

· 老年人认知功能障碍专栏

“从脾论治”失眠在阿尔茨海默病中的研究进展

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【摘要】 全球范围内老龄化加剧, 包括痴呆在内的老年健康问题日益突出, 其中阿尔茨海默病(AD)患者日益增多。AD本质上是神经炎症, 与睡眠和免疫功能密切相关, 失眠能诱发炎症反应, 破坏肠道菌群丰度及多样性, 最终促进该病发生发展。由于目前关于AD的发病机制尚不明确, 西药治疗效果比较令人失望, 可利用“脑肠轴”理论与中医学“百病皆由脾胃衰而生”理念的一致性和相关性, “从脾论治”失眠以重塑肠道菌群, 有助于防治AD。

【关键词】 阿尔茨海默病; 肠道菌群; 失眠; 从脾论治; 中医药疗法

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Research advances in “Cure from the Spleen” for insomnia in patients with Alzheimer's disease

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【Abstract】 Aging is increasing all over the world, and the health problems in the elderly, including dementia, are becoming increasingly prominent, with an increasing number of patients with Alzheimer's disease (AD). AD essentially, is a condition of neuroinflammation, and is closely related to sleep and immune function, while, insomnia can induce an inflammatory response, destroy the abundance and diversity of intestinal flora, and ultimately promote the development of the disease. Since the pathogenesis of AD is still unclear, the therapeutic effect of Western medicine is relatively disappointing. Here, based on the consistency and correlation between the “Cerebrointestinal axis” theory and the concept of “all diseases are born from spleen and stomach failure” in Traditional Chinese Medicine, we discuss to “Cure from the Spleen” for insomnia so as to reshape the gut microbiota and thus be beneficial to prevent and treat AD.

【Key words】 Alzheimer's disease; gut microbiota; insomnia; Cure from the Spleen; traditional Chinese therapy

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阿尔茨海默病(Alzheimer's disease, AD)是一种以进行性认知功能障碍和行为损害为特征的中枢神经系统退行性疾病, 病变可累及神经内分泌、运动及免疫等全身多个系统, 影响机体正常的新陈代谢^[1]。基于Aβ级联假说研发的抗AD药物不仅临床试验结果令人失望, 且对心血管系统的不良反应较大, 可通过改变生活方式, 间接抑制AD特征性Aβ和tau蛋白病理性沉积以延缓AD的病程。良好的睡眠能充分发挥免疫系统相关功能, 抑制炎症反应和Aβ病理性沉积。相反, 失眠则会导致老年患者并发多种慢性病, 造成肠道菌群紊乱, 进而破坏正

常的认知功能^[2]。中医学中“百病皆由脾胃衰而生”的观点与西医学中肠道菌群是联系人体各生理系统的中间环节理论具有一致性和相似性, “从脾论治”改善失眠在一定程度上能治疗AD相关症状。

1 失眠与AD的相关性

1.1 失眠直接导致AD

睡眠是一种周期出现的自发的和可逆的静息状态, 其与神经系统的发育成熟密切相关。失眠是诱发AD的主要危险因素之一, 一项临床研究表明: 与无睡眠问题的人相比, 有睡眠问题的人患AD、认知

障碍(cognitive impairment, CI)和临床前AD的风险分别高出1.55、1.65和3.78倍,约有15%的AD患者可能归因于睡眠问题^[3]。在衰老过程中,Aβ和tau蛋白病理性改变能显著调控昼夜节律,抑制细胞外老年斑(senile plaque, SP)、细胞内神经原纤维缠结(neurofibrillary tangles, NFTs)的形成,遏制神经退行性变的进展^[4]。睡眠和免疫双向联系,失眠能通过影响肠道菌群丰度及多样性,促进机体释放白细胞介素、肿瘤坏死因子等炎症介质,造成神经元损伤和突触丢失来诱发AD^[5-7]。健康的肠道微生物组能促进胃肠道与脑组织之间的交流,限制大脑中炎症化学物质的产生以维护肠道屏障及血脑屏障的完整性,发挥神经保护作用^[8]。

