

E74样因子5过表达抑制结肠癌细胞生物学行为的 体内外实验研究*

马骏¹, 陈树军^{1△}, 秦阳¹, 张玉英², 孙晓峰³

1. 沈阳医学院附属中心医院 普外四科(沈阳 110024); 2. 沈阳医学院附属中心医院 放射科(沈阳 110024);
3. 沈阳医学院附属中心医院 麻醉科(沈阳 110024)

【摘要】目的 探讨E74样因子5(ELF5)过表达对结直肠癌细胞的生长和侵袭能力以及裸鼠成瘤的影响。**方法** 人结直肠癌SW480和HT-29细胞分为5组: LV-GFP组, 转染空载体LV-GFP慢病毒; LV-ELF5组, 转染重组LV-ELF5慢病毒; shRNA-NC组, 转染空载体shRNA-NC慢病毒; shRNA-ELF5组, 转染重组shRNA-ELF5慢病毒; 对照组, 未转染任何载体。转染72 h后, 取含有慢病毒的细胞上清液, 实时荧光定量PCR(RT-qPCR)检测各组细胞中ELF5的mRNA表达水平; Western blot检测ELF5、凋亡相关的cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3和cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9、侵袭相关的E-cadherin和N-cadherin的蛋白表达水平; CCK-8检测细胞活力; 克隆形成实验检测克隆形成率; 流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡; Transwell实验检测细胞侵袭; TUNEL实验检测组织中细胞凋亡; 免疫组化检测组织中E-cadherin、N-cadherin的表达。将20只BALB/c裸鼠分为4组, 每组5只: LV-GFP组、shRNA-NC组、LV-ELF5组、shRNA-ELF5组, 于裸鼠皮下注射含重组慢病毒的SW480细胞上清液, 构建裸鼠成瘤模型, 监测移植瘤体积变化。第30天取裸鼠移植瘤组织, 测量肿瘤质量, Western blot检测移植瘤ELF5蛋白的表达, TUNEL染色检测移植瘤凋亡, 免疫组化检测移植瘤中N-cadherin阳性表达。**结果** 与对照组细胞比较, 两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组细胞的各指标差异无统计学意义。Western blot结果与RT-qPCR结果表明, 两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的ELF5 mRNA和蛋白水平均上调($P < 0.05$, 与LV-GFP组比较), shRNA-ELF5组的ELF5 mRNA和蛋白水平均下调($P < 0.05$, 与shRNA-NC组比较), ELF5过表达体系和干扰体系构建成功。与LV-GFP组比较, LV-ELF5组降低了细胞活力和克隆形成率($P < 0.05$), 促进SW480细胞凋亡, 并上调cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3和cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9蛋白表达($P < 0.05$), 抑制细胞侵袭, 并上调E-cadherin蛋白表达, 下调N-cadherin蛋白表达($P < 0.05$); ELF5干扰后, 细胞的上述表现呈相反趋势($P < 0.05$, shRNA-ELF5组与shRNA-NC组比较)。体内实验结果表明, ELF5过表达缩小裸鼠肿瘤体积和降低肿瘤质量($P < 0.05$), 促进组织中细胞凋亡($P < 0.05$), ELF5蛋白表达增加, 抑制N-cadherin蛋白表达($P < 0.05$)。当ELF5表达抑制, 上述实验结果呈相反趋势。**结论** 体内外实验表明ELF5过表达可促进结直肠癌细胞凋亡, 抑制结直肠癌细胞的生长和侵袭。

【关键词】 E74样因子5 SW480细胞 细胞转染 侵袭能力 裸鼠

In vivo and in vitro Experiment of E74-Like Factor 5 Overexpression Inhibiting the Biological Behavior of Colon Cancer Cells MA Jun¹, CHEN Shu-jun^{1△}, QIN Yang¹, ZHANG Yu-ying², SUN Xiao-feng³. 1. Department of General Surgery, Affiliated Central Hospital, Shenyang Medical College, Shenyang 110024, China; 2. Department of Radiology, Affiliated Central Hospital, Shenyang Medical College, Shenyang 110024, China; 3. Department of Anesthesiology, Affiliated Central Hospital, Shenyang Medical College, Shenyang 110024, China

△ Corresponding author, E-mail: csj028028@126.com

【Abstract】 Objective To investigate the effect of E74-like factor 5 (ELF5) overexpression on the growth and invasion ability of colorectal cancer cells and its effect on tumor formation in nude mice. **Methods** Human colorectal cancer SW480 and HT-29 cells were divided into 5 groups: the lentivirus (LV)-GFP group transfected with empty vector LV-GFP, the LV-ELF5 group transfected with recombinant LV-ELF5, the shRNA-NC group transfected with empty vector shRNA-NC, the shRNA-ELF5 group transfected with recombinant shRNA-ELF5, and the control group, not transfected with any vector. Seventy-two h after transfection, the cell supernatant containing lentivirus was collected. The mRNA expression level of ELF5 in each group was examined by real-time fluorescent quantitative PCR (RT-qPCR). The protein expression levels of ELF5, apoptosis-related cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3 and cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9, and invasion-related E-cadherin and N-cadherin were checked with Western blot. CCK-8 was used to check cell viability. Colony formation experiment was done to evaluate colony formation rate. Flow cytometry was used to assess cell apoptosis. Transwell migration assay was used to examine cell invasion. TUNEL assay was used to examine the apoptosis of tissues cells. Immunohistochemistry test was done to determine the expression of E-cadherin and N-cadherin in tissues. 20 BALB/c nude mice were put into 4 groups (5 in each group): LV-GFP group, shRNA-NC group, LV-ELF5

