



# 外周血免疫细胞中潜在药物成瘾生物标记物及其 mRNA 定量分析的动力特征与应用前景\*

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**摘要** 药物成瘾是全球关注的社会问题, 如何防止药物复吸行为产生是当前戒毒工作面临的难点。外周血生物标记物可动态反映中枢系统中相关标记物的含量水平, 相比传统行为心理分析具有更加有效地识别成瘾状态的潜力。通过分析外周血中成瘾相关的生物标记物含量变化来辅助评估戒治人员的易感性、戒治反应和戒治成效, 有助于提高评估的准确性, 减少成瘾药物复吸的发生概率。本文综述了当前药物成瘾主要的外周血免疫细胞潜在生物标记物, 总结了在不同药物成瘾类型和成瘾状态的患者外周血免疫细胞中相关生物标记物 mRNA 表达水平变化的趋势, 并对其应用前景和未来研究方向进行了讨论。

**关键词** 药物成瘾, 外周血, 生物标记物, 免疫细胞信使核糖核酸

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药物成瘾一直是全球关注的社会问题, 对世界各国经济发展和社会稳定有着不可忽视的影响。联合国公布的《2022年世界毒品报告》中指出, 截至2022年, 全球有2.84亿15~64岁人群使用成瘾药物, 约有1120万人注射毒品。《2022年中国毒情形势报告》则显示, 截至2022年底, 中国有吸毒人员112.4万名, 禁毒形势严峻而复杂。不断提升科学戒治能力, 积极探索药物成瘾戒治新技术新方法, 成为中国新时代司法行政戒毒工作的重点之一。在药物戒断过程中, 防止成瘾药物复吸行为是戒治工作面临的难点。利用生物标记物来协助评估戒治人员的易感性、戒治反应和戒治成效, 是提高戒治质量、创新戒治手段发展的重要途径, 近年来受到越来越多的关注。其中, 外周血生物标记物由于采集便利、创伤性小, 且部分标记物含量能反映中枢神经系统中标记物的含量水平, 因此具有较高的推广价值。本文以药物成瘾发展进程为脉络, 梳理药物成瘾相关的外周血免疫细胞潜在生物标记物及其mRNA定量分析研究进展, 以期为戒治手段创新、药物开发和临床应用提供一定的理论参考。

## 1 药物成瘾的基本神经生理机制

《精神障碍诊断和统计手册》第五版(DSM-5)将成瘾定义为“与物质相关的成瘾和成瘾性障碍”, 包括酒精、大麻以及阿片类药物等多种药物成瘾类型。尽管不同类型药物涉及的成瘾机制不尽相同, 但大量研究表明, 成瘾障碍有着共同的环路机制: 以多巴胺系统为核心的皮层—基底节—丘脑—皮层(cortico-basal ganglia-thalamo-cortical, CBGTC)强化奖赏环路<sup>[1]</sup>。该环路系统起源于中脑腹侧被盖区(ventral tegmental area, VTA)和黑质致密部(substantia nigra compacta, SNc)的多

