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人与其他动物椎间盘解剖和组织学结构的比较医学研究进展

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[摘要] 《2023年中国退行性脊柱健康报告》提到35岁以下患者的腰椎手术比例近年来显著增加, 颈、腰椎病有年轻化的趋势。腰椎间盘突出症成为最困扰大众的疾病之一, 研究椎间盘退变的发病机制和治疗方法有着重要的临床意义。目前人类椎间盘相关疾病多采用影像学诊断, 由于脊柱的组织样本不易得到, 实验动物以成本低、周期短、易获取的优点, 成为替代性研究对象。人与其他动物的椎间盘有着结构和生理上的差异, 比较人与其他动物的椎间盘结构和病理生理特点是研究的基础和关键。本文综述了不同动物椎间盘解剖与组织学结构相关研究文献并进行比较分析, 分别从椎间盘的高度、椎间盘的几何形状、腰椎间盘软骨终板特征、椎间盘内细胞外基质组分4个角度比较了不同动物的椎间盘特点。分析结果表明: 人类、袋鼠、绵羊、猪、大鼠在第六颈椎至第七颈椎处的椎间盘相对高度数值最接近; 与人类腰部椎间盘几何形状最为相似的是小鼠腰椎间盘; 与其他动物相比, 人类的软骨终板最厚, 细胞密度最小; 猪纤维环内部的胶原蛋白与人类的差异最大, 但猪、绵羊、兔、大鼠的髓核含水量与人类相比无差异性。在此基础上, 本文还阐述了人与其他动物之间椎间盘退变的共性和差异表现, 也对不同实验动物椎间盘退变的造模方法进行了总结, 旨在为椎间盘退变研究选择合适的实验动物模型提供基础数据。

[关键词] 椎间盘; 退变; 比较医学; 动物模型; 解剖与组织学

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Advances in Comparative Medical Research on Anatomy and Histological Structure of Intervertebral Discs in Humans and Other Animals

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[ABSTRACT] The 2023 China Health Report on Spine Degeneration noted a significant increase in lumbar surgery among patients under 35 years old in recent years, indicating a trend towards younger onset of cervical and lumbar diseases. Lumbar intervertebral disc herniation has become a major concern, making the study of disc degeneration pathogenesis and treatment methods clinically significant. At present, human intervertebral disc diseases are primarily diagnosed through imaging due to the challenges of obtaining tissue samples from the spine. Therefore, experimental animals have emerged as alternative research subjects because they are cost-effective, have short experimental cycles, and are easily accessible. Given the structural and physiological differences between human and other animal intervertebral discs, comparing their anatomy and histological characteristics forms the foundation of research into human disc degeneration. The purpose of this paper is to collect and review relevant studies on anatomical and histological structures of intervertebral discs in different animals and conduct a comparative analysis from four aspects, namely, intervertebral disc height, lumbar disc geometry, lumbar disc cartilaginous endplate characteristics, and extracellular matrix components. The results show that humans, kangaroos, sheep, pigs, and rats exhibit similar relative heights between the sixth and seventh cervical vertebrae. Mice possess lumbar disc geometries most akin to humans. Compared to other animals, humans have the thickest cartilaginous endplates and the lowest cell densities. The collagen within the fibrous annulus differs most notably in pigs compared to humans, while water content in the nucleus pulposus is consistent across pigs, sheep, rabbits, rats, and humans. Additionally, this paper describes the commonalities and discrepancies in disc degeneration manifestations between humans and animals, and summarizes modeling methods for disc degeneration in different experimental animals. Ultimately, the aims of this paper is to provide fundamental data for selecting suitable experimental animal models for the study of intervertebral disc degeneration.

