

强迫症的神经环路研究进展^{*}

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摘要:强迫症是一种慢性致残性精神疾病,其病因及发病机制尚未明确。近几十年来的神经影像学研究发现强迫症存在大脑神经环路的异常。本文就目前强迫症神经环路的研究现状和进展进行综述。

关键词:强迫症 神经环路 脑网络 综述

doi:10.11842/wst.2018.06.009 中图分类号:R749.72 文献标识码:A

强迫症(obsessive-compulsive disorder, OCD)是一种比较常见的慢性致残性精神障碍,其典型症状表现为强迫思维和/或强迫行为(DSM-5, 2013),多数强迫症患者均经历慢性、消长变化的过程,明知道强迫思维或强迫行为的必要性、耗时性,但却纠缠于其中无法自拔,常伴有明显的抑郁及焦虑情绪。强迫症通常起病于青春期或成年早期,男女性发病率基本相当。世界范围内,强迫症的终身患病率约为0.8%-3%^[1],影响着全球近5 000万人口,自杀风险高于普通人群,约1/3的患者因症状无法正常工作,不仅个人的社会功能严重受损,也给家庭造成巨大的经济损失和精神痛苦,是仅次于抑郁症、酒精滥用、社交恐惧症的第四位常见精神障碍。近十几年来,国内外学者对强迫症进行了大量的探索,但由于其临床症状复杂变异,疾病的发展演变阶段各异、共病其它精神障碍等因素的影响,其病因和发病机制远未阐明。

强迫症的病因及发病机制可能涉及遗传、神经生物、神经生理及社会心理等多个方面,目前的研究假说主要包括单胺类递质假说、神经免疫异常、分子遗传机制及神经环路异常等等。而随着近年来神经影像学技术的发展,基于正电子发射断层扫描(Positron Emission Computed Tomography, PET)、单光子放射计算机断层

扫描(Single- Photon Emission Computed Tomography, SPECT)、磁共振弥散张量成像(Diffusion Tensor Imaging, DTI)、功能磁共振成像(functional magnetic resonance imaging, fMRI)等技术进行的动物及人类实验,已经成为探索强迫症病理生理基础的重要手段。

早在1986年,Alexander即提出强迫症存在大脑皮质-纹状体-丘脑-皮质(cortico-striato-thalamo-cortical, CSTC)环路异常的假说,CSTC环路即大脑皮层将信号投射至纹状体,并通过苍白球将信号传递给丘脑,最终反馈回大脑皮层的神经环路^[2],涉及认知、情感、动机、运动等信息的处理,是执行个体行为控制功能的重要结构^[3]。近几十年的影像学研究均支持该假设提出的环路,并在其基础上进一步开展深入。

1 CSTC环路

基底神经节作为大脑的中心灰质核团,包括尾状核、豆状核、屏状核及杏仁核,其涉及的功能广泛,例如与运动相关的运动选择、准备和执行;言语和空间工作记忆,反应抑制、计划,以及奖励相关的过程,如预测误差、奖励预期等。直接/间接通路(direct/indirect pathways)理论是目前最广泛被接受的强迫症神经解剖模型理论,由Saxena等于2000年提出。纹状体从皮质多个区域和丘脑底核接受兴奋性传入,其神经递质主要包括γ-氨基丁酸,多巴胺,谷氨酸等,经过两条主

收稿日期:2018-05-10

修回日期:2018-06-10

* 国家自然科学基金面上基金项目(81671340):早年创伤对强迫症患者神经环路影响的纵向磁共振研究,负责人:王振;上海交通大学医学院高峰高原计划(20161321):mTBI对创伤后应激障碍发病的影响及其机制,负责人:王振。

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要途径(直接/间接通路)投射到输出核(苍白球内侧部和黑质)^[4]。在直接通路中,神经纤维直达基底节输出核,然后投射到丘脑及其他皮质区域;在间接通路中,神经纤维先投射到苍白球外侧部及丘脑底核,然后再到达输出核、丘脑及其他皮层区域^[5]。直接通路作为自我强化的正反馈通路,在行为的初始和持续中起作用;而间接通路被认为是负反馈通路,在行为的抑制和行为之间的转换中起作用。根据该模型理论,前额叶-纹状体环路的直接通路相对于间接通路的过度兴奋导致强迫症患者对于刺激的系统捕捉阈值较低,过度关注危险、暴力、卫生、次序和性等,从而产生强迫症状。

