

虫草素对RSL3诱导肝癌HepG2细胞铁死亡的增强作用及其机制

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[摘要] **目的:** 探讨虫草素对铁死亡诱导剂RSL3诱导肝癌HepG2细胞铁死亡的增强作用, 并阐明其潜在的作用机制。**方法:** HepG2细胞分为对照组, RSL3组, 低、中和高剂量虫草素组, RSL3组+低、中和高剂量虫草素组, RSL3+虫草素(中剂量)+铁死亡抑制剂Ferrostatin-1 (Fer-1)组和RSL3+虫草素(中剂量)+铁死亡抑制剂Liproxstatin-1 (Lip-1)组。采用0、1、5、10、15和20 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3分别干预HepG2、Huh-7及HCCLM3细胞24、48以及72 h, 采用细胞计数试剂盒8 (CCK-8)法检测各细胞活性, 筛选RSL3最佳作用浓度和作用时间。分别采用0、50、100、200、400、600、800、1 000和1 200 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素干预HepG2细胞24、48及72 h, 采用CCK-8法检测细胞存活率, 计算半数抑制浓度(IC_{50})值, 筛选虫草素最佳作用浓度和作用时间。使用凋亡抑制剂Z-VAD-FMK、细胞自噬抑制剂Chloroquine (CQ)、细胞坏死性凋亡抑制剂Necrostatin-1 (Nec-1)、Fer-1、Lip-1、Deferasirox和四甲基哌啶氧化物(TEMPO)分别干预HepG2细胞, 计算HepG2细胞存活率。 $2'$, $7'$ -二氯荧光素二乙酸酯(DCFH-DA)荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中活性氧(ROS)水平, C11 BODIPY 581/591荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中脂质过氧化(LPO)水平, FeRhoNox-1荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中亚铁离子(Fe^{2+})水平, 试剂盒检测HepG2细胞中谷胱甘肽(GSH)和丙二醛(MDA)水平, Western blotting法检测各组HepG2细胞中铁死亡相关蛋白、核转录因子E2相关因子2 (Nrf2)和血红素氧合酶1 (HO-1)蛋白表达水平, 透射电镜观察各组HepG2细胞超微结构形态表现。**结果:** CCK-8法, 0.56 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3干预细胞时, 3种细胞活性差异较明显。与0 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3组比较, 6.4和12.8 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3组3种细胞存活率均明显降低($P<0.05$)。HepG2细胞的 IC_{50} 值最大, 因此选择HepG2细胞进行后续实验。与0 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素组比较, 200、400、600、800、1 000和2 000 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素组HepG2细胞存活率均明显降低($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。选择0.5倍 IC_{50} 值(267.9 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、1倍 IC_{50} 值(535.8 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)和1.5倍 IC_{50} 值(803.7 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)分别作为低、中及高剂量虫草素组, 干预时间为24 h。与对照组比较, 低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞存活率均明显降低($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。与低、中和高剂量虫草素组比较, Z-VAD-FMK+低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞存活率均明显升高($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$), Fer-1+中和高剂量虫草素组及Lip-1+低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞存活率均明显升高($P<0.05$)。与对照组比较, RSL3组、RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3+虫草素+Fer-1组和RSL3+虫草素+Lip-1组HepG2细胞存活率均明显降低($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞存活率均明显降低($P<0.05$)。DCFH-DA荧光探针法, 与对照组比较, 中和高剂

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量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组细胞中ROS水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中ROS水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。C11 BODIPY 581/591 荧光探针法, 与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中LPO水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中LPO水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。FeRhoNox-1 荧光探针法, 与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。与对照组比较, 高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中MAD水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中MAD水平均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中GSH水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中GSH水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$)。与对照组比较, 低和中和剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞超微结构变化不明显, 高剂量虫草素组部分细胞线粒体嵴减少, 线粒体膜可见轻度肿胀和膜密度增高, 线粒体膜中内膜结构轻度扭曲, RSL3组和RSL3+低、中及高剂量虫草素组均表现出铁死亡细胞超微结构变化; 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组表现为细胞线粒体膜破裂并伴有膜密度增高, 线粒体膜中的内膜结构异常扭曲或扩张, 线粒体嵴减少甚至消失。Western blotting法, 与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中FTH1和GPX4蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$), Nrf2和HO-1蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$), RSL3组和RSL3+虫草素+Fer-1组 HepG2 细胞中GPX4蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$); 与RSL3组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中GPX4蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$)。**结论:** 虫草素具有明显增强RSL3诱导肝癌HepG2细胞铁死亡的作用, 并能够下调HepG2细胞中Nrf2和HO-1蛋白表达。

[关键词] 肝细胞癌; 虫草素; 铁死亡; RSL3; 核因子E2相关因子2/血红素氧合酶1信号通路
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Improvement effect of cordycepin on ferroptosis in HepG2 cells induced by RSL3 and its mechanism

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ABSTRACT Objective: To discuss the enhancing effect of cordycepin on ferroptosis inducer RSL3-induced ferroptosis in the hepatocellular carcinoma HepG2 cells, and to clarify its potential mechanism. **Methods:** The HepG2 cells were divided into control group, RSL3 group, low, medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3+low, medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3+medium-dose cordycepin+ferroptosis inhibitor Ferrostatin-1 (Fer-1) group, and RSL3+medium-dose cordycepin+ferroptosis inhibitor Liproxstatin-1 (Lip-1) group. The HepG2, Huh-7 and HCCLM3 cells were treated with 0, 1, 5, 10, 15 and 20 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 for 24, 48 and 72 h, respectively. Cell counting kit-8 (CCK-8) method was used to detect cell viability and determine the optimal concentration and treatment time of RSL3. The HepG2 cells were treated with 0, 50, 100, 200, 400, 600, 800, 1 000, and 1 200 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ cordycepin for 24, 48 and 72 h, respectively. CCK-8 method was used to detect the survival rate of the

