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· 基础研究 ·

乳腺癌中垂体瘤转化基因1对免疫浸润的影响及其预后价值

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摘要

背景与目的：垂体瘤转化基因1（PTTG1）是一种癌基因，在多种肿瘤中高表达，可作为癌症侵袭转移的生物标志物。然而，PTTG1在乳腺癌中的表达水平及其与患者预后的关系并不清楚。本研究旨在研究乳腺癌中PTTG1的表达与患者预后的关系及其对免疫细胞浸润的影响，并初步探讨PTTG1在乳腺癌发生发展中的可能作用机制。

方法：利用Oncomine 4.5数据库和Kaplan-Meier Plotter数据库分析乳腺癌组织中PTTG1的表达情况及其预测患者预后的价值。Coexpedia筛选出PTTG1的共表达基因，并通过GO数据库和KEGG数据库分析其共表达基因富集的通路情况。TIMER数据库用于分析乳腺癌中PTTG1基因表达水平与免疫细胞浸润的关系。采用multiMiR R语言包预测与PTTG1及其共表达基因相互作用的microRNA，并使用Cytoscape进行网络可视化。

结果：PTTG1在乳腺癌组织中表达明显升高，且高表达PTTG1患者的预后明显差于低表达PTTG1的患者($P<0.001$)。乳腺癌中PTTG1基因及其共表达基因集GO功能主要富集在核分裂、细胞器分离及染色体分离上，KEGG通路富集则集中在细胞周期、减数分裂、人类T淋巴细胞白血病病毒I型（HTLV-1）感染和p53信号转导通路上。PTTG1的表达水平与CD4⁺ Th1细胞($r=0.490$, $P=3.52e-61$)、CD4⁺ Th2细胞($r=0.765$, $P=3.7e-192$)、巨噬细胞($r=0.308$, $P=2.8e-23$)、B细胞($r=0.228$, $P=3.69e-13$)和中性粒细胞($r=0.121$, $P=1.27e-04$)的浸润水平呈明显正相关，与CD8⁺T细胞浸润水平呈明显负相关($r=-0.198$, $P=3.16e-10$)。用multiMiR R语言数据包分析发现共有17个共同靶向PTTG1及其共表达基因的microRNA。

结论：PTTG1在乳腺癌组织高表达并与患者的不良预后相关，PTTG1在乳腺癌中的表达水平与免疫浸润密切相关。PTTG1高表达可能通过调控细胞周期和p53信号通路而使得肿瘤增殖和侵袭能力增强，进而导致乳腺癌的不良预后。PTTG1可能在乳腺癌中发挥癌基因的作用，提示PTTG1可以作为乳腺癌潜在的诊断和预后标记物。

关键词

乳腺肿瘤；垂体瘤转化基因1；预后；免疫

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Effect of pituitary tumor transforming gene 1 on immune infiltration in breast cancer and its prognostic value

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Abstract

Background and Aims: Pituitary tumor transforming gene 1 (PTTG1) is an oncogene highly expressed in various tumors and can be used as a biomarker for cancer invasion and metastasis. However, the expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer and its relationship with the patient's prognosis is unclear. This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between the expression of PTTG1 in breast cancer and the prognosis of patients and its effect on immune cell infiltration, and preliminarily explore the possible mechanism of PTTG1 in the occurrence and development of breast cancer.

Methods: The expression of PTTG1 in breast cancer tissues and its prognostic value were analyzed using Oncomine 4.5 database and Kaplan-Meier Plotter database. The co-expressed genes of PTTG1 screened by Coexpedia and the enriched pathways by co-expressed genes were analyzed through GO and KEGG databases. TIMER database was used to analyze the relationship between PTTG1 gene expression level and immune cell infiltration in breast cancer. MultiMiR method of R language bundle was adopted to predict the microRNAs interacting with PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes, and Cytoscape was used for network visualization.

Results: PTTG1 expression was significantly increased in breast cancer tissues, and the prognosis of patients with high PTTG1 expression was significantly worse than that of patients with low PTTG1 expression ($P<0.001$). In breast cancer, the GO function of PTTG1 gene and its co-expressed gene set was mainly enriched in nuclear division, organelle separation, and chromosome separation. In contrast, the KEGG pathway was enriched in cell cycle, meiosis, human T lymphocytic leukemia virus type I (HTLV-1) infection and p53 signal transduction pathway. The expression level of PTTG1 was significantly positively correlated with the infiltration level of CD4⁺ Th1 cells ($r=0.490$, $P=3.52e-61$), CD4⁺ Th2 cells ($r=0.765$, $P=3.7e-192$), macrophages ($r=0.308$, $P=2.8e-23$), B cells ($r=0.228$, $P=3.69e-13$) and neutrophils ($r=0.121$, $P=1.27e-04$), but was significantly negatively correlated with the infiltration level of CD8⁺ T cells ($r=-0.198$, $P=3.16e-10$). The multiMiR language data package analysis showed that there were 17 microRNAs co-targeting PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes.