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△ 通信作者, E-mail: csj028028@126.com

group, and shRNA-*ELF5* group. Recombinant lentiviral SW480 cell supernatants were subcutaneously injected into nude mice to construct nude mice tumorigenesis models and the volume changes of transplanted tumors were monitored. On the 30th day, transplanted tumor tissues from the nude mice were extracted and the tumor mass was measured. Western blot was done to measure the expression of *ELF4* protein in the transplanted tumors. TUNEL staining was used to check cell apoptosis in the tissues, and the positive expression of N-cadherin in the transplanted tumor was measured by immunohistochemical tests. **Results** Compared with the control group, there was no statistically significant difference in the indicators of the two cell lines in the LV-*GFP* group and shRNA-NC group. The results of Western blot and RT-qPCR showed that the *ELF5* protein and mRNA of the LV-*ELF5* group of the two cell lines were up-regulated ($P<0.05$, compared with those of the LV-*GFP* group), and the *ELF5* protein and mRNA of the shRNA-*ELF5* group were down-regulated ($P<0.05$). The *ELF5* overexpression system and interference system were successfully constructed. Compared with the LV-*GFP* group, data from the LV-*ELF5* group showed that cell viability and colony formation rate ($P<0.05$) were reduced, SW480 and HT-29 cell apoptosis was promoted, cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3 and cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9 protein expression was up-regulated ($P<0.05$), cell invasion was inhibited, and the expression of E-cadherin protein was up-regulated while the expression of N-cadherin protein was down-regulated ($P<0.05$). After *ELF5* interference, the above-mentioned expression of cells demonstrated an opposite trend ($P<0.05$, comparing shRNA-*ELF5* group with shRNA-NC group). *In vivo* experimental results indicated that *ELF5* overexpression reduced tumor volume and tumor mass ($P<0.05$), promoted cell apoptosis in tissues ($P<0.05$), and inhibited N-cadherin protein expression ($P<0.05$). When *ELF5* expression was inhibited, the above mentioned experimental results showed the opposite trend. **Conclusion** *In vivo* and *in vitro* experiments showed that *ELF5* overexpression could promote the apoptosis of colorectal cancer cells and inhibit the growth and invasion of colorectal cancer cells.

【Key words】 E74-like factor 5 SW480 cells Cell transfection Invasion Nude mice

在我国,结肠癌是一种发病率较高的恶性肿瘤,被认为与环境及遗传因素有关^[1]。目前,结肠癌的致病性及其分子机制的研究仍处于起步阶段^[2]。上皮特异性E26转录因子(epithelial-specific E26 transformation-specific, ESE-1)[E74样因子3(E74-like factor 3, ELF3)、ELF5、ETS同源因子(ETS homologous factor, EHF)、SAM指向包含域的一类ETS因子(SAM-pointed domain-containing ETS-like factor, SPDEF)等]具有复杂的结构和功能,通过调节细胞的增生、分化、凋亡及细胞与细胞间的相互作用,在许多生理和病理过程中发挥重要的调控作用^[3]。ETS家族成员在发育过程中特异性时空表达与其对发育的调控作用密切相关,它从细胞、组织、器官不同的水平调控发育过程,特别是在血管生成和免疫系统的发育中发挥重要作用^[4]。此外,ETS在多种肿瘤的侵袭、转移过程中发挥重要作用,主要与调节细胞外基质(extracellular matrix, ECM)酶的转录活性有关^[5]。

*ELF5*位于11p13号染色体上,编码265个氨基酸的蛋白^[6]。已经有报道*EFL5*在多种肿瘤中发挥作用,包括乳腺癌、前列腺癌、尿路上皮癌、卵巢癌和肾癌^[7]。然而,在结肠癌中几乎未见关于*EFL5*的报道。本研究重点探究*ELF5*对结肠癌细胞生物学行为的影响。

