

综述

功能磁共振成像技术在肠易激综合征中的应用研究进展*

杨麒民 李 兵 钟向凯
邱志强 杨汉丰*

川北医学院附属医院放射科
(四川 南充 637000)

【摘要】肠易激综合征(irritable bowel syndrome, IBS)是指缺乏能解释其症状的生化指征或者器质性病变的,以反复发作的腹痛、排便异常为特征的功能性胃肠道疾病,极大地影响了患者的工作和生活;其发病机制尚不明确,研究认为多种因素共同作用引起的脑-肠互动异常是目前最有可能被认可的IBS发病机制之一。fMRI能无创地,较敏感地反映IBS的脑功能区变化。本文旨在对fMRI技术在IBS研究中的进展进行综述,探讨相应脑区的活动特点,以进一步探究其发病机制。

【关键词】肠易激综合征;磁共振成像;脑功能
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Research Progress of fMRI in Irritable Bowel Syndrome*

YANG Qi-min, LI Bing, ZHONG Xiang-kai, QIU Zhi-qiang, YANG Han-feng*.
Department of Radiology, Affiliated Hospital of North Sichuan Medical College, Nanchong 637000, Sichuan Province, China

ABSTRACT
Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) refers to a functional gastrointestinal disease characterized by recurring abdominal pain and abnormal defecation without biochemical indicators or organic lesions that can explain its symptoms, which greatly affects the work and life of patients. Its pathogenesis is unknown. According to research, it is believed that the abnormal brain-gut interaction led to by the combined action of multiple factors is one of the pathogenesis of IBS that is most likely to be recognized at present. fMRI can show changes in brain function areas of IBS in a non-invasive and sensitive manner. This article is aimed at reviewing the progress of fMRI technology in the research of IBS, discussing the activity characteristics of corresponding brain areas, and further exploring its pathogenesis.

Keywords: Irritable Bowel Syndrome; Magnetic Resonance Imaging; Brain Function

肠易激综合征(Irritable bowel syndrome, IBS)是指缺乏能解释其症状的生化指征或者器质性病变的,以反复发作的腹痛、排便异常为特征的功能性胃肠道疾病,是最常见的慢性功能性疼痛综合症之一。我国普通人群IBS总体患病率为1.4%~11.5%,女性发病率较男性更高^[1]。IBS极大的影响了患者的工作和生活^[2]。
IBS发病机制复杂且尚不明确,研究认为,内脏高敏感、肠道微生态紊乱、中枢神经系统等多种因素共同作用引起的脑-肠互动异常是目前被最为认可的IBS发病机制。其中脑-肠轴功能相关的内脏高敏感性被认为是IBS最重要的发病机制之一^[3]。功能磁共振成像(functional magnetic resonance imaging, fMRI)fMRI 是20世纪90年代出现的检查手段,根据含氧和脱氧血红蛋白的浓度比变化所导致的血氧水平依赖(blood oxygen level dependent, BOLD)效应研究脑功能区活动状态的一项技术,能较敏感地反映被试的脑功能区变化,可以为在中枢神经系统层面阐述IBS的发病机制提供有力的帮助。本文对fMRI技术在IBS研究中的进展进行综述,探讨相应脑区的活动特点。