目前众多的研究表明,强迫症患者CSTC环路的代谢、结构和功能均存在异常。利用正电子发射型计算机断层显像(Positron Emission Computed Tomography, PET)的研究表明,强迫症患者在眶额回^[6]、尾状核^[7]前扣带回、丘脑^[8]及顶叶皮层^[9]的葡萄糖代谢水平增高,且眶额回及尾状核^[7]的代谢水平可在成功治疗强迫症后有所下降。结构磁共振方面,大多数研究显示,强迫患者前扣带回的灰质体积减小,壳核、尾状核等纹状体区域以及丘脑的灰质体积增大,但有关OFC的体积改变却存在争议:大多数研究结果认为强迫症患者的OFC灰质体积减小^[10],但也有研究显示OFC的灰质体积增加^[11],或差异无统计学意义^[12]。而强迫症患者在额叶、功能磁共振的研究结果表明前额叶-纹状体环路是强迫症的病理生理基础,但研究结果也存在争议,如前扣带回与腹侧纹状体间的功能连接可增强^[13],减弱^[14],或无统计学差异^[15];眶额回与腹侧纹状体之间的功能连接可增强^[16]或减弱^[14]。

目前公认的几条CSTC环路包括:感觉运动环路(sensorimotor loops),认知环路(cognitive loops),边缘(情感)环路(limbic/affective loops),包含的大脑皮层分别为感觉运动皮层、背外侧前额叶(dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, DLPFC)、眶额回(orbital-frontal cortex, OFC)及前扣带回(anterior cingulate cortex, ACC),在强迫症中这些区域的异常均有报道,且虽然不同环路分工不同,但强迫症复杂的症状通常是几个环路共同作用的结果。

其中,情感/认知执行环路是两个相互独立的神经环路,分别涉及强迫症的情感、注意和工作记忆、认知等功能的损害。具体而言,边缘情感环路在奖励预期、

动机及决策中具有核心作用,其中的脑区受损可改变对预期奖励的敏感性,夸大对威胁的反应,并减少对奖励的反应及激励驱动,最终导致强迫症状^[17];而认知执行环路的异常会导致被试认知功能损害,例如延迟反应抑制、注意力转移缺陷,行为规划及决策异常及认知灵活性不足等。5-羟色胺再摄取抑制剂(SSRI)类药物和认知行为治疗(CBT)作为治疗强迫症的一线疗法,其作用的大脑区域并不相同,SSRI类药物可作用于情感环路,如边缘系统及基底神经节区域,改善患者的强迫思维和焦虑情绪;而CBT则作用于认知环路,如背外侧前额叶(DLPFC),改善患者的强迫思维^[18]。

关于强迫症的异质性,各种亚型可能具有不同的神经影像学结果,污染/清洗、检查症状维度是强迫症中较为常见的两种。其中,污染/清洗症状维度的特征在于强烈的回避以及厌恶敏感性的提高,既往研究也表明清洗仪式更多的受情绪相关的前额-边缘系统所调节,如该维度的强迫症患者在症状激发时,其边缘区域(脑岛、海马旁回)以及前额叶腹侧部存在活跃性增强^[19-20],腹侧纹状体与脑岛的功能连接增强,且其静息状态下的功能连接强度与污染/洗涤的症状严重程度呈负相关^[21];而检查仪式可能与冲动相关的前额-皮质下网络相联系^[20],例如既往研究显示,检查强迫症患者在尾状核、前扣带回中的活跃性降低^[22]。

2 CSTC环路以外的其它环路

虽然CSTC环路在强迫症中具有十分重要的意义,但却并不能完全解释强迫症存在的症状。

(1) 恐惧消除环路

恐惧消除过程涉及了腹内侧前额叶(VMPFC)/眶额回、前扣带、杏仁核等CSTC环路以外的区域^[23],这些区域间具有非常紧密的联系^[24],在情感调节中反向激活^[25],在强迫症的病理机制中具有十分重要的作用。

杏仁核位于颞叶内侧,与海马前部相连,是恐惧的调节中心,既往研究均已证明在症状激发过程中杏仁核存在过度活跃^[26-27],且与眶额回之间的正耦合减弱^[28];VMPFC在巩固恐惧消除学习中发挥着核心作用^[29],与海马一起参与了对消除记忆的唤起标记^[30]。强迫症患者在恐惧条件化范式中表现出了恐惧消除能力的损害,在恐惧消除训练期间VMPFC的活跃性减弱;在恐惧条件化过程中,强迫症患者的海马及尾状核活跃性降低;而恐惧消除保持过程中存在小脑、后扣带回及壳核的活性改变^[31]。