1 材料和方法

1.1 实验材料

人结肠腺癌HT-29细胞和SW480细胞购自武汉

Procell公司; BALB/c裸鼠20只, 雄性, 7周龄, 购自广东省医学实验动物中心, 许可证号: SCXK(粤)2018-0002; 重组慢病毒过表达载体LV-*ELF5*(含*ELF5*基因、绿色荧光蛋白(green fluorescent protein, GFP)基因)和空载体LV-*GFP*(作为阴性对照), 重组慢病毒干扰载体shRNA-*ELF5*(根据*ELF5*基因设计的shRNA克隆到干扰载体GV248中)和空载体shRNA-NC(含GFP, 作为阴性对照)购自上海吉凯基因公司; Superscript RNase H-逆转录酶购自美国Invitrogen公司; 10%胎牛血清购自美国Gibco公司; RNA纯化系统购自德国Qiagen公司; DNase- I 购自瑞士Roche公司; 随机六聚体购自美国Sigma-Aldrich公司; 改良Eagle培养基(DMEM)、SYBR Green Master Mix购自美国Thermo Fisher公司; Giemsa染色液、10 mg/mL RNase A、碘化丙啶(PI)、1%结晶紫、TUNEL细胞凋亡检测试剂盒购自北京索莱宝公司; *ELF5*抗体、N-cadherin抗体、SignalStain[®]Boost IHC检测试剂、SignalStain DAB Substrate Kit购自美国CST公司。ABI Prism 7000系统购自美国Applied Biosystems公司; 多功能Multiskan FC酶标仪购自美国Thermo Fisher公司; C6流式细胞仪购自美国BD公司; Eclipse E100光学显微镜购自日本Nikon公司。

1.2 实验方法

1.2.1 细胞培养和病毒载体转染 HT-29细胞和SW480细胞分别在含有10%胎牛血清的DMEM中37℃、体积分数5%CO₂的潮湿培养箱中培养。实验分为5组: LV-*GFP*组, 转染空载体LV-*GFP*慢病毒; LV-*ELF5*组, 转染重组

LV-*ELF5*慢病毒; shRNA-NC组, 转染空载体shRNA-NC慢病毒; shRNA-*ELF5*组, 转染重组shRNA-*ELF5*慢病毒; 对照组, 未转染任何载体。取对数生长期的细胞重悬, 以 2×10^5 细胞/孔接种于6孔板中。待细胞铺满孔70%~80%时, 按分组说明分别加入适量的LV-*ELF5*、LV-*GFP*、shRNA-*ELF5*及shRNA-NC, 构建过表达或干扰*ELF5*的细胞, 对照组不做干预。感染12 h后对细胞进行换液, 用新鲜的完全培养液继续培养。72 h后, 收集并浓缩含有慢病毒的细胞上清液, 校准病毒效价。所有组的慢病毒终浓度为 4×10^8 TU/mL。用实时荧光定量PCR(RT-qPCR)和Western blot检测*ELF5* mRNA和蛋白的表达, 评价转染是否成功。病毒储存于 -80 °C, 用于后续实验。

1.2.2 RT-qPCR法检测细胞*ELF5* mRNA的表达 使用TRIzol从各组SW480细胞和HT-29细胞提取总RNA, 用DNase- I 去除基因组DNA。用Superscript RNase H-逆转录酶和随机六聚体(Sigma-Aldrich)从5 mg总RNA中制备cDNA。对于qRT-PCR, 在ABI Prism 7000系统中, 使用SYBR Green Master Mix和引物在优化浓度下测定基因表达。检测基因的引物如下: *ELF5*正向引物 5'- GATCT GTTCAGCAATGAAG-3', 反向引物 5'- GGTCTCTTC AGCATCATTG-3', 扩增产物长度81 bp; β -actin正向引物 5'-AGTGTGACGTGGACATCCGCAAAG-3', 反向引物5'-ATCCACATCTGCTGGAAGGTGGAC-3', 扩增产物长度220 bp。引物由上海吉凯基因公司合成。每个基因均生成标准扩增曲线, 扩增效率为90%~100%。使用 $2^{-\Delta\Delta Ct}$ 法计算mRNA的相对表达水平。

1.2.3 Western bolt检测细胞*ELF5*、cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3、cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9、E-cadherin和N-cadherin蛋白的表达 取各组HT-29细胞和SW480细胞, 加入裂解缓冲液, 4 °C裂解, $14\ 000$ r/min离心15 min浓缩蛋白质。并用BCA测定试剂盒测量蛋白质浓度。将10 μ g蛋白样品用12%十二烷基硫酸钠聚丙烯酰胺凝胶电泳(SDS-PAGE)分离后转移至聚偏二氟乙烯(PVDF)膜上。用5%脱脂奶粉封闭膜, 然后用一抗(*ELF5* (1 : 1 000)、cleaved Caspase-3 (1 : 1 000)、cleaved Caspase-9 (1 : 1 000)、Caspase-3 (1 : 5 000)、Caspase-9 (1 : 1 000)、E-cadherin (1 : 1 000)和N-cadherin (1 : 1 000))在 4 °C封闭过夜, 接着加入对应辣根过氧化物酶偶联的二抗室温孵育1 h, 最后滴ECL曝光。然后再次用TBST洗涤3次。洗膜后ECL曝光成像并应用Quantity One软件分析蛋白条带的灰度值。内参蛋白为 β -actin, 蛋白相对表达量为目的蛋白灰度值与 β -actin灰度值的