1.2 失眠间接诱发AD

人的睡眠-觉醒行为主要通过中枢神经系统来调控,失眠可能导致下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺轴功能紊乱、中枢神经递质及细胞因子异常释放,是诱发慢性病的主要危险因素,临床研究发现老年慢性病患者AD发病率显著升高。失眠所承受的巨大心理压力能刺激肾上腺异常释放皮质醇,致使体内氧化与抗氧化机制失衡,造成肠道菌群代谢产物失调及脑神经内分泌紊乱,诱发心血管系统疾病,破坏患者的认知功能^[9,10]。长期失眠还能通过增加体内脂肪储存,激活炎症相关通路以破坏肠道菌群丰度及多样性,导致细胞无法从血液中提取葡萄糖继而产生胰岛素抵抗,造成患者的认知能力下降,诱发AD^[11,12]。

基于“脑肠轴”理论,大脑与肠道通过交感神经系统、内分泌系统、免疫系统及肠道微生物等双向交流,失眠所致的各类慢性病可能通过脑肠轴来影响大脑相关区域,诱发神经炎症,加重AD的病理表现。

2 中医学理论的应用

2.1 AD的中医理论

中医古籍中并无AD的病名,现代理论研究通常将AD归属于中医的“呆症”“健忘”“呆病”等病证范畴。中医学认为其病位在脑,但与心、肝、脾、肾功能失调密切相关,尤以脾肾为主。当前临幊上主要采用2012版《中国痴呆诊疗指南》中针对AD的中医诊断、辨证分型及疗效评定标准,其脾肾两虚证主要指由于年老体衰,脾胃功能减退或肾阳亏虚不足以温煦脾阳所致的脾虚阳微、不能化精微生气血,导致脑髓失荣、清窍失养、元神失用及灵机记性衰减。

2.2 失眠的中医理论

中医学将失眠称为“少寐”“不得卧”“不得眠”等,其病因主要与脾胃化源不足,脾胃虚弱所致升降失常、失运,中焦不和难以营卫等密切相关,临幊上以脾胃气虚型较为多见^[13]。一方面,当脾胃气虚不足以支撑胃肠功能时,脑肠轴的生理功能遭受破坏,致使神经递质调控失常而诱发不寐症;另一方面,不寐症亦能导致患者肠道菌群紊乱,使机体长期处于应激状态,交感神经系统功能障碍,去甲肾上腺素、乙酰胆碱及多巴胺能神经元兴奋性异常增高,海马及大脑皮层突触丢失,加剧神经元损伤和神经炎症^[14,15],可通过调理脾胃来改善睡眠质量,缓解AD病理进程及相关症状。

2.3 “从脾论治”与“脑肠轴”理论的结合

李杲所著的《脾胃论》将“古方今病不相能也”的革新思想和扶养脾胃的学术观点相结合,创立了脾胃学说。在中医理论中,“肠”的生理功能及其病理变化与“脾”的功能密切相关,脾主运化,肠主泌别清浊,与现代微生物学中肠道菌群参与人体营养物质的代谢、吸收功能相对应。“脾”虚不仅能显著降低中枢神经递质的表达,破坏脑组织间的突触联系,还可能导致肠道集合淋巴结数量减少,肠道及血脑屏障通透性增加,诱发神经炎症^[16]。

现代研究已经证实,肠道微生物群落是联系人体诸多系统的中间环节,肠道菌群的致病特点与中医“脾”脏类似,其与脾胃功能相互影响,调理脾胃能促进体内多种神经递质的合成、代谢,启发临幊以中西医结合为基点,运用中医学“从脾论治”理论治疗失眠以改善AD相关症状。

3 “从脾论治”在AD中的应用

3.1 常用于防治AD疗法的不足与思考

当前,主要采用药理干预、非处方药(over-the-counter drug, OTC)补充剂干预、体育活动和认知训练等方式来防治CI^[17]。然而,关于阿司匹林、睾酮、痴呆药物和非甾体抗炎药的神经保护机制尚缺乏充足的随机对照试验,无法证明其能延缓AD轻中度阶段的病理进展^[18];且仅有少数研究观察OTC补充剂干预对患者的影响,仍缺乏相关证据表明多种维生素在AD患者临床试验中的益处。叶酸参与DNA甲基化反应,大豆肽通过调控氧化应激和凋亡,在一定程度上能够预防AD,但应开展更大规模实验以充分验证其在治疗AD中的益处^[19,20]。