[Key words] Intervertebral disc; Degeneration; Comparative medicine; Animal model; Anatomy and histology

人类椎间盘随着年龄增长会发生间质细胞老化, 进而引起结构渐进性的异常变化, 医学上称这种现象为椎间盘退变 (intervertebral disc degeneration)。椎间盘退变是导致椎间盘突出、髓核含水量和应变力降低、椎间盘高度下降, 造成或加重腰疼疼痛、椎间盘突出症等一系列脊柱相关疾病的重要因素^[1]。引起椎间盘退变的原因有多种, 已被证实的因素有遗传、年龄、代谢异常和压力载荷, 还可能包括动脉粥样硬化、肥胖、职业、吸烟和性别等因素^[2-3], 其准确的发病机制至今尚不明确。由于人类椎间盘样本有限且难以获取, 椎间盘

退变诊疗相关的体内外研究更依赖于来自模型动物的实验结果, 那么建立可靠的动物模型就成为深入研究椎间盘退变机制、椎间盘疾病治疗方法的关键。由于不同物种间的椎间盘大小、形状等各有差异, 科学家们已经对恒河猴、犬、绵羊、牛、猪、兔、小鼠和大鼠开展了大量的比较医学研究, 更多的中大型动物如马、袋鼠、美洲驼等也逐步进入了人们的视野^[4]。本文对此进行文献检索分析, 以了解常用的实验动物与人类的椎间盘结构和生理差异, 以及椎间盘退变动物模型的研究进展, 期望为椎间盘退变研究提供参考。

1 脊椎动物的椎间盘结构

脊椎动物的脊柱分为颈椎 (cervical vertebra, C)、胸椎 (thoracic vertebra, T)、腰椎 (lumbar vertebra, L)、骶椎 (sacral vertebra, S) 和尾椎 (caudal vertebra, CA) 五部分。椎间盘 (intervertebral disc) 存在于除一、二颈椎外的所有椎体间软骨连接, 是由上下软骨终板、中央髓核 (nucleus pulposus) 和四周包绕的纤维环 (anulus fibrosus) 构成的“三明治”样封闭结构, 共同构成了椎间盘整体高度。椎间盘坚韧而富有弹性, 在维持椎骨的连接、保持脊柱的灵活性、脊柱的减震方面有着重要作用。

软骨终板由透明软骨细胞和丰富的细胞外基质构成, 细胞外基质主要成分为蛋白聚糖、胶原 (Ⅱ、X 型胶原) 和水分^[5]。软骨终板形似中间凹陷的圆饼状海绵, 在中心区域分布大量的孔隙, 从中间到软骨终板边缘的孔隙数量逐渐减少^[6]。大部分孔隙中存在毛细血管, 有利于营养物质从外周脉管系统扩散到髓核。

椎间盘中央的髓核结构源于脊索细胞, 是无血管的凝胶状结构, 其细胞外基质含大量蛋白聚糖、水分, 在椎体间缓解牵拉力, 起缓冲作用。另外, 细胞外基质还含有Ⅱ型胶原, 使椎间盘具有机械强度和弹性。

纤维环由同心圆排列的片状纤维层堆积组成, 环内部是纤维软骨细胞产生的Ⅱ型胶原, 外部为成纤维细胞样细胞产生的Ⅰ型胶原^[7]。纤维层之间通过弹性纤维、Ⅰ型胶原、Ⅳ型胶原和丰富的蛋白聚糖组成的横桥连接, 可在有限范围内相对滑动^[8]。其中, 弹性纤维能够减少片状纤维层间的相对膨胀, 降低径向拉伸的延展性, 增加周向剪切的剪切模量^[9]。片状纤维层向垂直轴倾斜而产生的夹角能够使纤维环在外力作用下具有各向异性^[10], 帮助脊柱完成屈伸和侧屈等动作。