比值。

1.2.4 CCK-8实验检测细胞增殖 将各组HT-29细胞和SW480细胞接种至96孔板, 每孔1 500细胞, 在 37 °C、体积分数5%CO₂条件下培养。分别在第0、1、2、3天处理上述细胞, 将10 μ L CCK-8溶液添加至上述孔中, 根据制造商的操作说明, 使用CCK-8试剂盒检测细胞活力。用Multiskan FC多功能酶标仪检测每个孔在450 nm处的光密度值(OD₄₅₀)。与第0天比较, 计算各时点的细胞增殖倍数。增殖倍数=(实验组OD₄₅₀值-对照组OD₄₅₀值)/对照组OD₄₅₀值。

1.2.5 克隆形成实验 将各组HT-29细胞和SW480细胞接种于6孔板中, 每孔200个细胞, 连续培养7 d。废弃培养基, 每个孔用PBS仔细洗2次。将菌落在甲醇溶液中固定20 min, 然后用Giemsa染色液染色。统计 ≥ 50 个细胞的克隆形成数, 以 ≥ 50 个细胞的克隆形成数/接种细胞数 $\times 100\%$, 计算克隆形成率。

1.2.6 流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡 各组HT-29和SW480细胞用胰酶消化, 在 4 °C下体积分数为70%乙醇中固定过夜。然后加入10 mg/mL RNase A和PI于 4 °C染色过夜。培养48 h后, 使用Annexin V-FITC细胞凋亡检测试剂盒按照说明书采用C6流式细胞仪(美国BD公司)检测细胞凋亡率。Annexin V-FITC(-)/PI(-)(左下)为正常细胞, Annexin V-FITC(+)/PI(-)细胞(右下)为早期凋亡细胞, Annexin V-FITC(+)/PI(+)(右上)为晚期凋亡细胞, Annexin V(-)/PI(+)(左上)为坏死细胞。细胞凋亡率=早期凋亡细胞率+晚期凋亡细胞率。

1.2.7 Transwell实验检测细胞侵袭 将融解的Matrigel胶与无血清培养基混合, 均匀铺至Transwell小室底部(上室面), 置于 37 °C培养箱进行凝固约2~4 h, 使其呈凝胶状。接种各组HT-29细胞和SW480细胞, 将生长至对数期的细胞消化, 计数, 无血清培养基稀释, 均匀接种至Transwell小室底部, 再将Transwell小室放入加了10%FBS培养基的孔板中培养; 细胞染色, 培养细胞48 h后, 取出Transwell小室, 用棉签擦拭小室内部细胞及残余的Matrigel胶, PBS清洗3次, 多聚甲醛对小室底部背面穿过的细胞进行固定, 下层细胞用结晶紫染色, 在高倍显微镜(HP, 400倍)下观察分析, 并在5个随机视野中对细胞进行计数, 侵袭细胞数表示为每个HP视野下的平均细胞数。

1.2.8 裸鼠皮下成瘤实验 恒温(25 ± 3) °C, 湿度60%, 光暗循环12 h, 自由获取食物和水。分别将裸鼠分为4组, 每组5只: 2个对照组(LV-*GFP*或shRNA-NC)、2个实验组(LV-*ELF5*或shRNA-*ELF5*)。将含重组慢病毒的SW480细胞上清液(慢病毒的终浓度为 4×10^8 TU/mL, 细胞终浓度

为 $5.0 \times 10^6/\text{mL}$)各150 μL 皮下注射对照组或实验组裸鼠背部。注射后,4组均自由饮食,继续常规饲养。分别在第5天、第10天、第15天、第20天、第25天、第30天测量两组裸鼠肿瘤体积。注射后第30天后小鼠腹腔注射药物实施安乐死,并测定两组小鼠肿瘤质量,收集肿瘤用于后续实验。所有实验都根据动物实验3R原则制定,并且得到了实验动物福利伦理委员会的批准。

1.2.9 移植瘤的检测 第30天取裸鼠移植瘤组织,Western blot检测移植瘤ELF5蛋白的表达,方法同前。取裸鼠移植瘤,石蜡包埋,制成切片,TUNEL染色检测移植瘤凋亡,免疫组化检测移植瘤中N-cadherin阳性表达,方法同前。

1.3 统计学方法

所有计量资料均采用 $\bar{x} \pm s$ 表示。单因素方差分析进行多组间比较,两组间采用Duncan法多重性比较, $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 结直肠癌细胞转染LV-ELF5或shRNA-ELF5后ELF5的表达

RT-qPCR结果显示,与对照组比较,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的ELF5 mRNA水平差异无统计学意义。LV-ELF5组的ELF5 mRNA水平均上调($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较),shRNA-ELF5组的ELF5 mRNA水平均下调($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较),见图1A。Western blot结果与RT-qPCR结果一致,见图1B。上述结果表明,ELF5过表达体系和干扰体系构建成功。

2.2 ELF5对结直肠癌细胞增殖和克隆形成的影响

CCK-8实验表明,细胞培养至第3天,与对照组比较,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的细胞增殖和克隆形成差异无统计学意义。两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的细胞增殖倍数降低($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较),shRNA-ELF5组的细胞增殖倍数升高($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较)。克隆形成实验显示,两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的克隆形成率降低($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较),shRNA-ELF5组的克隆形成率升高($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较)。见图2。