cells and the half maximal inhibitory concentration (IC_{50}) was calculated to determine the optimal concentration and treatment time of cordycepin; the apoptosis inhibitor Z-VAD-FMK, autophagy inhibitor Chloroquine (CQ), necroptosis inhibitor Necrostatin-1 (Nec-1), Fer-1, Lip-1, Deferasirox and 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidinoxy (TEMPO) were used to treat HepG2 cells, and the survival rate of the cells was calculated; 2',7'-Dichlorodihydrofluorescein diacetate (DCFH-DA) fluorescence probe was used to detect reactive oxygen species (ROS) levels in the HepG2 cells in various groups; C11 BODIPY 581/591 fluorescence probe was used to detect lipid peroxidation (LPO) levels in the HepG2 cells in various groups; FeRhNox-1 fluorescent probe was used to detect ferrous ion (Fe^{2+}) levels in the HepG2 cells in various groups; kits were used to detect glutathione (GSH) and malondialdehyde (MDA) levels in the HepG2 cells; Western blotting method was used to detect the expression levels of ferroptosis-related proteins, nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2 (Nrf2) and heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1) proteins in the HepG2 cells in various groups; transmission electron microscope was used to observe the ultrastructural morphology of the HepG2 cells in various groups. **Results:** The CCK-8 results showed that when the cells were treated with $0.56 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3, the viabilities of the three cell types differed significantly. Compared with $0 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 group, the survival rates of the cells in 6.4 and $12.8 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 groups were significantly decreased ($P<0.05$). The HepG2 cells had the highest IC_{50} value and were selected for subsequent experiments. Compared with $0 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ cordycepin group, the survival rates of the HepG2 cells in 200, 400, 600, 800, 1 000, and 2 000 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). $0.5\times IC_{50}$ ($267.9 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$), $1\times IC_{50}$ ($535.8 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$) and $1.5\times IC_{50}$ ($803.7 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$) were selected as low, medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, respectively, with an intervention time of 24 h. Compared with control group, the survival rates of the HepG2 cells in low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P<0.05$). Compared with low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups, the survival rates of the HepG2 cells in Z-VAD-FMK+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.01$), and those in Fer-1+medium and high doses of cordycepin groups and Lip-1+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$). Compared with control group, the survival rates of the HepG2 cells in RSL3 group, RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group and RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group were significantly decreased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). Compared with RSL3 group, the survival rates of the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P<0.05$). The DCFH-DA results showed that compared with control group, the ROS levels in the cells in medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). The C11 BODIPY 581/591 results showed that compared with control group, the LPO levels in the HepG2 cells in medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). Compared with RSL3 group, the LPO levels in the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). The FeRhNox-1 results showed that compared with control group, the Fe^{2+} levels in the HepG2 cells in medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). Compared with RSL3 group, the Fe^{2+} levels in the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). Compared with control group, the MDA levels in the HepG2 cells in high doses of cordycepin group, RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P<0.05$ or $P<0.01$). Compared with RSL3 group, the MDA levels in the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses

of cordycepin groups were significantly increased ($P < 0.05$ or $P < 0.01$). Compared with control group, the GSH levels in the HepG2 cells in medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$ or $P < 0.01$). Compared with RSL3 group, the GSH levels in the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$ or $P < 0.01$). Compared with control group, the ultrastructure of the HepG2 cells in low and medium doses of cordycepin groups showed no significant changes, while the cells in high dose of cordycepin group exhibited reduced mitochondrial cristae, mild swelling and increased membrane density, with slightly distorted inner membrane structure. The cells in RSL3 group and RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups all showed ultrastructural changes characteristic of ferroptosis. Compared with RSL3 group, the cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups exhibited ruptured mitochondrial membranes with increased membrane density, abnormally twisted or expanded inner membrane structures, and reduced or even disappeared mitochondrial cristae. The Western blotting results showed that compared with control group, the expression levels of FTH1 and GPX4 proteins in the HepG2 cells in medium and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$ or $P < 0.01$), while the expression levels of Nrf2 and HO-1 proteins were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$ or $P < 0.01$). Compared with control group, the expression levels of GPX4 protein in the HepG2 cells in low, medium and high doses of cordycepin groups, RSL3 group, and RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$). Compared with RSL3 group, the expression levels of GPX4 protein in the HepG2 cells in RSL3+low, medium, and high doses of cordycepin groups were significantly decreased ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Cordycepin can significantly enhance RSL3-induced ferroptosis in the hepatocellular carcinoma HepG2 cells and down-regulate the expression of Nrf2 and HO-1 proteins in the HepG2 cells.

KEYWORDS Hepatocellular carcinoma; Cordycepin; Ferroptosis; RSL3; Nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2/heme oxygenase-1 signaling pathway

原发性肝癌是一种临床上常见的恶性肿瘤,其主要类型为肝细胞癌(hepatocellular carcinoma, HCC),占全部患者的90%以上^[1-2]。肝癌具有恶性程度高、易转移和治疗后易复发的特点^[3]。尽管目前已有很多治疗手段,如手术切除、放疗和化疗等,但HCC患者的预后仍然较差^[4-5]。以索拉菲尼为代表的靶向治疗药物,以程序性死亡受体1(programmed cell death protein-1, PD-1)及细胞程序性死亡配体1(programmed cell death-ligand 1, PD-L1)为靶点的免疫调节治疗为HCC患者带来了新的希望^[6]。但靶向免疫治疗的有限性仅能够使不到三分之一的患者从中受益,且中位生存期仅可延长3个月左右^[7]。促使研究者需寻找新的、高效且不良反应小的肝癌治疗药物以提高其临床疗效。

铁死亡是一种铁依赖性磷脂过氧化作用驱动的新型细胞程序性死亡方式,已被证实在肝癌的发生发展中发挥重要的调控作用^[8]。癌细胞发生铁死亡的2个中心事件即细胞内铁积累和脂质过氧化(lipid peroxidation, LPO)。包括经典[半胱氨酸剥夺诱导途径、谷胱甘肽过氧化物酶4

(glutathione peroxidase 4, GPX4)抑制途径和甲氧戊酸途径]和非经典途径(脂代谢途径、铁代谢途径和氧化应激途径)在内的众多调节通路,最终能增加铁浓度和活性氧(reactive oxygen species, ROS),进而诱发铁死亡。核因子E2相关因子2(nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2, Nrf2)/血红素氧合酶1(heme oxygenase-1, HO-1)抗氧化轴在抗氧化应激中起关键作用。Nrf2激活后,随着其下游靶点蛋白HO-1、膜铁转运蛋白40A1(solute carrier family 40 member 1, SLC40A1)、GPX4和铁蛋白重链1(ferritin heavy polypeptide 1, FTH1)等上调可以减少氧化应激,从而保护线粒体完整性。在病理条件下细胞内会发生过度氧化应激,进而发生铁死亡。因此,抑制Nrf2/HO-1抗氧化通路的激活可能会导致氧化应激和细胞内铁积累增加,并诱导铁死亡。已有研究^[9]证实:可以通过药物调节Nrf2/HO-1/GPX4抗氧化机制,诱导HCC细胞铁凋亡,从而抑制HCC的发生发展。

虫草素可通过各种分子机制来抑制肝癌生长^[10-13]。研究^[14]显示:虫草素能通过Nrf2/HO-1/

核因子 κ B (nuclear factor- κ B, NF- κ B) 通路抑制体外肝癌细胞生长、迁移和侵袭。但虫草素对HCC恶性进展的抑制作用是否与铁死亡有关尚未完全阐明。本研究探讨虫草素抑制肝癌进展与铁死亡的关系,通过Nrf2/HO-1抗氧化轴分析虫草素促进肝癌铁死亡的作用机制,以期为肝癌的治疗和新药的开发提供理论依据。