2 人与其他动物的椎间盘结构差异

2.1 椎间盘的高度

椎间盘的厚薄或高度决定了脊柱活动的范围。根据 Pfirrmann 分级, 人类腰椎间盘高度与椎间盘退变程度之间呈负相关, 即椎间盘高度越小, 椎间盘退变程度就越高^[11]。现有研究中针对椎间盘相关解剖结构的尺寸测量手段主要是尸体标本测量、X 光片或磁共振成像测量。其中, 尸体标本的水分丢失会影响测量数据的准确性, 而 X 光片不能测量颈椎间盘的矢径和横径, 较准确的脊椎解剖结构数据来自磁共振成像。文献中可查到的椎间盘高度的测量数据多来自体成熟的

动物尸体标本。

各种动物的椎骨数量和种类不同, 椎间盘相对高度 (即椎间盘绝对高度与前一个椎体长度的比值) 存在较大差异 (表 1)。比较不同动物与人类相同部位椎间盘相对高度的相似度, 发现: 与人类颈椎 C3~C7 最接近的是大鼠 (C3~C4, 0.32~0.30=0.02; C4~C5, 0.29~0.28=0.01; C6~C7, 0.23~0.22=0.01); 与人类颈椎 C5 至胸椎 T1 最接近的是袋鼠 (C5~C6, 0.25~0.25=0; C6~C7, 0.24~0.23=0.01; C7~T1, 0.27~0.26=0.01); 猪 (C5~C6, 0.25~0.23=0.02) 和绵羊 (C6~C7, 0.23~0.21=0.02) 均各只在一处椎间盘与人类略为接近; 之后, 直到胸椎 T12 和 T13, 只有袋鼠 (0.26) 略与人类 (0.29) 接近 (0.29~0.26=0.03)。

人类由于直立行走, 颈椎间盘高度随着年龄增加会出现先增高再降低的趋势, 在 39~48 岁时该数值最大。这是由于人类幼龄时颈椎骨骼还未完全定型, 尚能生长, 随着年龄增长, 椎间盘逐渐增大; 超过一定年龄后, 颈椎由于保持固定姿势而长期受压, 椎间盘内部分软组织出现退化、水分流失, 椎间盘高度明显降低^[21]。

2.2 椎间盘几何形状

不同动物的椎间盘形状不同, 与受力时抵抗弹性变形的能力有关, 常用于脊柱侧弯病变模型^[22]。通过测量椎间盘高度与横径的比值、椎间盘纵向宽度与横径宽度的比值、髓核面积占椎间盘总面积的比例等参数, 最终得出兔、大鼠和小鼠的不同部位的椎间盘参数与人类腰椎间盘参数的平均偏差值, 数值大小代表着与人类腰椎间盘几何形态差异的程度。其中, 小鼠的腰椎间盘与人类腰椎间盘的几何形状最为相似 (与人类参数的平均偏差为 12%), 大鼠的尾椎间盘几何形状与人类腰椎间盘几何形状差异最大 (与人类参数的平均偏差为 46%) (表 2)^[23]。

2.3 腰椎间盘软骨终板特征

文献检索人类与猪、兔及大鼠等实验动物 L1~L7 部分腰椎间盘软骨终板的特征^[24], 相关数据整理成表 3。通过对比腰椎间盘中心区和边缘区的软骨终板的厚度、细胞密度、胶原蛋白分布特征和胶原纤维直径等参数可见, 人类软骨终板最厚, 细胞密度最小^[25], 胶原纤维平行排列, 间隙小于其他动物, 而胶原纤维直径与其他动物差异不大。终板的厚度明显可能与成年人类不存在生长板, 软骨终板钙化成骨性终板的特点有关。

表1 人与其他动物颈胸腰各段的椎间盘相对高度值的比较

Table 1 Comparison of relative height values of intervertebral discs in the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar segments between humans and other animals