(2) 皮质-小脑环路

小脑位于后颅窝内,其中央蚓部将两侧的小脑半球分隔开。根据小脑表面的沟和裂可以将其分为三个叶(lobe)或十个小叶(lobule):即小脑前叶(主要包括 Lobule I-V)、小脑后叶(包括 Lobule VI-IX)和绒球小结叶(主要为 Lobule-X)。早期解剖学研究发现小脑与前额皮层的运动区域间存在神经纤维的连接,从而参与运动及躯体平衡的调节,目前越来越多的研究提示,小脑参与了人类的精神及心理活动^[32]。在神经解剖上,小脑与前额叶皮质的运动区域、认知区域、皮下结构(如纹状体、杏仁核)等均存在广泛的突触连接^[33-35]。研究者^[36]曾报道小脑损伤的患者不仅表现出运动功能损害,还存在言语流利度、空间记忆以及情感调节功能的损害,表明其可能参与了各种高级认知活动及情感过程^[37]。就强迫症而言,小脑也存在结构和功能的异常:一项大样本多中心的Mega研究显示强迫症患者存在双侧小脑的灰质体积增加^[38];静息状态下,强迫症患者存在双侧小脑的自发活动性减弱^[39],与全脑的功能连接强度增加^[40];Stroop任务态下,强迫症患者小脑的激活程度降低,经有效行为治疗后,激活程度有所增加^[41]。

3 强迫症的脑网络异常

随着方法学水平的提高和研究的进一步深入,单一的环路异常假说远不足以解释清楚强迫症的病理机制,研究者们开始更多地关注强迫症患者脑功能网络的结构及功能改变。

默认网络是最早被发现的脑功能网络之一,主要包括后内侧前额叶、后扣带回、双侧顶叶等脑区;随后研究者们利用基于盲源分离算法的独立成分分析技术进一步分离出执行控制网络(execution control network, ECN)、突显网络(salience network, SN)、背侧注意网络(dorsal attention network, DAN)及感觉运动网络(sensorimotor network)等多个功能网络,其中执行控制网络通常也被定义为任务相关网络,主要包括背外侧前额叶及后顶叶等脑区,在从事认知相关的任务中发挥了重要的作用^[42]。而突显网络主要包括岛叶及背侧前扣带回等脑区,参与了信息过滤、错误监测及整合等认知过程^[43]。目前已有研究发现这些网络的功能异常与强迫症的发病机制密切相关^[40,45]。

此外,Fan等人的研究显示,强迫症患者不仅存

在这些网络内部的功能连接改变,且默认网络-突显网络及突显网络-执行网络间的功能连接也显著增强;且默认网络-背侧执行网络间的功能连接与焦虑严重程度呈负相关^[46]。最近一项纳入18项研究的meta分析(541例强迫症 vs 572例健康对照)显示,强迫症患者的脑网络间及环路中分别存在广泛的连接异常,并提出强迫症患者的三网络模型与额叶-纹状体环路间存在部分重叠及联系,在强迫症的发病中共同发挥作用,构成强迫症的病理机制模型^[47]。

4 药物对于强迫症神经环路的影响

目前有关强迫症神经环路的研究结果并不一致,例如既往研究结果表明强迫症患者的腹侧纹状体灰质体积增加^[48]或正常^[49],边缘情感环路内的功能连接增强^[14]或减弱^[16],研究结果的不一致性可能与纳入研究对象的服药情况及共病情况复杂,混杂因素众多有关,难以说明强迫症本质的病理状态。

而选择性5-羟色胺再摄取抑制剂(selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, SSRI)类药物作为目前治疗强迫症的国际一线药物,其应用不仅改善调节情绪、改善临床症状,也可以部分恢复强迫症引起的大脑功能改变。纵向研究显示,SSRI类药物治疗后可减小强迫症患者的尾状核、丘脑的灰质体积^[50],可以增加皮质的血流量及活跃性^[51],增加边缘情感环路的功能连接^[52]等。此外,动物及人类研究表明,SSRI的短期与长期作用并不相同甚至相反^[53-55]。一项横断面研究,纳入不同用药状态(从未用药、既往用药且目前已停药至少4周、目前正在用药)的强迫症患者及健康对照,发现既往用药组及从未用药组在丘脑、腹侧纹状体、眶额回的灰质体积增加,而正在服药组在这些区域的灰质体积更接近健康对照组^[56]。

5 总结与展望

综上所述,强迫症患者不仅存在CSTC环路及以外多个区域的结构和功能异常,还存在大脑不同网络内部及网络间相互作用的异常,且受到药物治疗的影响。目前,强迫症的神经环路研究尚未完善,纵向研究分析强迫症环路改变的变化轨迹,探索不同表型强迫症神经环路异常的差异,增加儿童强迫症的神经环路研究等是未来强迫症的研究发展方向。

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Research Development of Neural circuitry in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

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Abstract: Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a chronic crippling mental illness, but the etiology and pathogenesis have not yet been clarified. In the recent 10 years, neuroimaging study has found that abnormalities in the neural circuitry of brain. This paper reviews current research of studies on neural circuitry in OCD.

Keywords: Obsessive-compulsive disorder, neural circuitry, brain network, review

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