2.3 ELF5对结直肠癌细胞凋亡的影响

流式细胞术检测结果显示,与对照组比较,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的细胞凋亡差异无统计学意义。两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的细胞凋亡率升高($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较),shRNA-ELF5组的细胞凋亡率降低($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较),见图3A。Western blot检测显示,与对照组比较,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的凋亡相关蛋白cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-

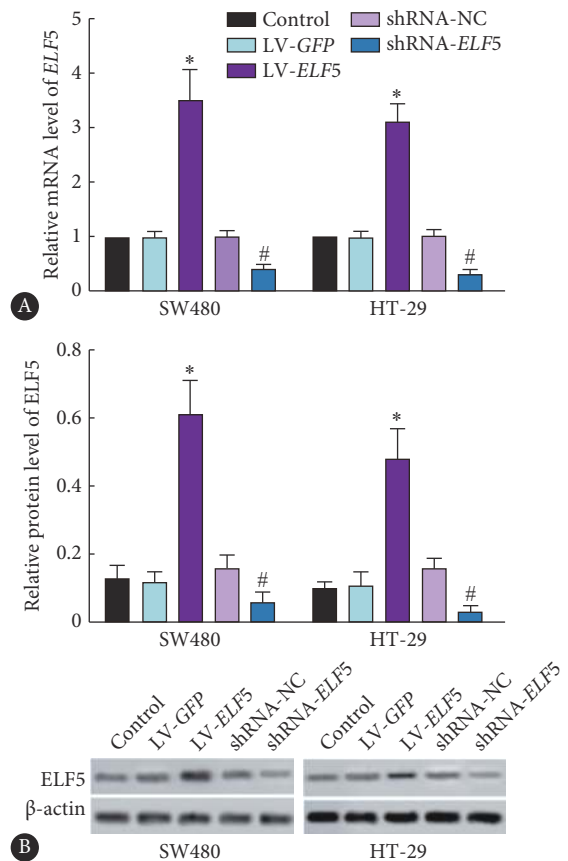


图1 转染重组慢病毒的结直肠癌细胞ELF5的表达 ($n=8$)

Fig 1 ELF5 expression in colorectal cancer cells transfected with recombinant lentivirus ($n=8$)

A: The mRNA level of ELF5 was determined by RT-qPCR; B: The protein level of ELF5 was examined with Western blot. * $P < 0.05$, vs. LV-GFP group; # $P < 0.05$, vs. shRNA-NC group.

3和cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9的表达差异无统计学意义, LV-ELF5组的上述比值均上调($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较), shRNA-ELF5组的上述比值均下调($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较),见图3B。

2.4 ELF5过表达对结直肠癌细胞侵袭的影响

Transwell实验结果显示,与对照组比较,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的细胞侵袭数量差异无统计学意义。两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的细胞侵袭数量增多($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较), shRNA-ELF5组的细胞侵袭数量降低($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较),见图4A。Western blot检测显示,与对照组相比,两个细胞系LV-GFP组和shRNA-NC组的侵袭相关蛋白E-cadherin和N-cadherin的表达差异无统计学意义。两个细胞系LV-ELF5组的E-cadherin表达上调,而N-cadherin表达下调($P < 0.05$,与LV-GFP组比较); shRNA-ELF5组的E-cadherin表达下调,而N-cadherin表达上调($P < 0.05$,与shRNA-NC组比较),见图4B。

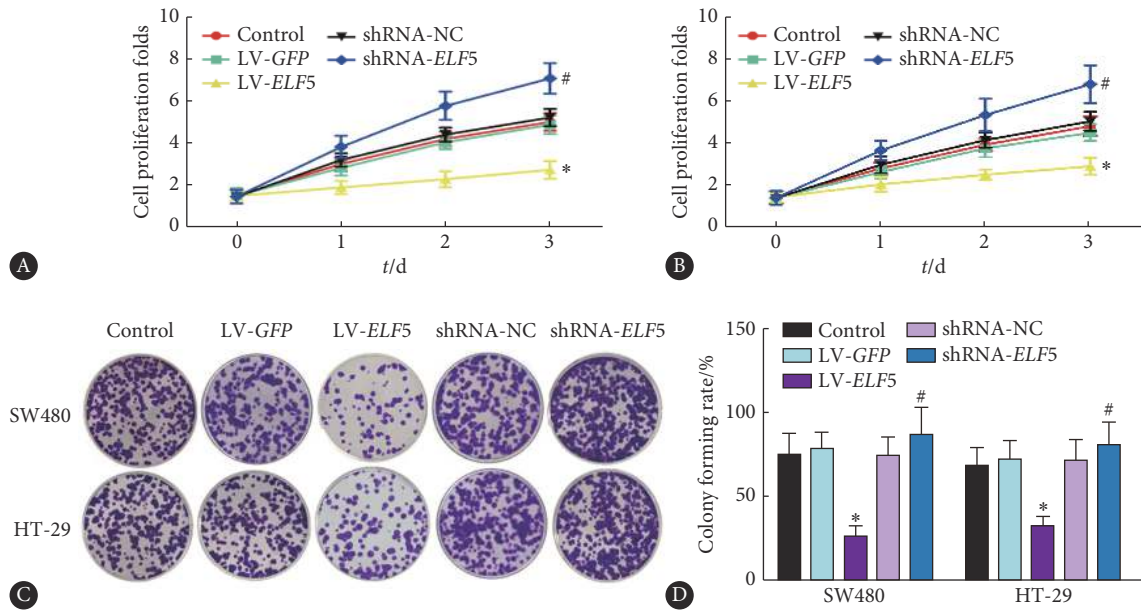


图 2 ELF5对结直肠癌细胞增殖和克隆形成率的影响 (n=8)