1 材料与方法

1.1 细胞、主要试剂和仪器 人肝癌HepG2细胞和Huh-7细胞(武汉普诺赛生命科技有限公司),人肝癌HCCLM3细胞(苏州海星生物科技有限公司)。虫草素(纯度 $>98\%$,上海源叶生物科技有限公司),DMEM培养基和胎牛血清(武汉普诺赛生命科技有限公司),铁死亡抑制剂Ferrostatin-1(Fer-1)、Liproxstatin-1(Lip-1)、四甲基哌啶氧化物(2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidinoxy,TEMPO)、Deferasirox和铁死亡诱导剂(RSL3)(美国GlpBio公司),BCA蛋白定量C11-BODIPY试剂盒(美国GlpBio公司),谷胱甘肽(glutathione,GSH)检测试剂盒、丙二醛(malondialdehyde,MDA)检测试剂盒和细胞计数试剂盒8(cell counting kit-8,CCK-8)(北京索莱宝科技有限公司),FeRhoNox-1试剂盒(上海懋康生物科技有限公司),2',7'-二氯荧光素二乙酸酯(2',7'-dichlorofluorescein diacetate,DCFH-DA)荧光探针(上海碧云天生物技术股份有限公司),兔抗GPX4、兔抗FTH1、兔抗溶质载体家族7成员11(solute carrier family 7 member 11,SLC7A11)、HO-1、SCL40A1、Nrf2多克隆抗体和甘油醛-3-磷酸脱氢酶(glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase,GAPDH)多克隆抗体(美国ABclonal公司)。CO₂细胞培养箱(型号:CLM-170B-8-NF,太仓艺斯高医疗器械科技有限公司),多模式酶标仪(型号:Infinite200PRO,瑞士Tecan公司),流式细胞仪(型号:CytoFlex,美国Beckman Coulter公司),凝胶成像分析系统(型号:Universal Hood II,美国Bio-Rad公司),共聚焦显微镜(型号:ZVP12-10,北京卓立汉光仪器有限公司),透射电子显微镜(型号:JEM 1400,上海百贺仪器科技有限公司)。

1.2 细胞培养及分组 Huh-7和HepG2细胞于含10%胎牛血清及1%双抗的DMEM培养液中培养,人肝癌HCCLM3细胞于TCH-G456培养基中培养。将HepG2细胞分为对照组、RSL3组、低、中和高

剂量虫草素组、RSL3组+低、中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3+虫草素(中剂量)+Fer-1组和RSL3+虫草素(中剂量)+Lip-1组。

1.3 CCK-8法检测各组肝癌细胞存活率 取处于对数生长期且生长状态良好的细胞,将细胞以每孔 1×10^5 个细胞的密度接种于96孔细胞培养板中,置于37℃培养箱中继续培养。待细胞贴壁后,采用0、1、5、10、15和20 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3分别干预HepG2、Huh-7及HCCLM3细胞24、48和72 h,采用CCK-8法检测各组细胞活性,筛选RSL3最佳作用浓度和作用时间。分别采用0、50、100、200、400、600、800、1000和1200 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素干预HepG2细胞24、48及72 h,采用CCK-8法检测细胞存活率,计算半数抑制浓度(half maximal inhibitory concentration, IC₅₀)值,筛选虫草素最佳作用浓度和作用时间。使用凋亡抑制剂Z-VAD-FMK(10 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、细胞自噬抑制剂Chloroquine(CQ,25 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、细胞坏死性凋亡抑制剂Necrostatin-1(Nec-1,10 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、Fer-1(10 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、Lip-1(0.4 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)、Deferasirox(18 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)和TEMPO(10 $\mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$)分别干预HepG2细胞,计算HepG2细胞存活率。各组细胞干预完成后加入10 μL CCK-8溶液,37℃孵育30 min,采用酶标仪于波长450 nm处测定吸光度(A)值,计算细胞存活率。细胞存活率=(实验组A值-空白组A值)/(对照组A值-空白组A值) $\times 100\%$ 。

1.4 DCFH-DA荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中ROS水平 将细胞以 1.6×10^5 个的密度接种于小皿中,37℃培养过夜。24 h后,弃培养液,冲洗3次后于每个共聚焦小皿中加入1 mL DCFH-DA稀释液,37℃孵育20 min,原位装载探针,无血清培养液冲洗3次,共聚焦显微镜拍照采集图像,采用Image J软件计算平均荧光强度,以平均荧光强度代表各组HepG2细胞中ROS水平。

1.5 C11 BODIPY 581/591荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中脂质过氧化(lipid peroxidation,LPO)水平 将细胞以 1×10^5 个的密度接种于共聚焦小皿中,37℃培养过夜,加入C11-BODIPY工作液,于37℃下继续孵育30 min后,共聚焦显微镜拍照,采用Image J软件计算相对荧光强度,以相对荧光强度代表各组HepG2细胞中LPO水平。

1.6 FeRhoNox-1 荧光探针法检测各组 HepG2 细胞中亚铁离子(ferrous iron, Fe^{2+})水平 将细胞以 1×10^5 个的密度接种于共聚焦小皿中, 37°C 培养过夜, 加入 FeRhoNox-1 孵育细胞, 1 h 后使用共聚焦显微镜拍照, 采用 Image J 软件计算相对荧光强度, 以相对荧光强度代表各组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平。

1.7 试剂盒检测各组 HepG2 细胞中 GSH 和 MDA 水平 将细胞以 1×10^5 个的密度接种于共聚焦小皿中, 37°C 培养过夜。收集细胞裂解液, 按照相应试剂盒说明书操作, 检测各组细胞中 GSH 和 MDA 水平。GSH 水平 ($\mu\text{g} \cdot 10^6 \text{ cell}$) = 样本浓度 ($\text{mg} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$) / 细胞数量 ($\times 10^5$), MDA 水平 ($\text{nmol} \cdot 10^4 \text{ cell}$) = $53.763 \times \Delta A / \text{细胞总数} (\times 10^4) \times \text{稀释倍数}$ 。

1.8 Western blotting 法检测各组肝癌细胞中铁死亡相关蛋白、Nrf2 和 HO-1 蛋白表达水平 RIPA 裂解细胞后采用 BCA 蛋白测定试剂盒测定蛋白浓度。SDS-PAGE 电泳分离蛋白, 将其转移至 PVDF 膜。10% 脱脂牛奶室温下孵育封闭 2 h。将 PVDF 膜与兔抗 Nrf2 单克隆抗体 (1:20 000)、HO-1/HMOX1 兔多克隆抗体 (1:20 000)、SLC7A11/xCT 兔单克隆抗体 (1:20 000)、GPX4 兔多克隆 KO 抗体 (1:20 000)、FTH1 兔单克隆抗体 (1:20 000) 和 GAPDH 一抗 (1:20 000) 共孵育, 次日与二抗 (1:2 000) 共孵育, 增强化学试剂可视化蛋白, Image J 软件分析蛋白条带灰度值, 计算目的蛋白表达水平。目的蛋白表达水平 = 目的蛋白条带灰度值 / 内参蛋白条带灰度值。

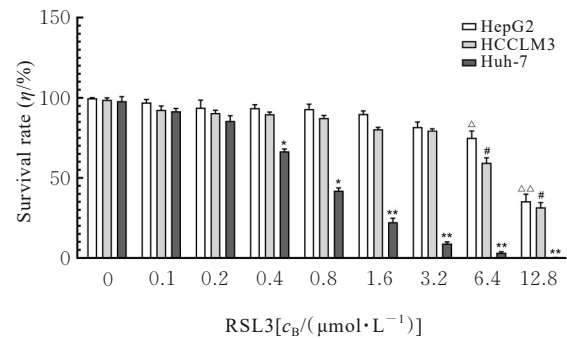
1.9 透射电镜观察各组 HepG2 细胞超微结构形态表现 细胞浸入 2.5% 戊二醛中, 室温固定 24 h 后, 浸入 1% 锇酸室温固定 2 h, 清洗。用梯度乙醇使样本脱水, 浸入到渗透剂 A 中 2 h, 再浸入渗透剂 B 中室温过夜。将样本包埋后依次放入 37°C 和 60°C 烘箱内分别烘烤 12 h。使用超薄切片机进行切片, 厚度为 60~80 nm。完成铅铀双染后采用透射电镜拍摄细胞器形态表现。