既往研究大多依据淀粉样蛋白级联假说开发新药,但临床试验进展缓慢,无法满足广大AD患者的

药物需求,中医药疗法既能避免抗精神病药物所产生的不良反应,又可以通过多种途径和机制发挥神经保护作用,抑制AD特征性A_β和tau蛋白病理性沉积^[1],未来应充分运用中医学脾胃论与西医学“脑肠轴”理论的相关性,“从脾论治”改善失眠以防治AD。

3.2 中医药疗法改善睡眠治疗AD

脾胃属中焦,脾主运化、升清;其泌别清浊功能与现代医学研究中大部分物质需借助肠道细菌吸收和排出相吻合,“从脾论治”能通过调节脾胃功能来促进机体的新陈代谢,修改大脑区域或网络的激活和连通性以维持和改善AD患者认知功能^[21,22]。对于AD的治疗,病位在脑,而根于脾胃,故应从健运脾胃入手,运用中医健运脾胃的方药来调节肠道菌群的相对丰度和多样性,改善AD相关症状。研究人员通过对治疗AD的方药进行统计,发现了调理脾胃的方剂在治疗AD方面占据主要地位,且常用于治疗AD的中草药中茯苓、甘草、当归、远志等改善睡眠的中药单味药基于频次统计位居前十,表明失眠和AD之间存在潜在关联^[23]。

“髓减脑消、痰浊上犯”是AD的基本病机,肾精亏虚是病因,脾胃虚弱是病因之根本^[24],脾胃虚弱与失眠及AD的发生密切相关。补中益气汤可直接或间接对人体神经-内分泌-免疫系统发挥调节作用,通过脑肠轴来调节肠道菌群,改善患者认知功能^[25]。酸枣仁汤具有抗抑郁、抗焦虑、抗惊厥、降血脂和镇静催眠等作用,其方含中药当归、川穹的主要活性成分为阿魏酸,阿魏酸化合物能通过血脑屏障,抑制乙酰胆碱酯酶的活性,防止A_β(1-42)聚集,发挥抗氧化和神经保护作用^[26,27]。茯苓具有利水渗湿、健脾、宁心安神的功效,临幊上不仅用于治疗心脾两虚、气血不足之失眠,其提取液亦可以有效抑制肠道内产气荚膜杆菌、粪链球菌的产生,调节肠道菌群紊乱,抑制炎症反应,发挥神经保护作用^[28]。远志的主要活性成分为细叶远志皂苷,远志三酮Ⅲ和3,6'-二芥子酰基蔗糖,其能通过增加神经生长因子的合成,减少A_β的产生,调节体内神经递质系统来改善患者的学习记忆能力,发挥神经保护作用^[29]。

4 结语与展望

近年来,现代医学对AD的本质、病因学以及病理生理学的认识取得了很大进展,但目前仍缺乏公认的发病机制学说。中医学认为AD与脾胃虚弱所致的失眠密切相关,“脾”虚则会破坏脑肠

轴的生理功能,造成A_β病理性沉积,诱发神经炎症反应,“从脾论治”不仅能直接改善AD患者的临床症状,还能通过调理睡眠来减轻AD病理,保护认知功能。

中药含有多种有效成分,并具有同时发挥多种作用机制的特点。目前,尽管有些传统中药复方已被证明能显著提高AD患者的学习记忆能力、改善认知功能障碍,但其临床效果及安全性仍有待于进一步的验证。传统中药复方在治疗失眠和AD方面药物重合率相对较高,以“脑肠轴”理论和脾胃学说的相关性为切入点,探索总结出具有治疗AD和失眠双重疗效的中药复方,有可能成为未来研究的热点。

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