Fig 2 Effects of ELF5 on cell proliferation and colony formation rate of colorectal cancer cells (n=8)

A: Proliferation of SW480 cells was measured by CCK-8; B: Proliferation of HT-29 cells was measured by CCK-8; C: Cloning rate after 48 h was measured by cloning forming assay; D: Statistical histogram of cloning forming assay. *P<0.05, vs. LV-GFP group; # P<0.05, vs. shRNA-NC group.

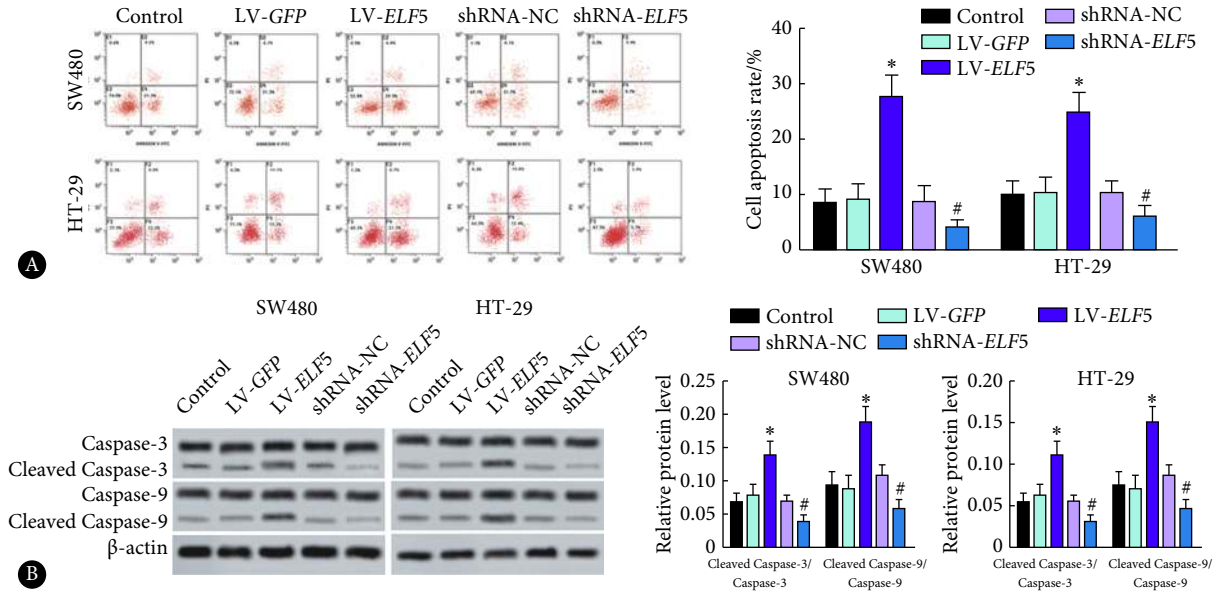


图 3 ELF5对结直肠癌细胞凋亡的影响 (n=8)

Fig 3 The effect of ELF5 on apoptosis of colorectal cancer cells (n=8)

A: The apoptosis rate was checked by flow cytometry; B: The expression of apoptosis-related proteins Caspase-3 and Caspase-9 was checked by Western blot. *P<0.05, vs. LV-GFP group; # P<0.05, vs. shRNA-NC group.

2.5 ELF5过表达对裸鼠成瘤的影响

见图5。第30天,与LV-GFP组比较,LV-ELF5组裸鼠的肿瘤体积缩小($P < 0.05$),肿瘤质量降低($P < 0.05$),ELF5蛋白表达上调($P < 0.05$, 0.15 ± 0.03 vs. 0.22 ± 0.04),细胞凋亡率增高 [$P < 0.05$, $(10.51 \pm 1.87)\%$ vs. $(41.43 \pm 4.32)\%$], N-cadherin阳性表达下调 [$P < 0.05$, $(31.54 \pm$

$6.73)\%$ vs. $(10.33 \pm 2.13)\%$]。与shRNA-NC组比较,shRNA-ELF5组的肿瘤体积增加($P < 0.05$),肿瘤质量增加 ($P < 0.05$),ELF5表达下调($P < 0.05$, 0.16 ± 0.02 vs. 0.07 ± 0.02),细胞凋亡率降低 [$P < 0.05$, $(9.72 \pm 2.09)\%$ vs. $(5.26 \pm 1.79)\%$], N-cadherin阳性表达上调 [$P < 0.05$, $(30.89 \pm 3.97)\%$ vs. $(48.77 \pm 4.06)\%$]。