Conclusion: PTTG1 is highly expressed in breast cancer tissue and is associated with poor prognosis in patients. The expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer is closely related to immune infiltration. High expression of PTTG1 may enhance tumor proliferation and invasion ability by regulating cell cycle and p53 signaling pathway, thereby leading to poor prognosis of breast cancer. PTTG1 may play an oncogene role in breast cancer, suggesting that PTTG1 can be used as a potential diagnostic and prognostic marker for breast cancer.

Key words

Breast Neoplasms; Pituitary Tumor-Transforming Gene 1; Prognosis; Immunity

CLC number: R737.9

乳腺癌是世界范围内发病率最高的女性恶性肿瘤。根据2018年的全球癌症数据^[1]统计，乳腺癌

新发病例占全部女性恶性肿瘤的25%。随着乳腺癌的诊治水平的不断提高，乳腺癌患者的预后有

了极大改善。但是,绝大部分乳腺癌患者仍不可能避免地出现转移和复发,导致乳腺癌仍然是女性癌症相关死亡的第二大癌种^[2]。目前乳腺癌研究领域正致力于开发新的分子标记物和治疗靶点,以进一步提高乳腺癌的诊治效果^[3]。开发新的分子标记物对于乳腺癌的早期诊断、药物反应预测和复发风险的评估都有很大的帮助,同时为乳腺癌的精准治疗提供新的工具^[4-6]。

垂体瘤转化基因1(pituitary tumor transforming gene 1, PTTG1)是一种癌基因,参与调控细胞周期和姐妹染色单体的分离。PTTG1在多种肿瘤中高表达,且其产物具有体外转化活性和体内致瘤的活性,提示PTTG1可能在乳腺癌的发生发展中起重要作用^[7]。既往研究^[8]发现高表达的PTTG1与更强的肿瘤侵袭性及肿瘤血管生成密切相关。PTTG1可以通过与多种蛋白相互作用参与调控细胞转录过程,与细胞周期、代谢控制和信号转导通路等密切相关^[9]。越来越多的证据^[7-9]表明,PTTG1可作为癌症侵袭转移的生物标志物。但乳腺癌中PTTG1的表达水平及其与患者预后的关系并不清楚,同时PTTG1与乳腺癌免疫浸润是否有关系也是未知。

本研究通过公共数据库(包括Oncomine在线网站、Coexpedia数据库和TIMER数据库)评估乳腺癌组织中PTTG1 mRNA水平与乳腺癌患者预后之间的关系,进一步探讨PTTG1 mRNA水平与乳腺癌患者的临床病理特征以及肿瘤免疫细胞浸润的关系,揭示PTTG1在乳腺癌中的表达情况及其作用,为乳腺癌诊断和治疗提供潜在的新靶点。

1 材料与方法

1.1 PTTG在乳腺癌中的表达水平及其与生存预后的关系

笔者利用Oncomine 4.5数据库中Curtis Breast、Richardson Breast和Zhao Breast等^[10-12]乳腺癌测序数据,分析乳腺癌组织与癌旁正常乳腺组织中PTTG1的mRNA表达和DNA拷贝数^[13]。随后,利用Kaplan-Meier Plotter(<https://kmplot.com>)在线分析平台对Kaplan-Meier Plotter数据库中1 402例乳腺癌患者进行预后分析^[14-15],明确PTTG1的表达水平与患者总生存率的关系。最后,使用UALCAN在线数据

分析工具(<http://ualcan.path.uab.edu>)分析TCGA数据库中1 097例乳腺癌患者的PTTG1表达水平与患者临床病理特征的关系。

1.2 Coexpedia分析

Coexpedia(<http://www.coexpedia.org/>)数据库是从GEO中多个人类和小鼠数据集整合构建的基因共表达数据库^[16]。利用Coexpedia分析在乳腺癌中与PTTG1表达显著相关的基因,并选取排名前50的基因做后续分析。

1.3 富集分析

使用R语言中的clusterProfiler包将PTTG1共表达的前50基因进行GO和KEGG通路富集分析^[17]。

1.4 肿瘤免疫细胞浸润相关性分析

通过TIMER数据库(<https://cistrome.shinyapps.io/timer>)分析PTTG1的表达水平及其与6种免疫细胞(CD4⁺ Th1细胞、CD4⁺ Th2细胞、巨噬细胞、CD8⁺ T细胞、B细胞和中性粒细胞)浸润水平的相关性。

1.5 microRNA预测

使用R语言包“multiMiR”预测PTTG1以及其共表达基因相互作用的microRNA^[18],并使用Cytoscape 3.6.0构建microRNA-mRNA可视化网络^[19]。