1.10 统计学分析 采用 SPSS 27.0 统计软件进行统计学分析。各组肝癌细胞存活率, HepG2 细胞中 ROS、 Fe^{2+} 、LPO、MDA 和 GSH 水平, 细胞中 SLC7A11、SCL40A1、FTH1、GPX4、Nrf2 和 HO-1 蛋白表达水平均符合正态分布, 以 $\bar{x} \pm s$ 表示, 多组间样本均数比较采用单因素方差分析, 组

间样本均数两两比较采用 LSD-*t* 检验。以 $P < 0.05$ 为差异有统计学意义。

2 结果

2.1 不同浓度 RSL3 干预后 HepG2、Huh-7 和 HCCLM3 细胞存活率 $0.56 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 干预细胞时, 3 种细胞活性差异较明显。与 $0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 组比较, 6.4 和 $12.8 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 组 3 种细胞存活率均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。RSL3 对 3 种细胞的 IC_{50} 值分别为: HepG2 细胞 $9.658 0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$, Huh-7 细胞 $0.649 6 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$, HCCLM3 细胞 $8.302 0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 。由于 HepG2 细胞的 IC_{50} 值最大, 提示其对 RSL3 的耐受性最强, 因此选择 HepG2 细胞进行后续实验。见图 1。



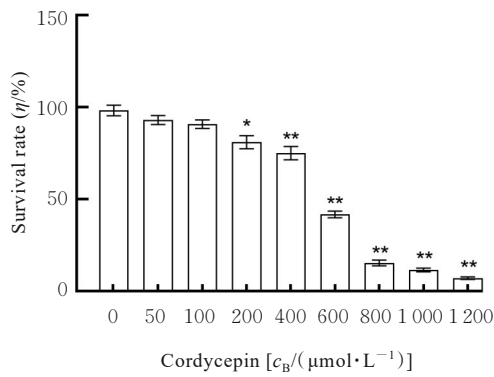
* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$ vs Huh-7 cell in $0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 group; $\Delta P < 0.05$, $\Delta\Delta P < 0.01$ vs HepG2 cell in $0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 group; # $P < 0.01$ vs HCCLM3 cell in $0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ RSL3 group.

图 1 不同浓度 RSL3 干预 HepG2、Huh-7 和 HCCLM3 细胞后细胞存活率

Fig. 1 Survival rates of HepG2, Huh-7, and HCCLM3 cells after interfered with different concentrations of RSL3

2.2 不同浓度虫草素干预后 HepG2 细胞存活率

虫草素干预 HepG2 细胞 24 h 时 IC_{50} 值为 $535.8 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$, 因此后续实验均以 24 h 为虫草素干预时间。与 $0 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素组比较, 200、400、600、800、1 000 和 2 000 $\mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$)。由于 2.0 倍 IC_{50} 值浓度的虫草素干预下, 细胞存活率较低, 无法进行后续实验, 因此选择 0.5 倍 IC_{50} 值 ($267.9 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$)、1 倍 IC_{50} 值 ($535.8 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$) 和 1.5 倍 IC_{50} 值 ($803.7 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$) 分别作为低、中及高剂量虫草素组, 干预时间为 24 h。见图 2。

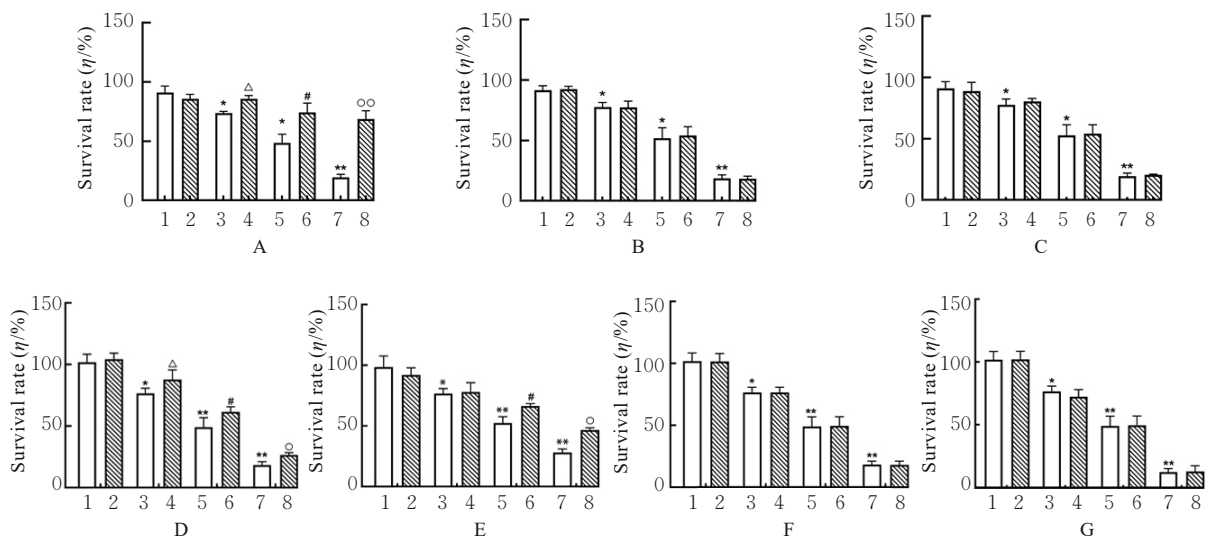


* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$ vs $0 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ cordycepin.

图2 不同浓度虫草素干预 HepG2 细胞的细胞存活率
Fig. 2 Survival rates of HepG2 cells after interfered with different concentrations of cordycepin

2.3 不同铁死亡抑制剂干预后各组 HepG2 细胞存活率

与对照组比较,低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显降低 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$);与低、中和高剂量虫草素组比较,Z-VAD-FMK+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$ 或 $P < 0.01$),Nec-1+低、中和高剂量虫草素组、CQ+低、中和高剂量虫草素组、Deferasirox+低、中和高剂量虫草素组及 TEMPO+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率差异均无统计学意义 ($P > 0.05$),Fer-1+中和高剂量虫草素组及 Lip-1+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显升高 ($P < 0.05$),Fer-1+低剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率差异无统计学意义 ($P > 0.05$)。见图 3。