部位 Level	人 ^[12-14] (n=20 ~ 615) Human	袋鼠 ^[15] (n=8) Kangaroo	绵羊 ^[16] (n=7 ~ 14) Sheep	猪 ^[17-18] (n=10) Pig	大鼠 ^[19-20] (n=5 ~ 19) Rat
C2 ~ C3	0.29	-	0.12	-	-
C3 ~ C4	0.30	-	0.15	0.24	0.32
C4 ~ C5	0.29	0.21	0.16	0.25	0.28
C5 ~ C6	0.25	0.25	0.17	0.23	0.21
C6 ~ C7	0.23	0.24	0.21	0.20	0.22
C7 ~ T1	0.26	0.27	0.20	0.14	0.51
T1 ~ T2	0.31	0.19	0.19	0.11	-
T2 ~ T3	0.30	0.14	0.13	0.14	-
T3 ~ T4	0.22	0.16	0.11	0.13	-
T4 ~ T5	0.21	0.15	0.11	0.13	-
T5 ~ T6	0.19	0.11	0.10	0.12	-
T6 ~ T7	0.22	0.11	0.11	0.10	-
T7 ~ T8	0.26	0.13	0.11	0.11	-
T8 ~ T9	0.25	0.14	0.11	0.11	-
T9 ~ T10	0.31	0.15	0.01	0.09	-
T10 ~ T11	0.28	0.18	0.11	0.11	-
T11 ~ T12	0.37	0.22	0.11	0.09	-
T12 ~ T13	0.29	0.26	0.12	0.11	-
T13 ~ T14/L1	/	0.28	0.13	0.10	-
T14 ~ T15	/	/	/	0.12	/
T15 ~ L1	/	/	/	0.12	/
L1 ~ L2	0.41	0.27	0.13	0.11	0.17
L2 ~ L3	0.43	0.25	0.12	0.12	0.17
L3 ~ L4	0.49	0.23	0.12	0.11	0.17
L4 ~ L5	0.60	0.24	0.11	0.11	0.19
L5 ~ L6	0.61	0.26	0.11	0.12	0.16
L6 ~ L7/S1	/	0.41	0.11	0.12	/
L7 ~ S1	/	/	-	/	/

注：表格中数据均取自前侧椎间盘高度测量值和前侧/腹侧椎体长度。C，颈椎；T，胸椎；L，腰椎；S，骶椎。“-”代表无数据；“/”代表无此结构。加粗黑体字表示与人类对应部位的数值最接近。

Note: All the data were obtained from measurements of anterior disc heights and anterior/vertebral body length. C, cervical vertebrae; T, thoracic vertebrae; L, lumbar vertebrae; S, sacral vertebrae. "-" indicates no data; "/" indicates the absence of this structure. Bold font indicates values closest to corresponding human index.

2.4 椎间盘内细胞外基质组分

蛋白聚糖、胶原蛋白和水分等是构成椎间盘细胞外基质的主要成分，其含量和种类的变化会影响椎间盘的功能。基质中丰富的蛋白聚糖形成的亲水性环境使椎间盘组织能够承受高负荷压缩力，产生抵抗脊柱压力的支持力，如果这一环境发生变化会导致椎间盘机械性能降低^[26]。胶原纤维的类型和含量显著影响椎间盘的极限拉伸能力，胶原纤维排列的方向与椎间盘整体的抗破裂能力相关^[27]。从猪、山羊、绵羊、兔、

大鼠与人类腰椎间盘的胶原蛋白、蛋白聚糖、水分含量数据^[28-29]来看，如果忽略腰椎的位置，猪的纤维层内部的胶原蛋白含量占比与人类的差异最显著；兔的胶原蛋白和蛋白聚糖含量与人类的接近；猪、绵羊、兔、大鼠髓核的蛋白聚糖含量占比与人类的相似（表4）。人与猪、绵羊的腰椎、大鼠的尾椎的纤维环内外层的含水量具有差异。与人类相比，猪、绵羊、兔、大鼠的髓核中含水量均无差异。因此，在研究髓核的抗压能力时可选择的动物模型范围较广泛。

表2 人与其他动物腰椎间盘几何形状对比

Table 2 Comparison of lumbar intervertebral disc morphology between humans and other animals