2 结果

2.1 PTTG1在乳腺癌组织中高表达且与患者不良预后相关

对来自TCGA数据库的多个乳腺癌研究中PTTG1的mRNA和DNA拷贝数水平进行分析。数据显示,在乳腺癌组织中,PTTG1的mRNA表达和DNA拷贝数变异(CNV)显著高于正常乳腺组织($P<0.05$)(图1A-E)。对Kaplan-Meier Plotter数据库中1 402例乳腺癌患者进行预后分析,结果发现乳腺癌中PTTG1 mRNA高表达患者的总生存率显著低于低表达的患者($P<0.001$)(图1F)。随后,TCGA数据库中筛选出1 097例乳腺癌患者,根据患者的临床分期、种族、年龄、TP53状态和淋巴结转移等情况进行分组分析。结果显示,各个分组中乳腺癌的PTTG1表达均高于正常乳腺组织(图2)。这些结果提示PTTG1的表达水平可以作为乳腺癌潜在的诊断和预后标记物。

2.2 乳腺癌中PTTG1的共表达基因及其相互作用网络

为了分析乳腺癌中PTTG1的共表达基因及其相互作用网络，本研究利用Coexpedia分析PTTG1的共表达基因（图3）。结果显示，共有182个与PTTG1共表达的基因，提示PTTG1可能具有广泛的调控作用。筛选出其中排名前50的基因进行后续分析。基因富集分析显示，这些基因编码的蛋白主要定位于纺锤体、染色体以及着丝粒。这些蛋白主要功能是与微管蛋白结合，调节蛋白质丝氨酸/苏氨酸激酶的活性，并参与细胞核的分裂、

细胞器分离和染色体分离（图4A-C）。KEGG通路分析的结果显示，这些蛋白主要在细胞周期调控、减数分裂、HTLV-1感染中发挥作用（图4D-E）。

利用clusterProfiler的R语言包对共表达基因以及富集通路进行可视化，结果发现PTTG1相关的基因主要通过调节细胞周期发挥作用。其中MAD2L1、CDC20、CCNB2、CCNA2、BUB1、ESPL1、CDK1和CCNB1在PTTG1调节细胞周期中发挥着重要的作用（图5A）。PTTG1共表达基因参与多个通路的调节，可能通过这些通路参与乳腺癌的发生发展（图5B）。