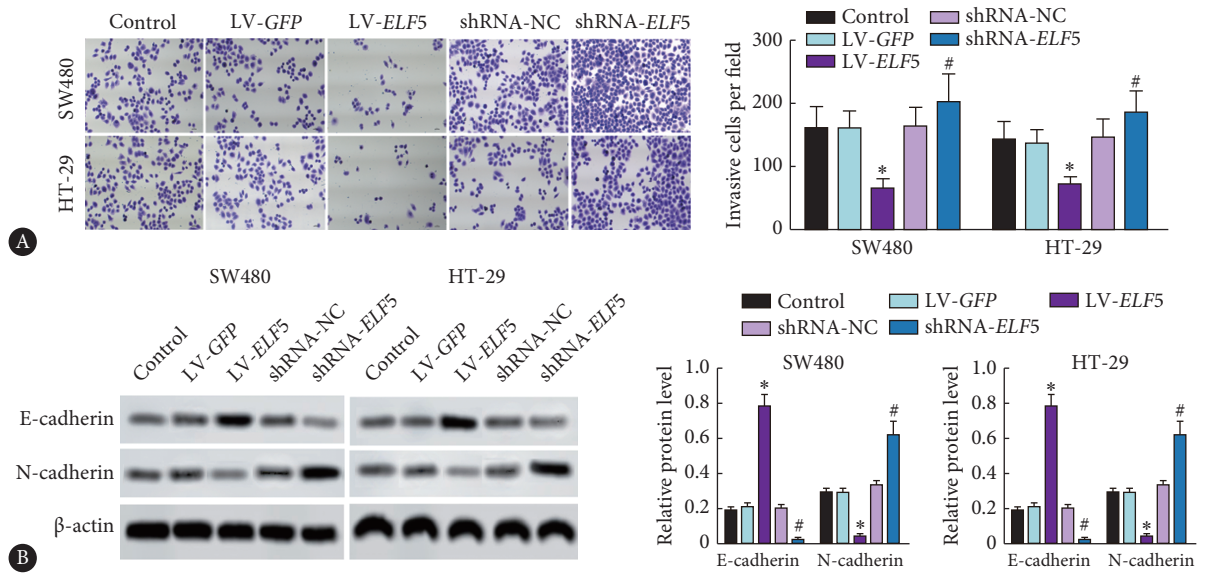


图 4 ELF5过表达对结直肠癌细胞侵袭的影响 (n=8)

Fig 4 The effect of ELF5 on the invasion of colorectal cancer cells (n=8)

A: Cell invasion was checked by Transwell assay (×200); B: The expression of E-cadherin and N-cadherin was checked by Western blot. *P<0.05, vs. LV-GFP group; #P<0.05, vs. shRNA-NC group.