物种 Species	部位 Level	高度/横向宽度 Height/ lateral width	纵向宽度/横向宽度 Anteroposterior width/ lateral width	髓核面积/椎间盘面积 Nucleus pulposus area/ disc area	与人类参数的平均偏差/% Average deviation from human parameters/%
人类 (n=3) Human	L4 ~ L5	0.20	0.67	0.28	-
兔 (n=3) Rabbit	L4 ~ L5	0.11	0.52	0.25	26.00
大鼠 (n=3) Rat	L4 ~ L5	0.16	0.75	0.25	15.00
小鼠 (n=3) Mouse	L3 ~ L4	0.17	0.67	0.18	12.00
大鼠 (n=3) Rat	CA10 ~ CA11	0.29	1.07	0.37	46.00
小鼠 (n=3) Mouse	CA9 ~ CA10	0.20	1.08	0.30	18.00

注：L，腰椎；CA，尾椎。本表数据来源于参考文献^[23]。
Note: L, lumbar vetebra; CA, caudal vertebra. The data in the table were compiled from the reference^[23].

表3 人与其他动物的部分腰椎间盘软骨终板特征比较

Table 3 Comparison of characteristics of partial lumbar intervertebral disc cartilage endplates between humans and other animals

($\bar{x} \pm s$)

物种 Species	部位 Level	中心区 Central area				边缘区 Edge area			
		厚度/mm Thickness/ mm	细胞密度/mm ² Cellular density/ mm ²	胶原分布 特征 Collagen distribution feature	胶原纤维直 径/nm Collagen fiber diameter/ nm	厚度/mm Thickness/ mm	细胞密度/ mm ² Cellular density/ mm ²	胶原分布特 征 Collagen distribution feature	胶原纤维直 径/nm Collagen fiber diameter/ nm
人类 (n=5) Human	L1 ~ L5	855.58±24.37**	259.00±31.00**	平行排列， 间隙较小	57.18±17.11	938.31±108.44	203.00±36.00	平行排列， 间隙较小	67.58±30.48
猪 (n=8) Pig	L2 ~ L6	304.80±17.47**	605.00±132.00**	相互缠绕， 间隙较大	57.53±24.10*	279.24±27.72	409.00±67.00	平行排列， 间隙较大	63.46±19.05
兔 (n=8) Rabbit	L3 ~ L7	69.41±9.79	991.00±200.00	聚集成束并 发生交联	60.83±18.64**	73.81±11.27	868.00±192.00	聚集成束并 发生交联	77.06±21.92
大鼠 (n=8) Rat	L2 ~ L5	288.96±49.00**	603.00±93.00**	网状交织	45.06±8.98**	209.10±18.16	762.00±81.00	网状交织	107.25±42.74

注：每个物种的软骨终板中心和边缘区域参数比较，* $P<0.05$ ，** $P<0.01$ 。本表数据来源于参考文献^[24]。
Note: Comparison of parameters in the central and peripheral regions of cartilaginous endplate of each species, * $P<0.05$; ** $P<0.01$. The data in the table were compiled from the reference^[24].

3 人与其他动物的椎间盘退变表现差异

3.1 椎间盘退变的病变部位

不同物种之间的椎间盘退变表现出不同的临床症状。人类椎间盘退变引发的椎间盘突出常发生于颈部和腰部；胸椎间盘突出症较罕见，发病率仅为1/10⁶^[30]。而犬的椎间盘突出常发于胸腰脊柱交界处^[31]。人类退变椎间盘的前后部位病变程度较均一，而恒河猴在脊柱前缘出现的骨赘增生和退变更严重^[32]。