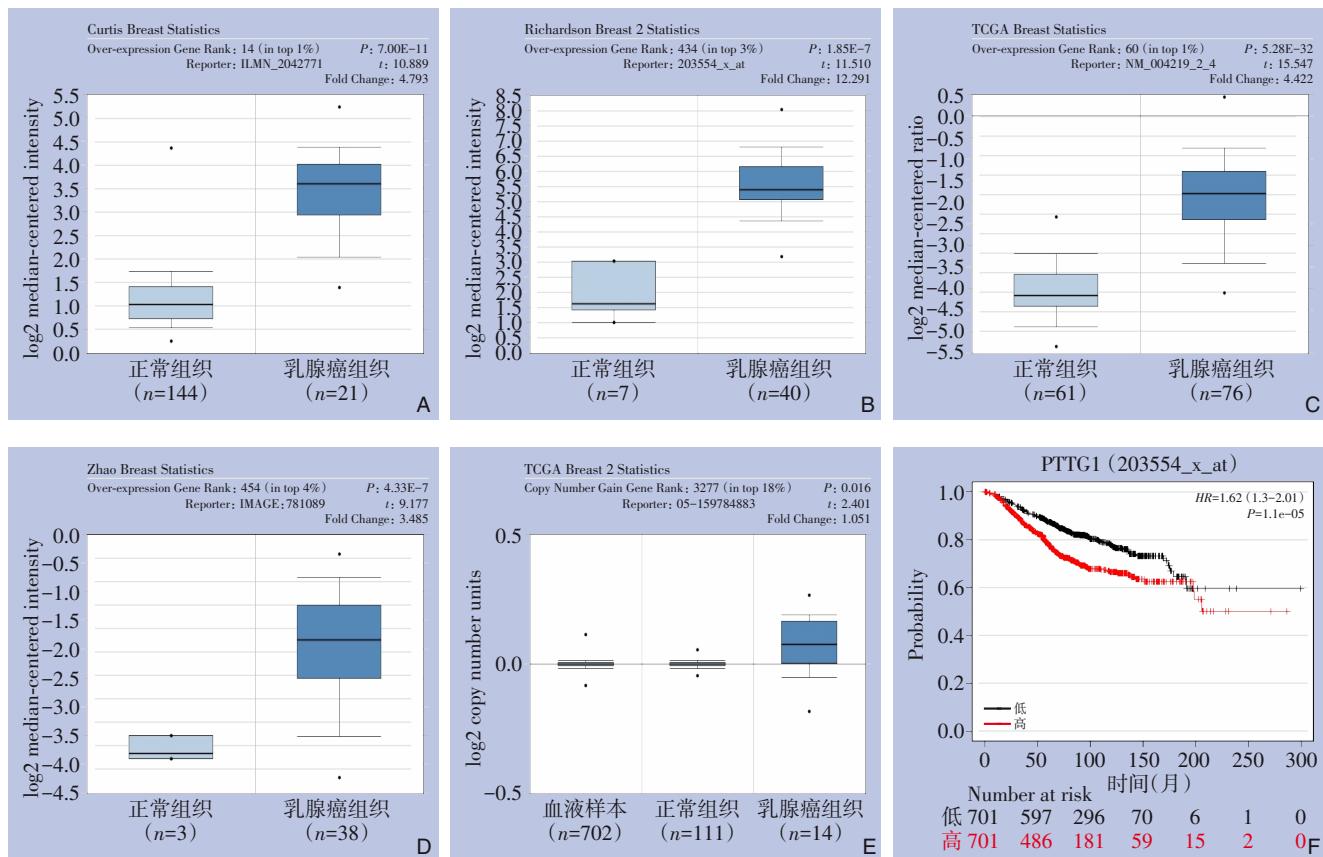


图1 乳腺癌中PTTG1 mRNA的表达水平及其与患者生存率的关系 A-D: 在Curtis Breast、Richardson Breast、TCGA Breast和Zhao Breast数据集中乳腺肿瘤组织和正常乳腺组织之间PTTG1 mRNA表达水平的差异；E: TCGA数据集中乳腺肿瘤组织和正常乳腺组织之间PTTG1 DNA拷贝数的差异；F: Kaplan-Meier生存曲线分析PTTG1表达高低对总生存率的影响(n=1 402)

Figure 1 The expression level of PTTG1 mRNA in breast cancer tissues and its relationship with survival rate of patients
A-D: The differences of PTTG1 mRNA expression levels between breast tumor tissues and normal breast tissues in the Curtis Breast, Richardson Breast, TCGA Breast and Zhao Breast datasets; E: The difference in PTTG1 DNA copy number between breast tumor tissues and normal breast tissues in the TCGA dataset; F: Analysis the influence of PTTG1 expression level on overall survival rate with Kaplan-Meier survival curve (n=1 402)