1 IBS静息态fMRI(rs-fMRI)研究

rs-fMRI是指在平静状态下测试受试者的大脑血氧水平信号的自发波动,运用多种不同的算法来对各脑区活跃程度及连接水平进行评估的成像技术^[4]。其常用的分析指标包括局部一致性(regional homogeneity, ReHo)、低频振幅(amplitude of low frequency fluctuation, ALFF)及功能连接(functional connectivity, FC)。
(1)局部一致性(ReHo)法:通过某个脑区内体素之间的肯德尔和谐系数的计算,来获得相应脑区的ReHo值,是局部脑区活动指标,它的异常通常可反映该脑区的神经元同步活动的异常生成和调节机制^[5]秦梦等人的研究^[6]发现IBS患者与健康对照组相比,双侧额中回及岛叶脑区ReHo值减低,而前额叶皮层、岛叶、前扣带回和丘脑被认为是与痛觉处理相关的主要脑区^[7],提示这些区域可能与IBS阐释痛觉的病理机制有关;右侧颞上回的ReHo值也降低,颞叶与非记忆相关的功能如感知功能密切相关^[8-9],由此推测该区域自发活动同步性减低可能与内脏敏感性增高有关。背外侧前额叶作为中枢控制网络的核心组成部分,通过下行抑制通路在痛觉中起调节作用,其参与“忘却疼痛”,尤其在慢性疼痛状态下的患者中^[10-11],Chen等人的研究发现^[12]静息态下背外侧前额叶的ReHo值升高,这表明其在IBS患者内脏痛觉过敏和痛阈降低中起重要作用。
(2)低频振幅(ALFF)法:通过计算单个体素水平的ALFF值,来评价其脑活动强度,反映局部脑神经元自发活动的水平,是衡量局部大脑活动的有效方法。扣带回皮层在控制躯体和内脏疼痛的神经网络中起着核心作用,内脏刺激和躯体疼痛会导致扣带回皮层明显被激活^[13-14],Ma等^[14]利用ALFF法发现IBS患者的左中扣带回的ALFF值升高,但与其病程长短呈负相关,这提示IBS患者可能对长期的躯体和内脏疼痛产生了适应。Qi等^[15]的研究发现IBS患者楔叶的ALFF值升高,而楔叶在整合躯体感觉输入与其他感觉刺激和认知过程方面起着重要作用,也是与疼痛体验相关的皮质网络的关键区域。
(3)脑网络研究 目前,主要与IBS相关的脑网络功能有默认模式网络(default mode network, DMN)、突显控制网络及感觉运动网络。
DMN是目前被关注最为广泛的网络之一,它包括后扣带皮层和前额叶内侧皮层等区域,该网络在静息状态下被激活,被认为与记忆、注意及认知功能有关。既往研究表明,IBS患者的DMN功能连接异常,与其长期的内脏疼痛有关^[16-18]。最近研究发现,IBS患者DMN与主要认知和感觉运动脑区之间的连通性增加,与肠道细胞旁通透性增加有关,提示肠道通透性与IBS患者的疼痛下行抑制通路有密切联系^[19]。Vadim的研究^[20]指

【第一作者】杨麒民,男,在读硕士研究生,主要研究方向:神经影像学、功能影像学。E-mail: 1079706290@qq.com
【通讯作者】杨汉丰,男,教授,主要研究方向:腹部影像诊断与介入治疗。E-mail: yhfctjr@qq.com

出, IBS女性患者在壳核和DMN(特别是后扣带回背侧)区域之间表现出更高的连通性, 而壳核是肠道微生物群域影响IBS患者的内脏高敏感性的关键区域^[21-22], 且色氨酸与壳核和DMN区域连通性密切相关, 提示色氨酸可能在肠道微生物群影响IBS患者的机制中发挥重要作用, 这对理解IBS的病理生理提供了新的思路。

突显控制网络与感觉运动信息的处理、总体认知以及情感、疼痛功能有关。Gupta等^[23]研究指出早期不良生活事件相关与IBS患者突显控制网络内的功能连接呈正相关, 在不同性别的患者中并未出现明显差异, 但男性患者额外显示出小脑网络相关的改变; 其后续文章发现^[24], IBS患者的突显控制网络内的功能连接与促炎基因(IL-6和APOL2)呈正相关, 但在健康对照组中与抗炎基因(KRT8和APOA4)呈负相关, 这表明在IBS中, 外周促炎状态是通过慢性激活的应激信号通路维持的。有研究指出^[25] IBS患者与健康对照组相比, 表现出突显控制网络内部连通性增加, 而Jonathan等^[26]发现, 有较高的积极情绪评分的IBS患者出现了突显控制网络内关键节点(右前中扣带回皮层与左前岛叶)的功能连接降低。