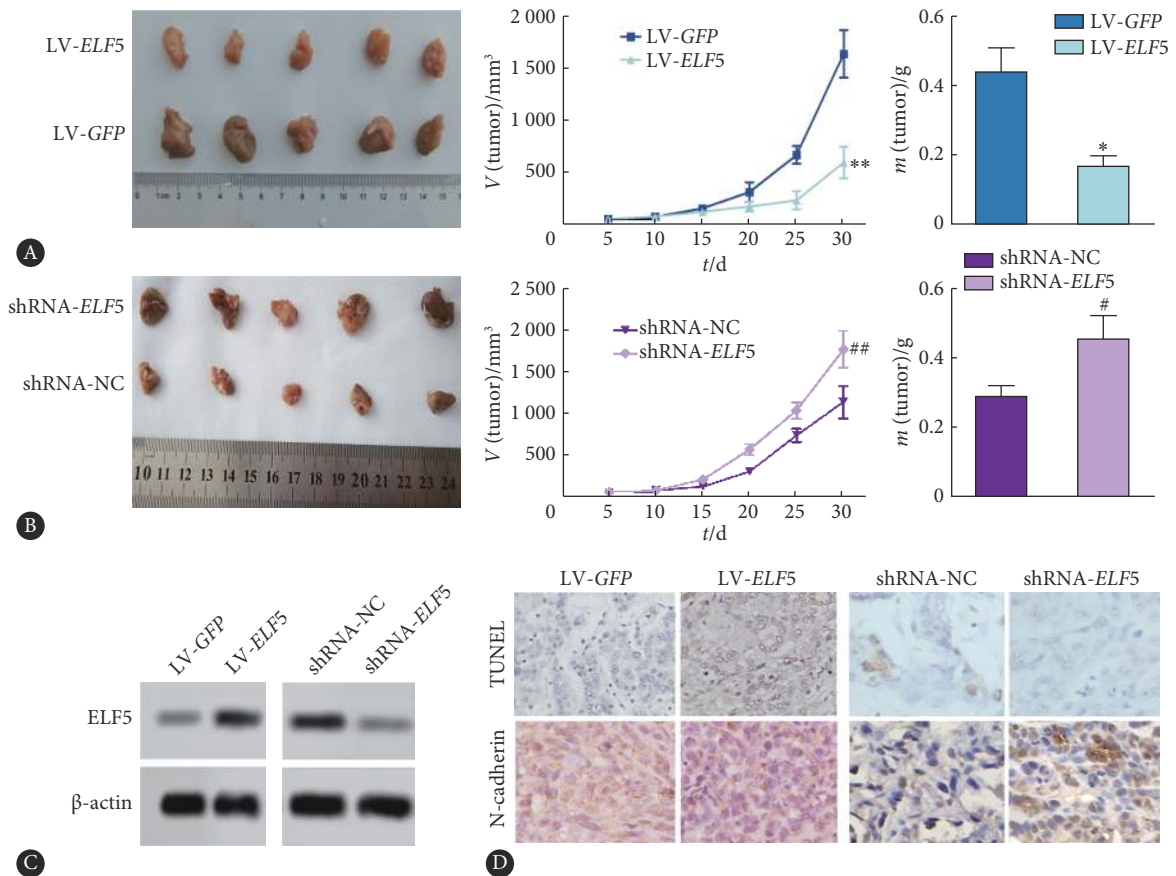


图 5 ELF5过表达对裸鼠成瘤的影响

Fig 5 The effect of ELF5 on tumorigenesis in nude mice

A: Tumor image, tumor volume and tumor mass of mice infected with LV-GFP or LV-ELF5 (n=5); B: Tumor image, tumor volume and tumor mass of mice infected with shRNA-NC or shRNA-ELF5 (n=5); C: The expression of ELF5 protein in tumor tissues was checked by Western blot; D: Apoptosis and N-cadherin expression in the tumor tissues were examined by TUNEL and immunohistochemistry, respectively (×400). *P<0.05, **P<0.01, vs. LV-GFP group; #P<0.05, ##P<0.01, vs. shRNA-NC group.

3 讨论

ELF5维持正常的细胞稳态和许多上皮组织的分化,其遗传改变和表达失调与一些上皮癌的进展有关。它在癌症中失调表达,在多种癌症中起到重要作用。研究表明,在三阴性乳腺癌(TNBCs)中,ELF5蛋白的高表达与较差的预后相关^[7]。相比之下,在管腔A、管腔B和HER2亚型中,ELF5 mRNA的表达低于正常乳腺上皮^[8]。卵巢癌中ELF5 mRNA表达^[9]和肾癌中ELF5 mRNA及蛋白表达^[10]较相应正常组织减少,ELF5在这些肿瘤细胞系模型中重新表达抑制细胞增殖和存活。在前列腺癌中,ELF5蛋白表达的缺失与上皮标记物E-cadherin表达的缺失以及间充质标记物N-cadherin表达的增加有关。敲减ELF5在前列腺癌细胞系诱导上皮-间质转化(EMT)^[11]。本研究的结果表明,结肠癌SW480和HT29细胞中,ELF5过表达抑制了细胞增殖,上调了凋亡相关的cleaved Caspase-3/Caspase-3和cleaved Caspase-9/Caspase-9蛋白比值水平,促进了SW480和HT29细胞凋亡,ELF5过表达上调E-cadherin,而下调N-cadherin。进一步,裸鼠成瘤实验的数据也验证了体外实验的结果。ELF5过表达促进了体内细胞凋亡,下调了N-cadherin表达,从而阻碍了裸鼠体内肿瘤细胞的增殖。综上所述,ELF5过表达在结肠癌中起到抑制肿瘤的作用。

ELF5肿瘤抑制作用包括在上皮样T47D乳腺癌细胞中沉默诱导EMT,ELF5在间充质样MDA-MB-231细胞中重新表达诱导上皮特征和减少体内转移,抑制SNAIL2的表达^[12]。同样,在MMTV-neu(HER2)背景中删除ELF5增加了EMT标记物和肺转移瘤的形成,而在MMTV-PyMT乳腺癌模型中转基因过表达ELF5抑制了细胞增殖^[13]。ELF5也被认为可以调节乳腺癌的雌激素敏感性,因ELF5可以抑制MCF7细胞中ER的表达。此外,经过长期培养,对三苯氧胺产生抗性的MCF7细胞中ELF5 mRNA表达增加,这些细胞增殖更依赖于ELF5^[14]。同样,与正常尿路上皮相比,ELF5 mRNA和蛋白在膀胱上皮癌中的表达降低,并且与膀胱癌分级呈负相关。ELF5在上皮样膀胱癌细胞中的下调诱导EMT,而其在间充质样T24细胞中的重新表达促进EMT^[15]。以上文献展示ELF5在癌症中发挥抑制癌症作用与细胞EMT密不可分,在本实验中,ELF5过表达也展示了这一点。

综上所述,ELF5过表达可抑制结肠癌SW480和HT-29细胞的侵袭能力及阻碍裸鼠体内肿瘤的生长。本研究探究了ELF5对结肠癌的影响,为寻求一种新的结肠癌治疗策略和手段提供了一定的基础实验证据。本研究的不

足之处是没有更深入地研究ELF5与细胞EMT之间的关系,这是我们今后研究的方向之一。

* * *

利益冲突 所有作者均声明不存在利益冲突

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