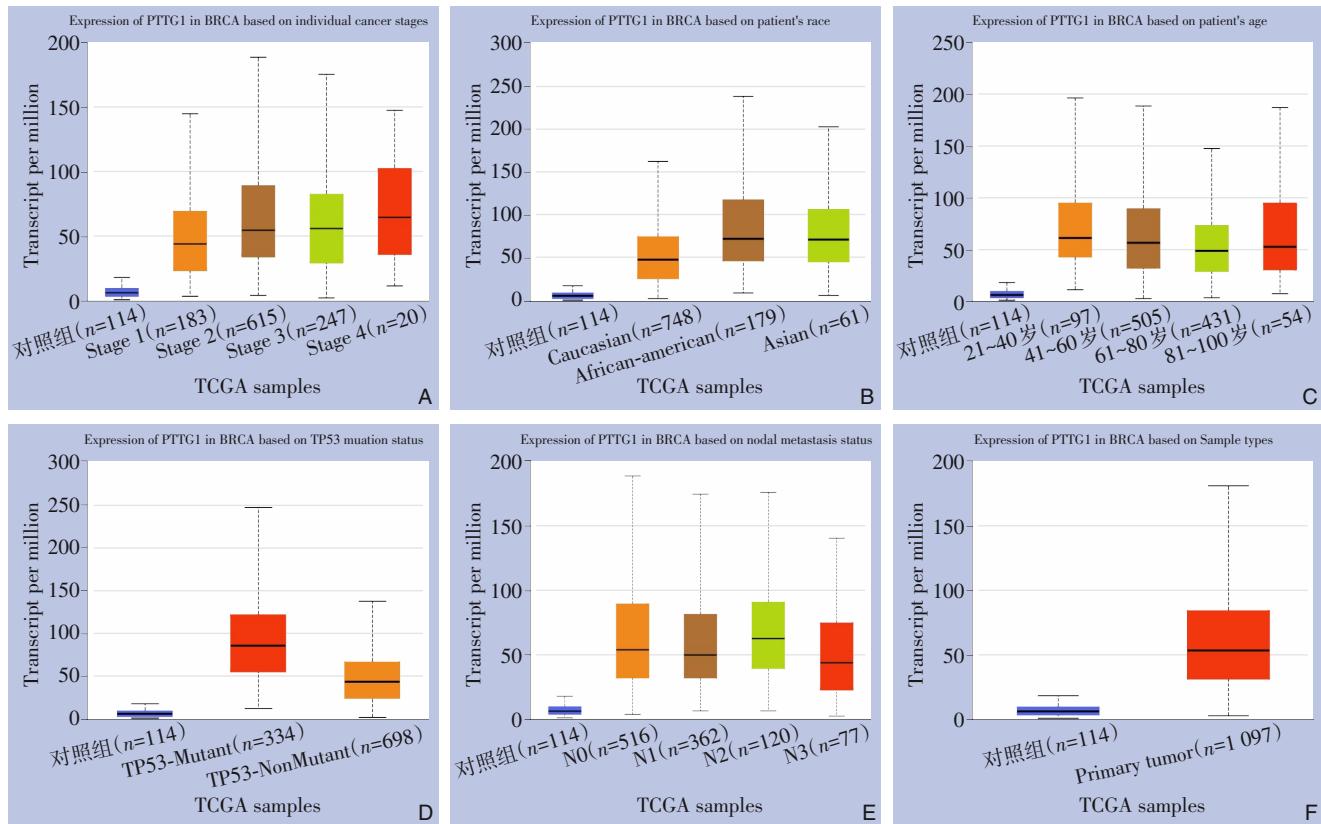


图2 PTTG1的表达与乳腺癌临床病理特征的关系 A: PTTG1在不同临床分期乳腺癌组织中的相对表达水平; B: PTTG1在不同种族乳腺癌患者中的相对表达水平; C: PTTG1在不同年龄段乳腺癌患者中的相对表达水平; D: PTTG1在不同TP53状态的乳腺癌患者中的相对表达水平; E: PTTG1在不同淋巴结转移状态乳腺癌患者中的相对表达水平; F: 正常乳腺组织标本和乳腺癌组织标本中PTTG1 mRNA表达水平的箱线图

Figure 2 Correlation between PTTG1 expression and clinicopathologic features in breast cancer A: The relative expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer tissues with different clinical stages; B: The relative expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer patients with different races; C: The relative expression levels of PTTG1 in breast cancer patients with different ages; D: The relative expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer patients with different TP53 status; E: The relative expression level of PTTG1 in breast cancer patients with different status of lymph node metastasis; F: Boxplots of PTTG1 mRNA expression levels in normal and breast cancer tissues

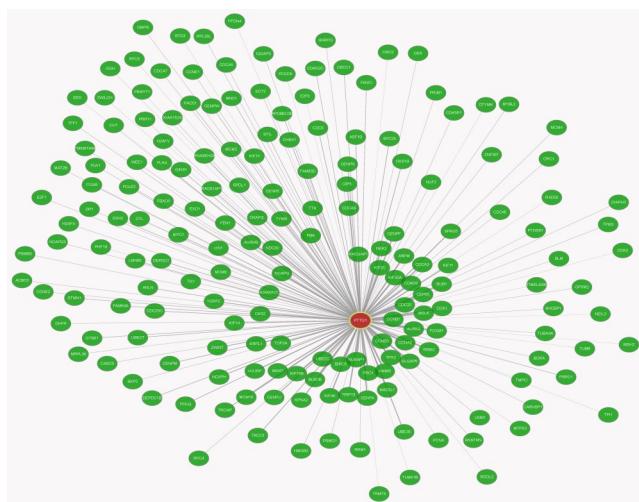


图3 PTTG1的共表达基因网络 (PTTG1用红色圆圈标识, 共表达基因用绿色圆圈标注)

Figure 3 Co-expression gene network of PTTG1 (PTTG1 marked by red circles, and the co-expressed genes marked by green circles)