感觉运动网络被认为是与感觉的认知、处理及运动的规划、协调有关; Adriane等^[27]的研究显示, 内脏敏感程度更高的IBS患者, 出现了后脑岛区域更高的功能连接度, 后脑岛区域被认为是感觉运动信息的多模态集中起着至关重要的作用, 尤其是涉及内脏疼痛信号的处理。Weng^[28]的研究发现, 感觉运动皮层和内侧前额叶皮质(认知和情感调节的关键节点)之间的连通性增加, 反映了IBS患者对躯体和内脏伤害性信息的监测加强。

2 IBS任务态fMRI研究

任务态fMRI主要适用于个体研究, 其优势在于可实时反映病理状态下人脑在处理任务时的脑功能活动异常。目前针对IBS任务态MRI研究, 以直肠扩张任务的研究最为多见; 在相关的研究结果中, 直肠扩张刺激会导致IBS患者及健康对照组激活的脑区有前扣带回、前额叶皮层、前/后岛叶及丘脑^[29-32]; 随着直肠球囊扩张, 这些区域的大脑激活明显增加, 但在症状持续超过5年的IBS患者中没有出现^[33]。Guleria等^[34]的研究指出发现男性患者较健康对照人群在直肠扩张时出现了颞中回、岛叶及左侧小脑半球激活的异常增高。Michiko等^[35]的研究发现, 在健康对照组中, 副交感神经活动较高的人在内脏信号处理和调节区域(包括的右尾状核、前扣带皮层膝部(pACC)和背侧前扣带皮层(dACC)表现出对直肠扩张的大脑反应增强, 而在IBS患者并发现这种改变, 这提示IBS患者自主神经系统活性与其内脏感知的大脑机制之间存在异常相互作用。促肾上腺皮质激素释放激素(CRH)是大脑和肠道应激反应的关键介质; 下丘脑室旁核通过下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺(HPA)轴控制神经内分泌应激反应。Tanaka^[36]的研究指出内侧前额叶皮层(mPFC)/前扣带皮层膝部(pACC)可能在自上而下抑制HPA轴反应的调控中发挥重要作用; IBS患者中这种抑制及CRH分泌的调节可能出现了受损, 这为阐明肠易激综合征中应激诱导症状表现的生理机制提供新的思路。值得注意的是, 有研究^[37]指出了, 在MRI扫描仪环境中进行直肠刺激会显著增加IBS患者和健康对照人群的内脏疼痛, 而非躯体疼痛, 这给大多数带有直肠扩张任务的fMRI研究带来一定的局限性。

IBS任务态fMRI研究除了采用直肠扩张刺激模式外, 还有研究联合采用一些其他的测试。有研究^[38]采用了威斯康星卡片分类测验来研究IBS患者的认知灵活性, 发现右侧背外侧前额叶皮层(DLPFC)和右侧海马活动减少及左侧后岛叶活动增加, 从背外侧前额叶皮层(DLPFC)到前辅助运动区的功能连接减少, 这被认为是导致IBS患者的认知灵活性潜在损伤的原因。Labus等^[39]采用负性面部表情视觉刺激任务fMRI来进行研究, 发现与女性相比, 男性在额叶皮层、杏仁核和脑岛上表现出更多的激活, 且它们之间的连通性也更强。

综上所述, IBS患者存在相关脑区功能及不同脑区间功能连接的异常, fMRI通过研究IBS患者疼痛相关的脑区及脑网络变化, 并与其相应的临床指标相关联, 为进一步揭示IBS的发病机制提供新的证据。目前关于IBS患者的中枢神经系统的改变的结

果是存在一定差异的, 这可能和患者个体差异, 实验设计的多样, 样本量大小不同等原因有关; 且针对IBS不同亚型的研究较少。脑-肠轴的外周及中枢之间的联系也是未来的重点研究方向, 最近, 成像方法已经发展到可以同时记录大脑和脊髓中的神经活动^[40], 这些方法可研究疼痛处理过程中大脑-脊髓的相互作用, 对进一步揭示IBS的病理生理机制具有重要的意义, 也将为其的诊断与治疗提供新的思路。

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