3.2 椎间盘退变中软骨终板的变化

人类与其他动物椎间盘退变的组织学变化基本一致，例如软骨终板的厚度、轴向面积和横向宽度减少^[33]。细胞外基质中蛋白聚糖含量降低，胶原蛋白含量增高，水合作用降低。椎间盘退变前期的软骨终板中细胞密度降低，退变后期细胞密度增加，椎间盘退变期间的基质金属蛋白酶（matrix metalloproteinase, MMP）-1、MMP-3、MMP-10、肿瘤坏死因子（tumor necrosis factor, TNF）-α、白细胞介素（interleukin, IL）-6等细胞因子表达上调^[34]。人类的椎间盘退变表现也具

表4 人与其他动物椎间盘中胶原蛋白、蛋白聚糖、水分含量的比较

Table 4 Comparison of collagen, glycosaminoglycan, and water content in intervertebral discs between humans and other animals

($\bar{x} \pm s$)

物种 Species	部位 Level	胶原蛋白占比/($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{mg}^{-1}$) Collagen content /($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{mg}^{-1}$)			蛋白聚糖占比/($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{mg}^{-1}$) GAG content/($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{mg}^{-1}$)			含水量/% Water content/%		
		髓核 Nucleus pulposus	纤维环内部 Inner annulus fibrosus	纤维环外部 Outer annulus fibrosus	髓核 Nucleus pulposus	纤维环内部 Inner annulus fibrosus	纤维环外部 Outer annulus fibrosus	髓核 Nucleus pulposus	纤维环内部 Inner annulus fibrosus	纤维环外部 Outer annulus fibrosus
人类($n=3$) Human	L3 ~ L4	15.6 $\pm$ 4.0	47.9 $\pm$ 3.0	102.6 $\pm$ 18.9	-	-	-	-	-	-
	L4 ~ L5	-	-	-	466.0 $\pm$ 205.0	377.0 $\pm$ 185.0	161.0 $\pm$ 31.9	81.0 $\pm$ 3.0	80.0 $\pm$ 2.0	72.0 $\pm$ 3.0
猪($n=5$) Pig	L1 ~ L2	5.8 $\pm$ 2.9	108.7 $\pm$ 6.4***	122.4 $\pm$ 22.8	379.0 $\pm$ 160.0	150.0 $\pm$ 19.7*	71.8 $\pm$ 13.5	83.0 $\pm$ 2.0	69.0 $\pm$ 3.0*	59.0 $\pm$ 2.0*
山羊($n=5$) Goat	L4 ~ L5	18.5 $\pm$ 5.8	26.4 $\pm$ 15.7	52.7 $\pm$ 13.9*	-	-	-	-	-	-
绵羊($n=5$) Sheep	L3 ~ L4	19.2 $\pm$ 10.6	66.8 $\pm$ 11.1	106.9 $\pm$ 18.4	547.0 $\pm$ 69.5	260.0 $\pm$ 55.5*	122.0 $\pm$ 32.6	75.0 $\pm$ 3.0	66.0 $\pm$ 3.0*	57.0 $\pm$ 3.0*
兔($n=5$) Rabbit	L4 ~ L5	-	34.0 $\pm$ 17.2	77.9 $\pm$ 19.2	579.0 $\pm$ 158.0	372.0 $\pm$ 132.0	160.0 $\pm$ 102.0	82.0 $\pm$ 5.0	73.0 $\pm$ 5.0	62.0 $\pm$ 9.0*
大鼠($n=5$) Rat	L3 ~ L4	-	-	-	384.0 $\pm$ 108.0	165.0 $\pm$ 27.9*	47.1 $\pm$ 10.9*	82.0 $\pm$ 9.0	71.0 $\pm$ 9.0*	65.0 $\pm$ 3.0

注：与人类参数比较，* $P<0.05$ ，*** $P<0.001$ ；“-”代表无数据。本表数据来源于参考文献^[28-29]。

Note: Comparison with human parameters, * $P<0.05$, *** $P<0.001$; "-" indicates no data. The data in the table were compiled from the references^[28-29].