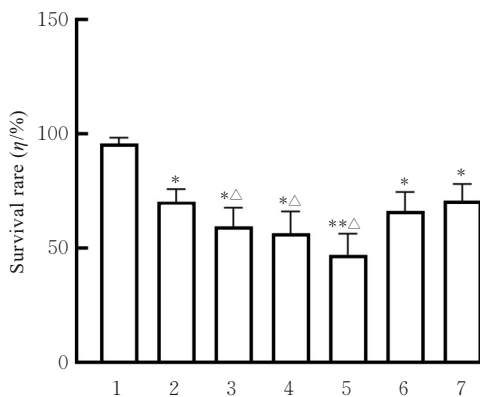


* $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$ vs control group; $\Delta P < 0.05$ vs low dose of cordycepin group; # $P < 0.05$ vs medium dose of cordycepin group; $\circ P < 0.05$, $\circ\circ P < 0.01$ vs high dose of cordycepin group. A: Z-VAD-FMK(1:Control group; 2:Z-VAD-FMK group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:Z-VAD-FMK+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:Z-VAD-FMK+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:Z-VAD-FMK+high dose of cordycepin group); B: Nec-1(1:Control group; 2:Nec-1 group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:Nec-1+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:Nec-1+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:Nec-1+high dose of cordycepin group); C: CQ(1:Control group; 2:CQ group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:CQ+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:CQ+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:CQ+high dose of cordycepin group); D: Lip-1(1:Control group; 2:Lip-1 group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:Lip-1+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:Lip-1+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:Lip-1+high dose of cordycepin group); E: Fer-1(1:Control group; 2:Fer-1 group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:Fer-1+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:Fer-1+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:Fer-1+high dose of cordycepin group); F: Deferasirox(1:Control group; 2:Deferasirox group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:Deferasirox+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:Deferasirox+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:Deferasirox+high dose of cordycepin group); G: TEMPO(1:Control group; 2:TEMPO group; 3:Low dose of cordycepin group; 4:TEMPO+low dose of cordycepin group; 5:Medium dose of cordycepin group; 6:TEMPO+medium dose of cordycepin group; 7:High dose of cordycepin group; 8:TEMPO+high dose of cordycepin group).

图3 不同浓度铁死亡抑制剂干预后各组 HepG2 细胞存活率

Fig. 3 Survival rates of HepG2 cells in various groups after interfered with different concentrations of iron death inhibitors

2.4 各组 HepG2 细胞存活率 与对照组比较, RSL3 组、RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3+虫草素+Fer-1组和RSL3+虫草素+Lip-1组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显降低 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$); 与 RSL3 组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞存活率均明显降低 ($P<0.05$)。见图 4。



1: Control group; 2: RSL3 group; 3: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 4: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 6: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 7: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\Delta P<0.05$ vs RLS3 group.

图 4 各组 HepG2 细胞存活率

Fig. 4 Survival rates of HepG2 cells in various groups

2.5 各组 HepG2 细胞中 ROS 水平 与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3 组及 RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组细胞中 ROS 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$), 低剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 ROS 水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$)。与 RLS3 组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 ROS 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。见图 5 和 6。

2.6 各组 HepG2 细胞中 LPO 水平 与对照组比较, 中及高剂量虫草素组、RSL3 组和 RSL3+低、中及高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 LPO 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$), 低剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 LPO 水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$); 与 RSL3 组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 LPO 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。见图 7 和 8。

2.7 各组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平 与对照组比较, 中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3 组及 RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$), 低剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$); 与 RSL3 组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。见图 9 和 10。

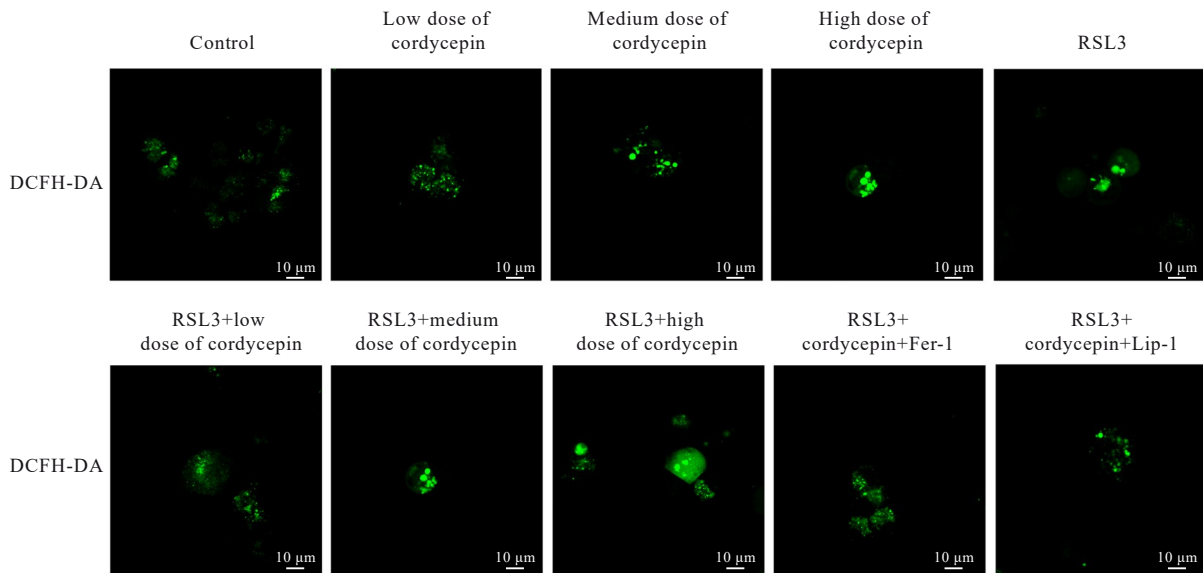
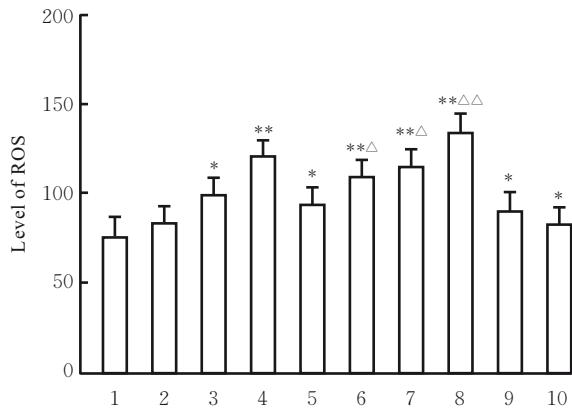


图 5 DCFH-DA 荧光探针法检测各组 HepG2 细胞中 ROS 水平

Fig. 5 Levels of ROS in HepG2 cells in various groups detected by DCFH-DA fluorescence probe method



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3 group; 6: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 7: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 8: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 9: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 10: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\triangle P<0.05$, $\triangle\triangle P<0.01$ vs RLS3 group.