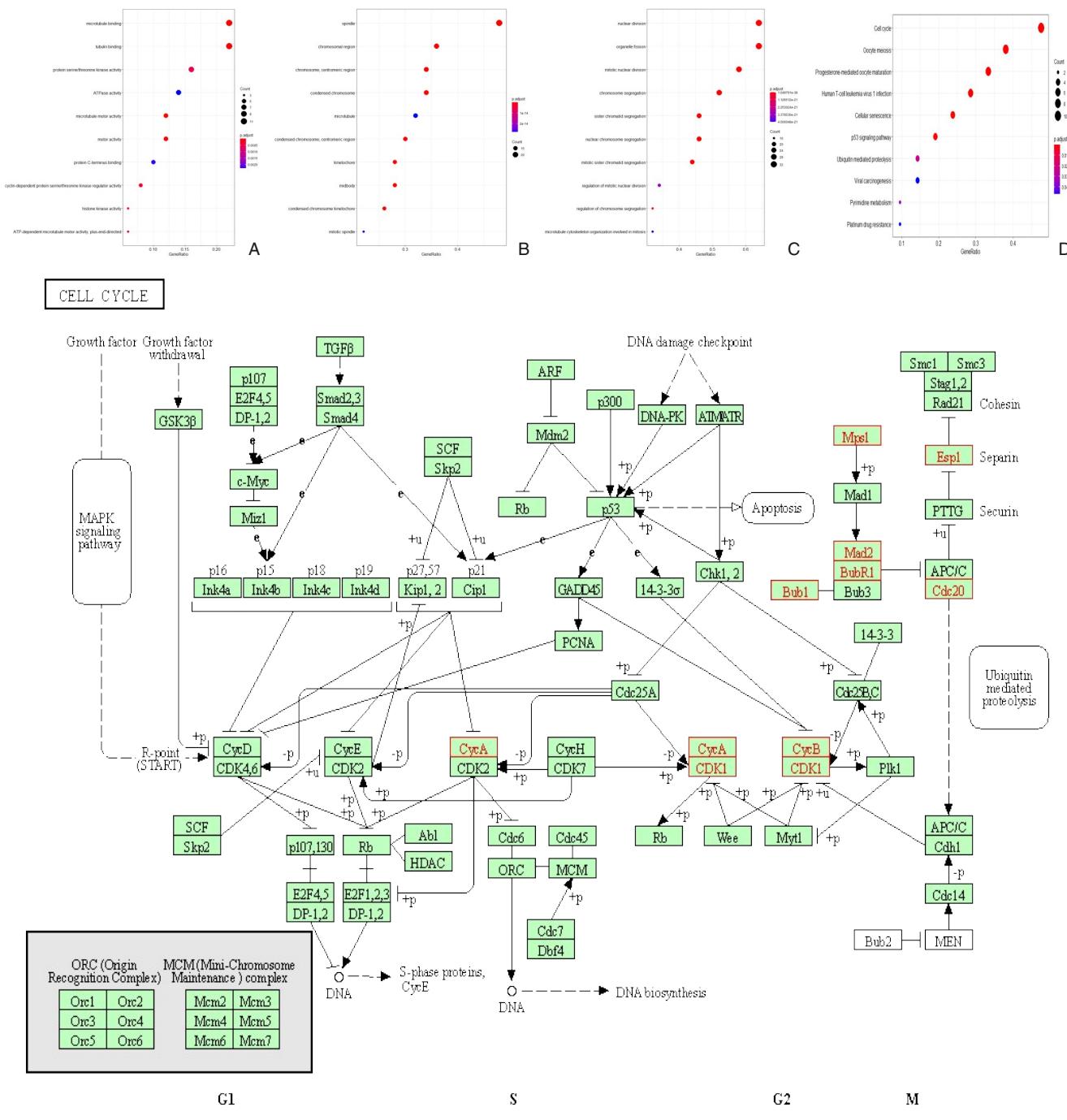


图4 乳腺癌中PTTG1共表达基因的GO和KEGG通路富集分析 A: PTTG1及其共表达基因的分子功能作用; B: PTTG1及其共表达基因在细胞成分中的作用; C: PTTG1及其共表达基因所参与的生物学过程; D: PTTG1及其共表达基因的KEGG相关通路; E: 细胞周期通路网络(共表达基因在此通路中所在的位置以红色标注)

Figure 4 Enrichment analysis of GO and KEGG pathways of PTTG1 co-expressed genes in breast cancer A: Molecular functional roles of PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes; B: The role of PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes in cell components; C: Biological processes involved in PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes; D: KEGG related pathways of PTTG1 and its co-expressed genes; E: Network of cell cycle pathway (the locations of co-expressed genes in this pathway indicated in red)

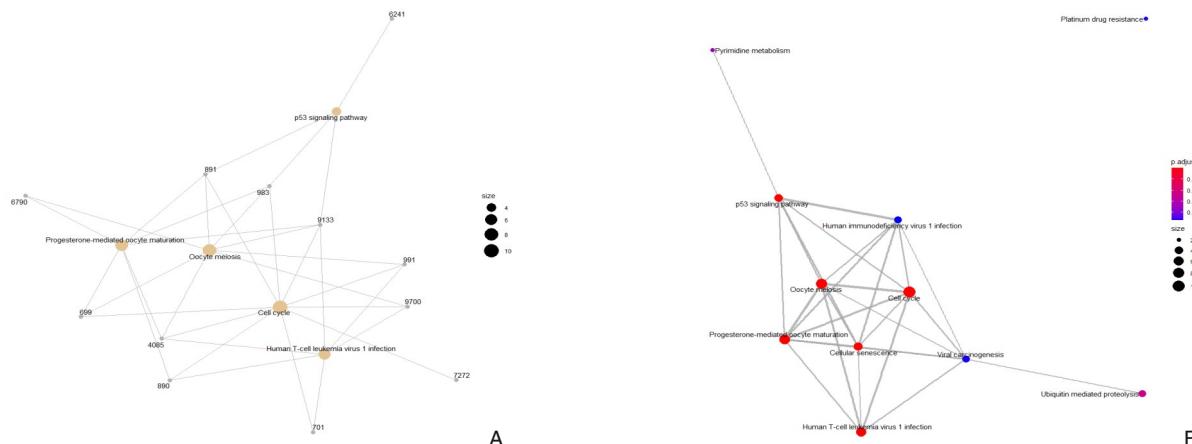


图5 乳腺癌中PTTG1共表达基因和通路的可视化网络 A: PTTG1共表达基因可视化网络; B: 共表达基因的KEGG通路富集可视化网络

Figure 5 Visual network of PTTG1 co-expressed genes and pathways in breast cancer A: Visual network of PTTG1 co-expressed genes; B: Visual network of KEGG pathway enrichment in co-expressed genes

2.3 PTTG1的表达与浸润性免疫细胞的浸润水平

相关性分析

TIMER数据库分析显示PTTG1的表达与6种免疫细胞(CD4⁺Th1细胞, CD4⁺Th2细胞、巨噬细胞、CD8⁺T细胞、B细胞和中性粒细胞)之间密切相关(图6)。PTTG1表达水平与CD4⁺Th1细胞

