免疫细胞发育、分化和宿主对病原体的免疫反应和细胞凋亡的调节,还介导外周免疫细胞中巨噬细胞的激活和其他炎性疾病^[18]。IRF4 是 IRFs 家族中唯一一个表达不受干扰素诱导的成员,由一

系列不同的促有丝分裂刺激介导表达^[19], 由于独特的特性和在多种生物学过程中的重要性, IRF4已被肿瘤学和免疫学所重视。IRF4优先在造血细胞中表达, 并控制着T细胞、B细胞和树突状细胞分化和功能, 是各种免疫细胞分化、激活和效应功能的核心决定因素。在微生物感染、过敏、自身免疫、移植物抗宿主反应和移植排斥反应中, IRF4的降低会削弱T细胞免疫^[20]。IRF4还可在多种类型的淋巴瘤中充当致癌基因或肿瘤抑制因子^[21]。在本研究中, 治疗后复发患儿IRF4水平升高, 为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的危险因素, 提示IRF4水平与复发性口腔溃疡预后发展密切相关。推测IRF4对T细胞亚群持续分化增殖至关重要, 可能调节T细胞亚群分化和炎症反应, 进而导致机体免疫力降低, 影响疾病的进展。IRF4与炎症因子呈正相关, 与 $CD4^+$, $CD4^+/CD8^+$ 呈负相关, 提示IRF4可能被炎症因子刺激, 分泌增加, 导致机体免疫失调, 病情进一步恶化。IRF4预测复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的AUC为0.840, 提示IRF4对复发性口腔溃疡再次复发具有一定辅助预测价值。

RANKL是一种II型跨膜蛋白, 对各种器官发育至关重要^[22]。RANKL主要在骨、骨髓和淋巴组织中表达, 是刺激破骨细胞分化和成熟的主要激活剂^[23]。RANKL与淋巴组织细胞上表达的RANK相互作用, 刺激下游信号通路, 从而影响T细胞的关键调节功能, 如细胞存活和抗原呈递。RANKL-RANK-OPG系统的失调与T细胞耐受性丧失和自身免疫性疾病的风险有关, 对T细胞选择和分化的各个步骤至关重要^[24]。有研究表明RANKL的自动调节可刺激口腔鳞状细胞癌细胞的增殖^[25]。本研究结果显示, 治疗后再次复发患儿RANKL水平升高, 为影响复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的危险因素, 提示RANKL与患儿生理病理过程以及病情发展密切相关。推测RANKL可能与RANK相互作用, 刺激相关信号通路, 从而影响T细胞的调节功能, 导致患儿机体免疫平衡失调, 促进疾病复发。RANKL与炎症因子呈正相关, 与 $CD4^+$, $CD4^+/CD8^+$ 呈负相关, 炎症因子可能刺激淋巴组织细胞上表达的RANK表达增加, 与RANKL相互作用, 刺激相关信号通路, 影响免疫反应, 进而影响患者病情。血清RANKL预测复发性口腔溃疡患儿复发的AUC为0.832, 表明RANKL对复发性口腔溃疡再次复发具有一定辅助预测价值。进一步分析发现, 联合预测特异度显著高于IRF4, RANKL单独预测特异度, 提示联合预测优于IRF4, RANKL单独预测, 两者联合对复发性口腔溃疡再次复发预测价值更高。

综上所述, 复发性口腔溃疡患儿血清IRF4,

RANKL水平显著升高, 均为影响患儿复发的危险因素, 对复发性口腔溃疡患儿治疗后复发具有一定辅助预测价值。但本研究所选样本量较少, 且IRF4, RANKL在复发性口腔溃疡中的调控机制尚不清晰, 需进一步深入研究。

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