图6 各组HepG2细胞中ROS水平

Fig. 6 Levels of ROS in HepG2 cells in various groups

2.8 各组HepG2细胞中MAD和GSH水平 与对照组比较,高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中及高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中MAD水平

均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$),低和中剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中MAD水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$);与RSL3组比较,RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中MAD水平均明显升高 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。见图11。

与对照组比较,中和高剂量虫草素组、RSL3组和RSL3+低、中及高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中GSH水平均明显降低 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$),低剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中GSH水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$);与RSL3组比较,RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞中GSH水平均明显降低 ($P<0.05$)。见图12。

2.9 各组HepG2细胞超微结构形态表现 与对照组比较,低和中剂量虫草素组HepG2细胞超微结构变化不明显,高剂量虫草素组部分HepG2细胞线粒体嵴减少,线粒体膜可见轻度肿胀和膜密度增高,线粒体膜中内膜结构轻度扭曲,RSL3组和RSL3+低、中及高剂量虫草素组均表现有铁死亡细胞超微结构变化;与RSL3组比较,RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组表现为细胞线粒体膜破裂并伴有膜密度增高,线粒体膜中的内膜结构异常扭曲或扩张,失去正常的圆柱形结构,线粒体嵴减少甚至消失。见图13。

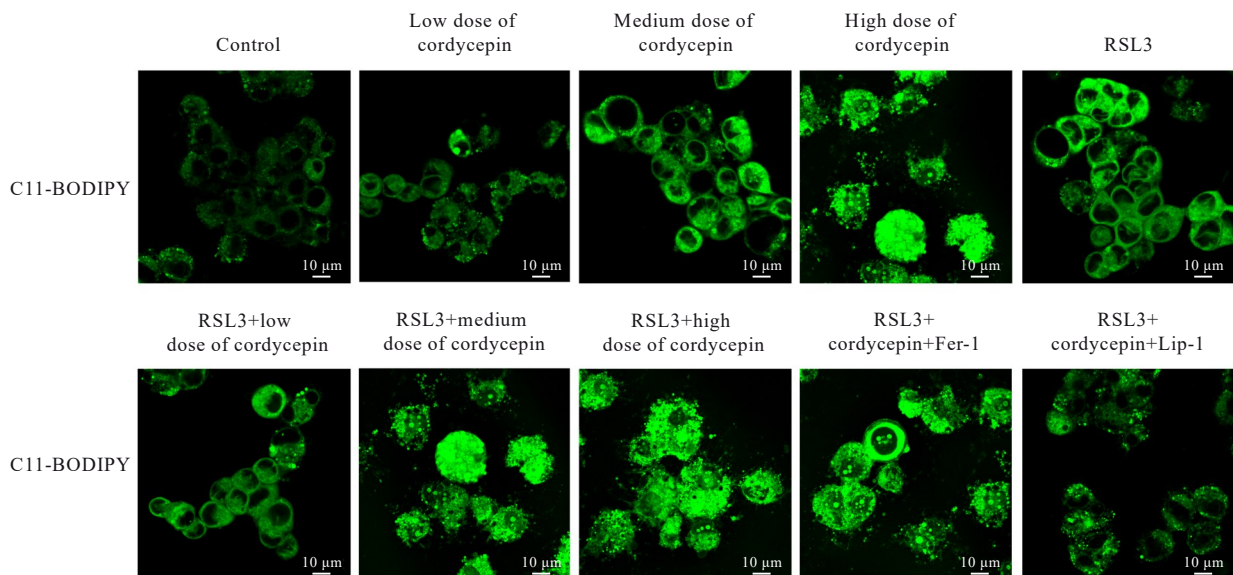
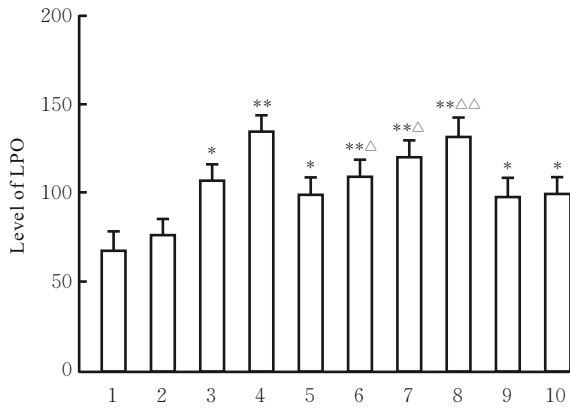


图7 C11 BODIPY 581/591 荧光探针法检测各组HepG2细胞中LPO水平

Fig. 7 Levels of LPO in HepG2 cells in various groups detected by C11 BODIPY 581/591 fluorescence probe method



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3 group; 6: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 7: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 8: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 9: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 10: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; △ $P<0.05$, △△ $P<0.01$ vs RLS3 group.

图8 各组 HepG2 细胞中 LPO 水平

Fig. 8 Levels of LPO in HepG2 cells in various groups

2.10 各组 HepG2 细胞中铁死亡相关蛋白和 Nrf2 及 HO-1 蛋白表达水平 与对照组比较, 低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 SLC7A11 和 SCL40A1 蛋白表达水平差异无统计学意义 ($P>0.05$), 中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 FTH1、GPX4、Nrf2 和 HO-1 蛋白表达水平均明显降低

($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$)。见图 14。

与对照组比较, RSL3 组、RSL3+虫草素+Fer-1 组 HepG2 细胞中 GPX4 蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P<0.05$ 或 $P<0.01$); 与 RSL3 组比较, RSL3+低、中和高剂量虫草素组 HepG2 细胞中 GPX4 蛋白表达水平均明显降低 ($P<0.05$)。见图 15。

3 讨论

DIXON 等^[15]发现: Erastin 可以促进 Ras 突变的癌细胞发生铁死亡。铁死亡诱导剂呈现出广阔的临床应用前景^[16-19]。然而, 多数铁死亡诱导剂存在毒性不良反应, 如 RSL3 系统性地靶向 GPX4 会导致肾和神经毒性, 限制其临床应用^[20-21]。因此, 寻求新的治疗药物优化铁死亡诱导剂的生物学分布和药代动力学, 同时通过提升对铁死亡靶点和机制的高选择性以提高铁死亡诱导剂的药物敏感性十分重要。

本研究结果显示: 虫草素在较高剂量时可诱导 HepG2 细胞铁死亡, 但在铁死亡诱导剂 RSL3 的基础上联用虫草素后, 即使是较低剂量虫草素的情况下, 仍可观察到 HepG2 细胞的 Fe^{2+} 水平明显升高, GSH 水平明显降低, 细胞中 ROS 和 MDA 水平明显升高, 同时下调 GPX4 的表达, 提示虫草素对铁死亡诱导剂 RSL3 产生增强作用。本研究结果显示: 虫草素干预后 Nrf2 和 HO-1 蛋白表达水平明显