($r=0.490$, $P=3.52e-61$)、CD4⁺Th2细胞($r=0.765$, $P=3.7e-192$)、巨噬细胞($r=0.308$, $P=2.8e-23$)、B细胞($r=0.228$, $P=3.69e-13$)和中性粒细胞($r=0.121$, $P=1.27e-04$)的浸润水平呈正相关,与CD8⁺T细胞浸润水平呈负相关($r=-0.198$, $P=3.16e-10$)。

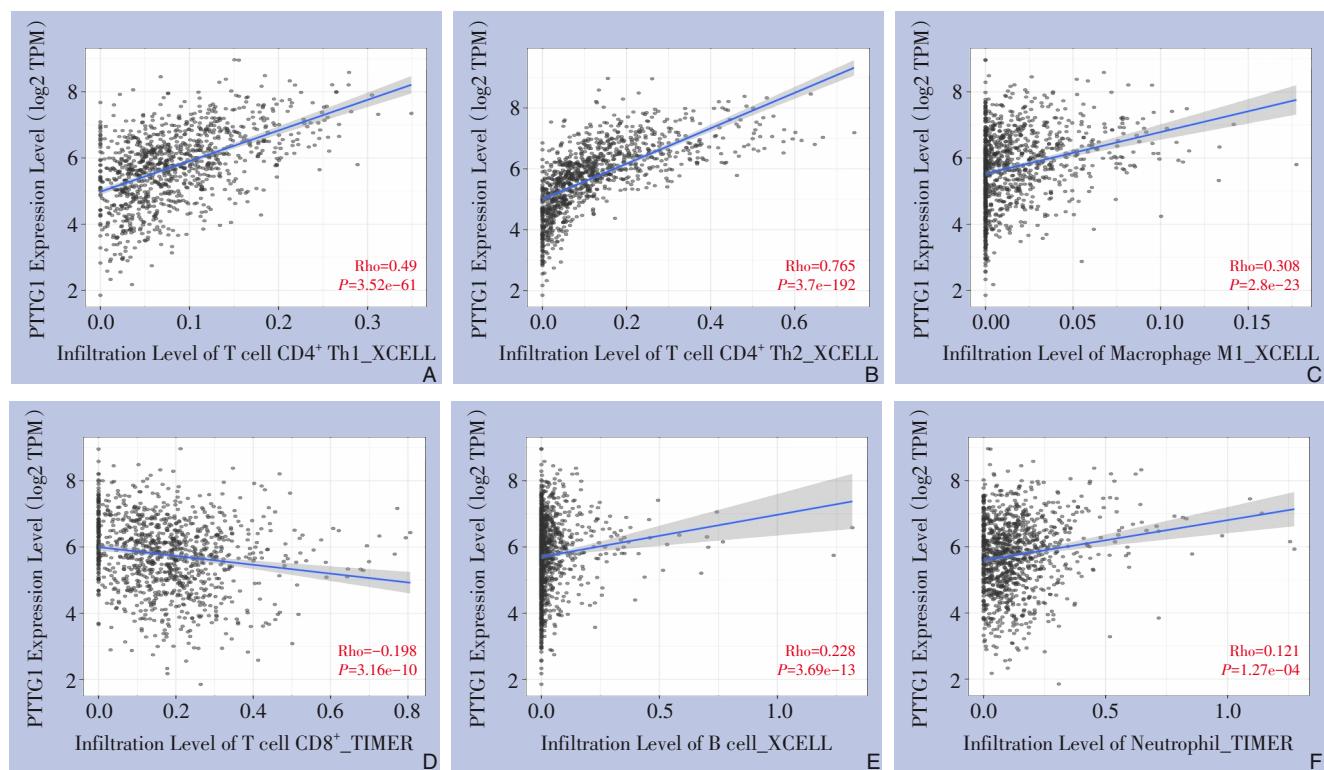


图6 PTTG1表达水平与浸润性免疫细胞浸润水平的关系 A-F: PTTG1的表达与CD4⁺Th1细胞、CD4⁺Th2细胞、巨噬细胞、CD8⁺T细胞、B细胞和中性粒细胞浸润水平呈正相关,与CD8⁺T细胞浸润程度呈负相关

Figure 6 Relationship between the expression level of PTTG1 and the infiltration level of infiltrating immune cells A-F: The expression of PTTG1 positively correlated with the infiltration levels of CD4⁺ Th1 cells, CD4⁺ Th2 cells, macrophages, CD8⁺ T cells, B cells and neutrophils, and negatively correlated with the infiltration degree of CD8⁺ T cells

2.4 乳腺癌中PTTG1和共表达基因的相互作用网络

为进一步探讨PTTG1在乳腺癌中的作用机制，本研究利用multiMiR R语言数据包分析了与PTTG1以及其共表达基因相互作用的microRNA。其中，与PTTG1相互作用的microRNA有30个，与PTTG1共表达的排名前50基因相互作用的microRNA有5130个，共同靶向PTTG1及其共表达基因的microRNA共有17个。使用Cytoscape软件对microRNA-基因网络进行可视化，结果提示PTTG1可能由microRNA以ceRNA的机制调控（图7）。