有特异性，人类腰椎间盘的软骨终板有骨性终板和软骨终板两层结构，双层终板的孔隙比单层终板多，更薄，髓核中的蛋白聚糖含量更高，有生物力学优势，营养容易平衡^[35]。小鼠的腰椎间盘只有一层软骨，而尾椎间盘有两层，多了一层钙化软骨^[36]，钙化软骨会阻碍营养的扩散^[37]。在相同的使用时间（物种寿命）内，人类腰椎间盘的病变程度低于小鼠，退变软骨终板的孔隙数量增加，其内部存在的毛细血管数量减少^[38-39]。

3.3 椎间盘退变中髓核的变化

随着年龄的增长，人类髓核中的软骨样细胞取代脊索细胞，脊索细胞最终耗尽^[40]。牛腰椎间盘的脊索细胞类似于人类，最终也会消失。大鼠、兔的腰椎间盘在退变过程中仍存在脊索细胞^[41]，同时伴随髓核纤维化，胶原蛋白含量减少，Ⅱ型胶原被Ⅰ型胶原替代，髓核与纤维环之间的界限模糊^[42]。在犬椎间盘退变中，髓核发生软骨样化生，未见纤维变性^[43]，胶原蛋白种类和含量有无变化尚不清楚。

3.4 椎间盘退变中纤维环的变化

椎间盘纤维环中的血管在胎儿发育过程中深入纤维环内，在出生后随生长过程逐渐消退，在老年后的

椎间盘退化期间血管会重新出现并伴有神经化^[44-45]。退化过程中纤维环的细胞变得更圆，结构紊乱，出现裂缝，纤维环层间黏合强度降低导致分层^[46-47]。在退变早期，纤维环细胞中所有蛋白聚糖的mRNA和蛋白质含量显著增加，而在退变严重的纤维环组织中则含量减少^[48]。退变的纤维环基质中蛋白聚糖和水分含量下降，降低了纤维环抵抗弹性的能力，但刚性增加，因此在相同的压力下退变的纤维环比健康的纤维环更容易断裂。

以上软骨终板、髓核、纤维环等结构变化的共同作用，导致了椎间盘整体高度下降，而且这些结构变化已经被证明与腰背疼痛相关^[49]。

3.5 椎间盘退变中细胞外基质的变化

一般来说，在退变的椎间盘中细胞外基质如蛋白聚糖、水分含量最终均会减少。在马的椎间盘退变研究中，髓核和纤维环的糖胺聚糖含量和水合作用却没有变化^[50]。冲刺运动不会影响幼龄动物的关节软骨中糖胺聚糖的含量，并且接受高强度跑步训练比接受低强度跑步训练的马的软骨具有更高的糖胺聚糖含量^[51]。结合饲养管理特点推测，大量的奔跑训练也许能够使马属动物的椎间盘中含水量和糖胺聚糖增加。

4 椎间盘退变研究中实验动物的选择及造模方法

目前,椎间盘退变研究中的实验动物多选择啮齿类,主要是沙鼠、小鼠和大鼠。沙鼠是一种自发性椎间盘退变的小型动物,在4月龄时开始发生椎间盘退变,能够较好地模拟人类慢性椎间盘退变的过程^[52]。另外,结节性硬化症(tuberous sclerosis complex 1, *TSC1*)基因敲除小鼠^[53]、富含半胱氨酸的分泌型酸性蛋白(secreted protein acidic and rich in cysteine, *SPARC*)基因敲除小鼠^[54]、SM/J品系小鼠^[55]、胰岛素样生长因子1受体(insulin-like growth factor 1 receptor, *IGF1R*)^{+/-}小鼠^[56]也已被证实可以作为椎间盘退变动物模型。其中,*TSC1*基因敲除小鼠的实验周期最长,在9月龄时椎间盘退变严重。而SM/J品系小鼠在4周龄时就已经开始出现椎间盘退行性变化。