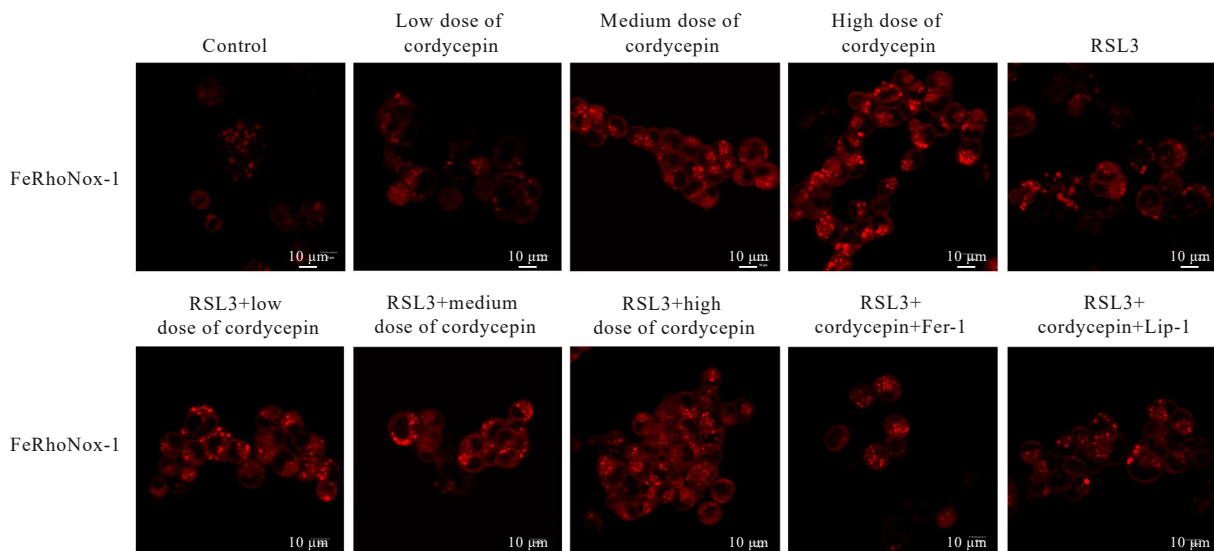
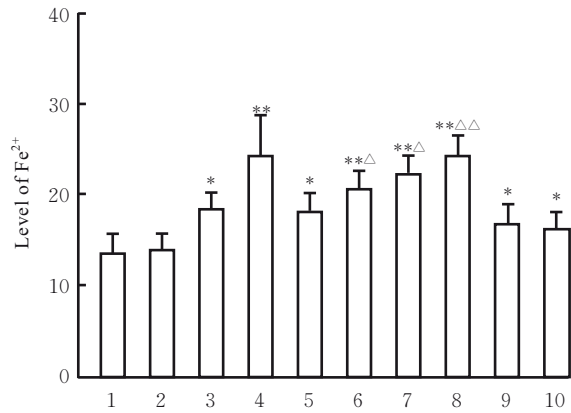


图9 C11 BODIPY 581/591 荧光探针法检测各组 HepG2 细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平

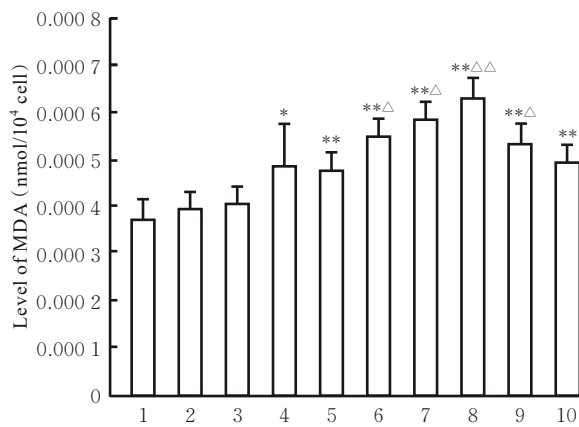
Fig. 9 Levels of Fe^{2+} in HepG2 cells in various groups detected by FeRhoNox-1 fluorescence probe method



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3 group; 6: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 7: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 8: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 9: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 10: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\Delta P<0.05$, $\Delta\Delta P<0.01$ vs RLS3 group.

图10 各组HepG2细胞中 Fe^{2+} 水平

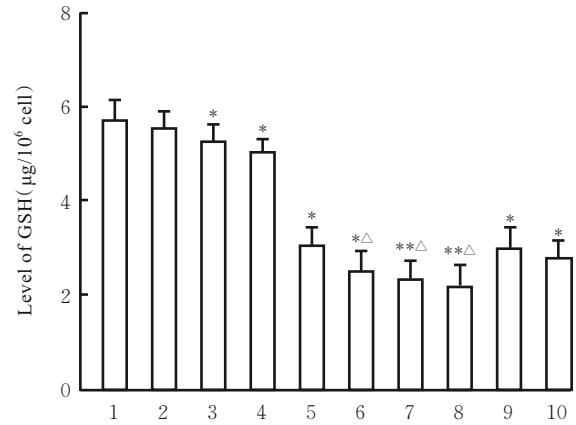
Fig. 10 Levels of Fe^{2+} in HepG2 cells in various groups



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3 group; 6: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 7: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 8: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 9: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 10: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\Delta P<0.05$, $\Delta\Delta P<0.01$ vs RLS3 group.

图11 各组HepG2细胞中MDA水平

Fig. 11 Levels of MDA in HepG2 cells in various groups



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3 group; 6: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 7: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 8: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 9: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group; 10: RSL3+cordycepin+Lip-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\Delta P<0.05$ vs RLS3 group.

图12 各组HepG2细胞中GSH水平

Fig. 12 Levels of GSH in HepG2 cells in various groups

降低, SLC7A11和SCL40A1蛋白表达水平无明显变化, 提示虫草素的抗肝癌作用可能与其通过抑制Nrf2/HO-1抗氧化轴增强RSL3诱导肝癌细胞铁死亡的能力有关, 而非经典途径中的SLC7A11和SCL40A1途径。

虫草素对铁死亡诱导剂RSL3产生增强作用的机制可能与虫草素通过ROS扩增环作为铁死亡增强剂的作用有关。虫草素的抗肿瘤作用与氧化应激或ROS水平升高有关^[22-23]。LIN等^[24]发现: 虫草素干预SCC-4肝癌细胞12h后, 可观察到线粒体功能障碍(线粒体裂变)和氧化应激。BI等^[25]通过建立转铁蛋白缀合脂质体, 将虫草素递送至肝癌细胞, 结果显示: ROS的产生增加并引起肝癌细胞线粒体跨膜去极化。而氧化应激或ROS的升高则与Nrf2/HO-1抗氧化轴密切相关^[26]。Nrf2/HO-1轴因其对抗氧化应激的关键作用而在细胞防御机制中发挥重要作用。Nrf2激活后会使其下游靶点HO-1和GPX4的上调, 进而减少氧化应激, 保护线粒体完整性。但抑制Nrf2/HO-1的激活可能导致氧化应激和细胞内铁积累增加, 并可能诱导铁死亡^[27]。Nrf2/HO-1抗氧化轴与铁死亡呈负相关关系^[29-30]。