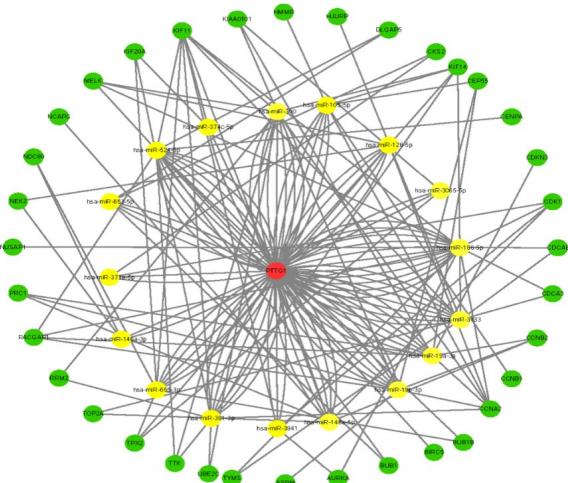


图7 PTTG1-microRNA-共表达基因可视化网络

Figure 7 Visualization network of PTTG1-microRNA-Co-expression genes

3 讨论

早期诊断和预后评价是癌症管理中极其关键且富有挑战性的环节。乳腺癌异质性极大，需要应用多种生物标记物的协同分析，以实现乳腺癌的早期诊断和预后精准预测^[20]。因此，当前迫切需要发现更多的乳腺癌生物标记物，从而实现乳腺癌早诊早治和预后评价^[21-22]。

PTTG1在多种恶性肿瘤中高表达，被认为是一种致癌基因，它的高表达对肿瘤的生长和发展具有促进作用并与多种癌症的不良预后有关^[23-27]。PTTG1 mRNA在肠癌组织和细胞系中表达上调，是肠癌预后的一个独立的危险因素^[23]。在非小细胞肺癌（non-small cell lung cancer, NSCLC）中，Li等^[24]发现PTTG1在NSCLC的侵袭、转移中具有重要作用，通过siRNA敲低PTTG1表达可抑制NSCLC细胞的侵袭。应用siRNA干扰PTTG1的表达后，口腔鳞状细胞癌细胞的侵袭能力显著降低。而microRNA-186和microRNA-655可抑制PTTG1在口腔鳞状细胞癌细胞中的表达，进而调节细胞的侵袭活性^[8]。Cui等^[25]发现敲低PTTG1可显著抑制胶质母细瘤的血管生成，抑制细胞的迁移和侵袭，并促进肿瘤细胞的凋亡。Fraune等^[26]通过对12427例前列腺癌样本进行免疫组化检测，结果发现PPTG可单独或与其他生物标志物联合使用能较好地评估前列腺癌的侵袭性。Grzechowiak等^[27]证实了PTTG1在头颈部鳞状细胞癌中的具有显著的促癌作用。这些研究表明PTTG1是潜在的肿瘤诊断标记物和治疗靶点。本研究通过对开放数据库进行分析发现PTTG1在乳腺癌组织中表达升高并与不良预后相关，提示PTTG1可能在乳腺癌中发挥癌基因的作用，是乳腺癌潜在的诊断和预后标志物。

本研究使用clusterProfiler的R语言分析PTTG1及其共表达基因的富集情况，结果发现PTTG1的功能主要富集在核分裂、细胞器分离和染色体分离上。KEGG通路富集则提示，PTTG1与乳腺癌的细胞周期、减数分裂、HTLV-1、p53信号转导是密切相关的。细胞周期失调是癌细胞恶性增殖的基础，细胞周期紊乱可导致癌细胞快速增殖^[28]。p53是一个重要的抑癌基因，p53突变和丧失抑癌作用是肿瘤恶变的一个重要原因^[29]。而本研究发现PTTG1的表达与p53信号转导密切相关。因此，笔者推测乳腺癌中PTTG1高表达可能通过调控细胞周期和p53信号通路而使得肿瘤增殖和侵袭能力增强，从而导致患者的不良预后。期待进一步的研究来验证该假说。

大量研究^[30-31]证实，肿瘤浸润淋巴细胞与肿瘤预后和对治疗的反应密切相关。PTTG1表达与乳腺癌中多种抑制性免疫细胞浸润水平呈正相关，同时与具有抗癌作用的CD8⁺T细胞浸润水平呈负相关，这可能是PTTG1高表达造成患者预后不良的另一重要原因。本研究结果表明，PTTG1参与调控乳腺癌的免疫微环境，推测PTTG1的表达可能与免疫治疗的疗效相关，这值得后续进一步研究。

综上所述，本研究证实乳腺癌组织中PTTG1表达上调且其高表达与乳腺癌患者的不良预后相关。PTTG1与乳腺癌的免疫浸润密切相关，是乳腺癌潜在的诊断标记物和治疗靶点。但是，PTTG1在

乳腺癌中发挥作用的具体机制还需要进一步的研究加以阐明。

利益冲突: 所有作者均声明不存在利益冲突。

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