椎间盘退变动物模型的造模方法包含物理造模和化学诱导。物理造模的策略主要是改变动物的生物力学:(1)切除小鼠^[57]或大鼠^[58]腰椎旁肌肉和韧带,造成腰椎不稳定,1周后可出现椎间盘退变的症状,避免了对椎间盘的直接损伤;(2)小鼠^[59]和大鼠^[60]前肢截肢,联合纤维环穿刺,模拟人类的双足站立模型,截肢的大鼠虽被迫站立,加速了颈椎的退化,但是根据三维脊柱运动模式,四足行走变成两足行走时由于双臂的摆动,腰椎的横向弯曲转换为轴向旋转^[61],因此该模型不能直接延伸成人类的情况;(3)切除大鼠臂丛神经,模拟人类直立的状态,结合轴向震动的方式造模,实验周期为11周^[62];(4)利用压缩装置对大鼠尾进行静态弯曲和压缩^[63],模拟脊柱屈曲姿势下人体的椎间盘负荷;(5)缝合两侧皮肤压缩尾椎间盘^[64],避免机械装置限制鼠尾运动的问题;(6)切除小鼠的双侧卵巢,然后联合针刺旋切髓核法^[65],其中最常见的是对大鼠进行纤维环穿刺^[66];(7)通过对兔椎体间进行融合手术的建模方法^[67]虽然解决了纤维环穿刺方法可能造成神经损伤的问题,但是仅限于对脊柱融合后邻近节段疾病的研究;(8)将兔放置于长筒中,迫使其保持直立状态,并自颈部施以轴向压力,发现内层纤维环明显增生,髓核区域缩小^[68];(9)在兔腰椎植入剪切应力的加载装置^[69],纤维环组织排列紊乱,髓核细胞明显减少。化学诱导即给椎间盘注射化学试剂,包括环亮氨酸^[70]、无水乙醇^[71]、碘乙酸钠^[72]和纤连蛋白片段^[73]等。

5 结论与展望

基于人与其他动物椎间盘的上述参数的比较结果,可知以单一参数选择椎间盘退变造模动物是不准确的。椎间盘退变模型各有千秋,需要根据研究目的来选择相近特点的动物模型。

明确人类与其他种属动物椎间盘的差异是选择动物模型时应考虑的重要因素。袋鼠、猪、大鼠的颈部椎间盘相对高度与人类的接近,说明颈椎的生理弯曲可能类似于人类。大鼠和小鼠的腰椎、小鼠的尾椎与人类腰椎间盘的几何形状最为相似。猪、山羊、绵羊、兔、大鼠与人类腰椎间盘的细胞外基质成分具有不同特点的差异性。不同动物椎间盘软骨细胞外基质中含水量与人类的差异较小。因此,在研究髓核的抗压能力时,可选择的动物模型范围较广泛。大鼠的尾椎间盘中蛋白聚糖、水分含量较人类的差异显著,在选择鼠尾作为椎间盘的代谢和生物力学研究时,要着重注意鼠尾椎间盘与人类腰椎间盘的差异性。在检索不同物种的椎间盘成分含量的研究中发现,目前尚缺乏小鼠的相关数据,未来可考虑对比研究小鼠的椎间盘成分。

毋庸置疑,四足动物与直立行走的人类在运动学上有本质差异,反映在脊柱各椎骨的解剖学结构和组分上千差万别。结合动物的遗传均一性、个体重复性、经济成本,推测大鼠和小鼠的尾椎对于人类椎间盘病变研究可能更具有优势^[74]。因此,在未来开展椎间盘退变机制研究时,大鼠和小鼠的尾椎或许是可以深入探讨的切入点。

[作者贡献 Author Contribution]

张莉查找及筛选相关文献,撰写初稿并修改;

韩凌霄审核文稿并给予指导;

匡宇参与文稿修订,给予修改意见。

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所有作者均声明本文不存在利益冲突。

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