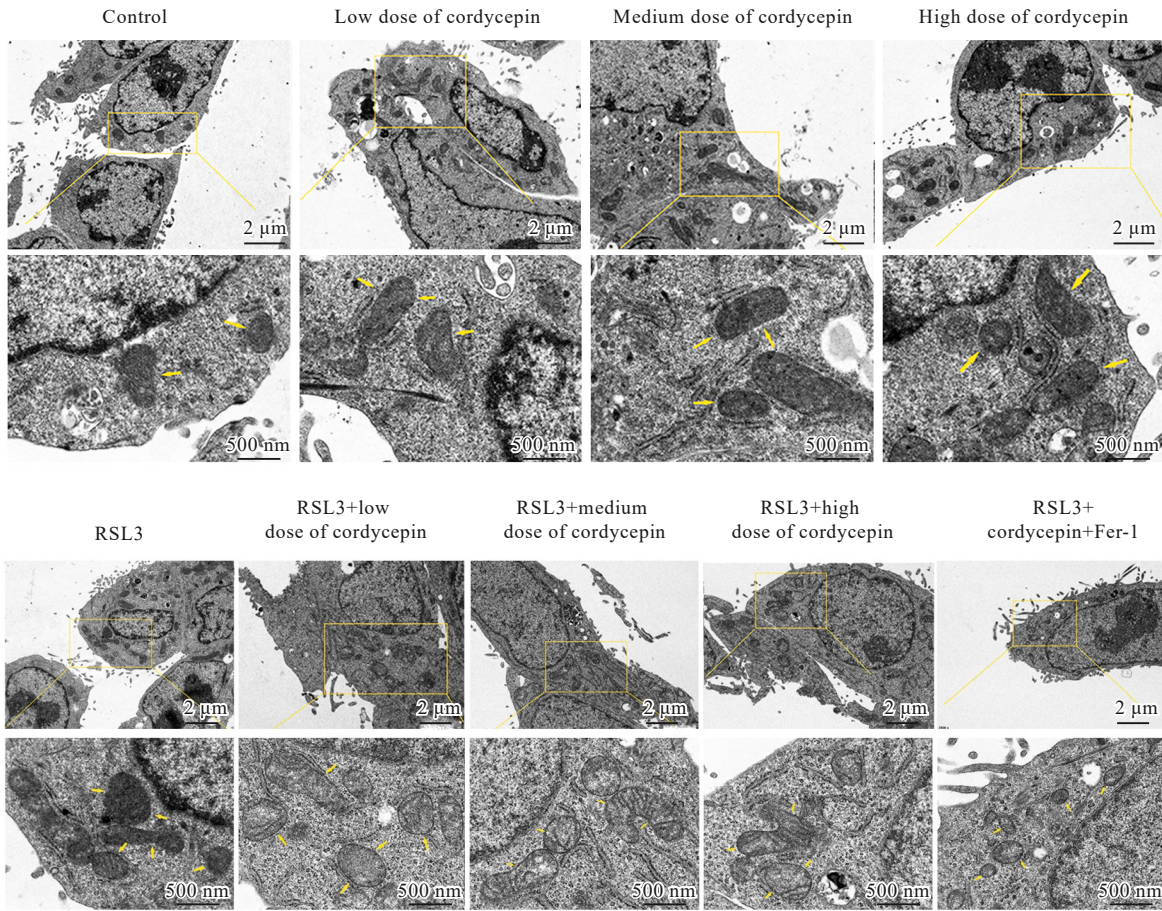
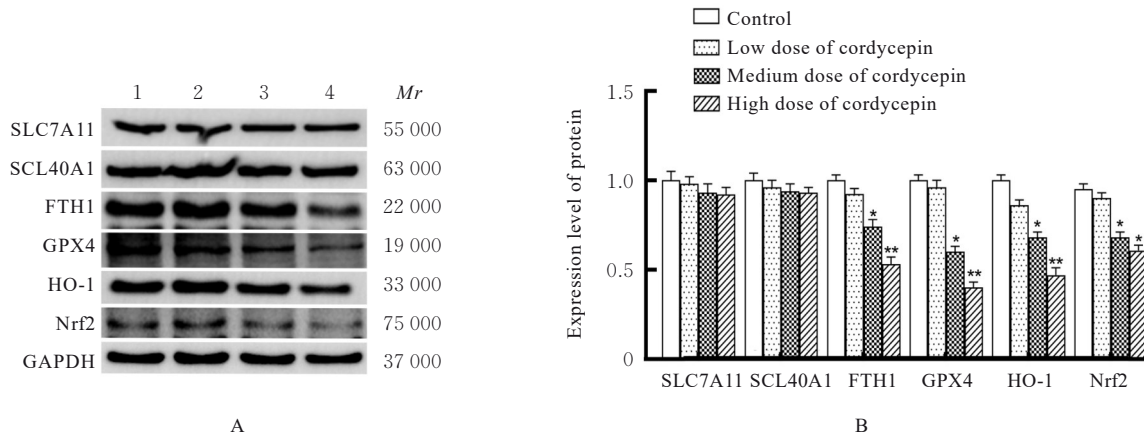


图 13 透射电镜观察各组 HepG2 细胞超微结构表现

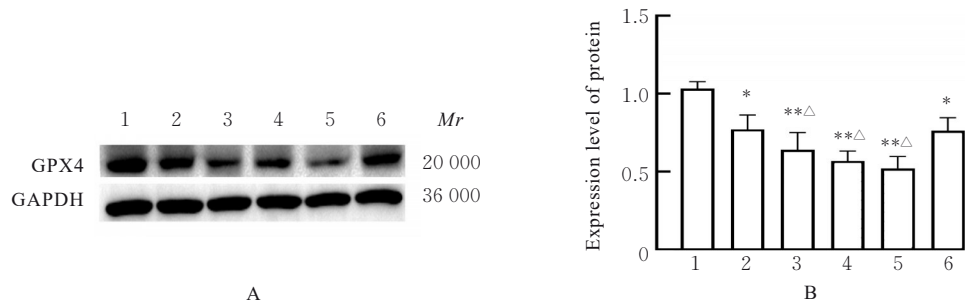
Fig. 13 Ultrastructural morphology of HepG2 cells in various groups observed by transmission electron microscope



1: Control group; 2: Low dose of cordycepin group; 3: Medium dose of cordycepin group; 4: High dose of cordycepin group. * $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$ vs control group.

图 14 Western blotting 法检测虫草素干预后各组 HepG2 细胞中铁死亡相关蛋白及 Nrf2 和 HO-1 蛋白表达电泳图(A) 和直条图(B)

Fig. 14 Electrophoregram (A) and histogram (B) of expressions of iron death-related proteins, Nrf2, and HO-1 proteins in HepG2 cells in various groups after intervened by cordycepin detected by Western blotting method



1: Control group; 2: RSL3 group; 3: RSL3+low dose of cordycepin group; 4: RSL3+medium dose of cordycepin group; 5: RSL3+high dose of cordycepin group; 6: RSL3+cordycepin+Fer-1 group. * $P<0.05$, ** $P<0.01$ vs control group; $\triangle P<0.05$ vs RLS3 group.

图15 Western blotting法检测各组HepG2细胞中GPX4蛋白表达电泳图(A)和直条图(B)

Fig. 15 Electrophoregram(A) and histogram(B) of expressions of GPX4 protein in HepG2 cells in various groups detected by Western blotting method

综上所述, 虫草素可增强RSL3诱导肝癌HepG2细胞铁死亡的作用, 并可下调HepG2细胞中Nrf2和HO-1蛋白表达。

利益冲突声明:

所有作者声明不存在利益冲突。

作者贡献声明:

林涵和杨秋燕参与实验设计及论文撰写, 钟洁月参与数据收集和分析, 陈博伦参与论文结果分析和讨论, 童汪霞参与论文写作指导和审校。

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