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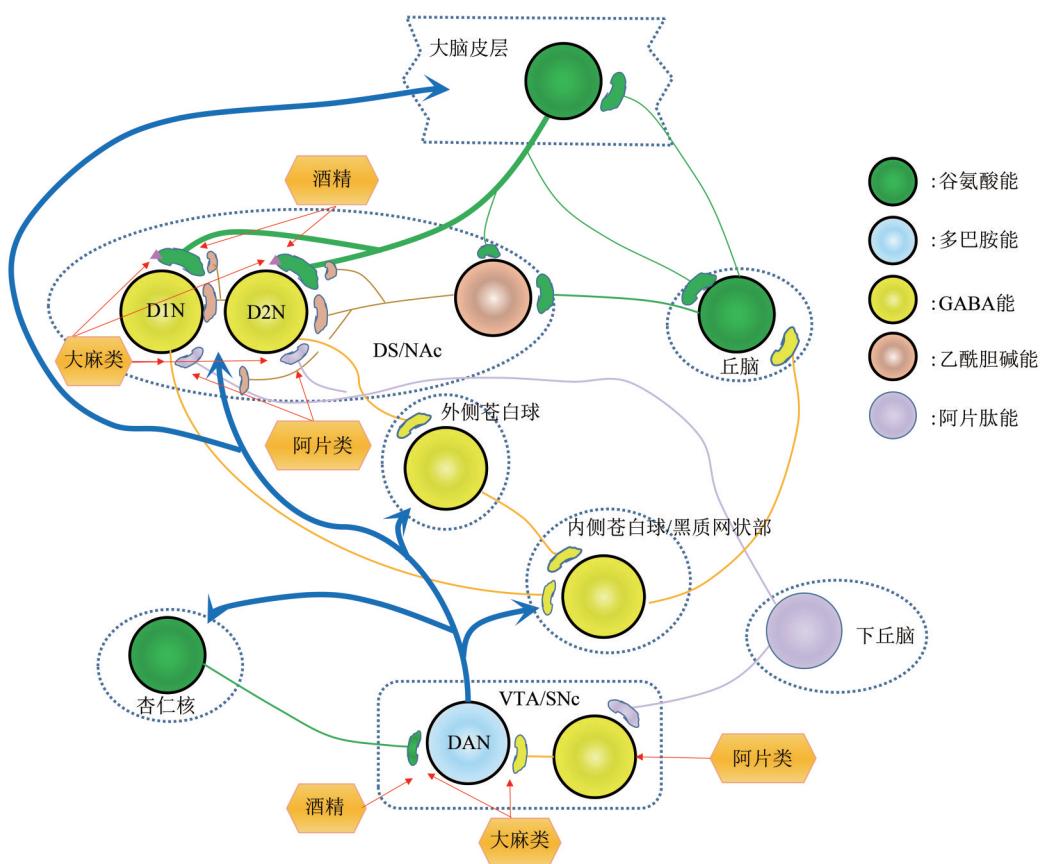
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巴胺能神经元<sup>[2]</sup>，通过并行的多条多巴胺通路投射到皮层、基底神经节以及边缘系统等多个脑区结构，且脑区间还存在双向投射关系，共同组成复杂的调控系统<sup>[3]</sup>。成瘾药物摄入后通过不同分子途径增强中脑多巴胺能神经元活动水平，促进伏隔核（nucleus accumbens, NAc）、背侧纹状体（dorsal striatum, DS）等脑区中多巴胺递质过度分泌<sup>[4-5]</sup>，干扰该系统正常的兴奋和抑制网络功能，而药物反复暴露则进一步通过改变相关受体或受体偶联的G蛋白亚基的相对表达等途径诱导机体对精神活性物

质的敏感性下降<sup>[6-7]</sup>，引起机体行为模式从对奖赏刺激的过度强化发展为对快感缺失的负强化<sup>[8]</sup>，同时伴随氧化应激<sup>[9-10]</sup>和炎症反应<sup>[11]</sup>，最终介导强迫性的药物渴求、复吸行为以及相关认知情绪障碍的形成。而在细胞与分子层面，主要是多巴胺、谷氨酸、γ氨基丁酸（GABA）<sup>[12]</sup>、内源性大麻素<sup>[13]</sup>、内源性阿片肽<sup>[14]</sup>、血清素<sup>[15]</sup>等神经递质及其受体的表达与相应信号转导变化<sup>[16-17]</sup>，以及不同递质系统之间的联合调控作用共同介导了这一复杂生理行为变化过程<sup>[18]</sup>（图1）。



**Fig. 1 Interactions of transmitter systems in brain regions associated with drug addiction**

图1 药物成瘾相关脑区递质系统的相互作用

DS：背侧纹状体（dorsal striatum）；NAc：伏隔核（nucleus accumbens）；VTA：腹侧被盖区（ventral tegmental area）；D1N：特异性表达多巴胺I型受体的GABA能神经元（GABAergic neurons specifically expressing dopamine type I receptors）；D2N：特异性表达多巴胺II型受体的GABA能神经元（GABAergic neurons specifically expressing dopamine type II receptors）；DAN：多巴胺能神经元（dopaminergic neurons）。

越来越多研究表明，环境和遗传因素共同作用于成瘾障碍的发展过程，尤其相关基因表达水平的改变在药物成瘾过程中起到了关键作用<sup>[19]</sup>。研究发现，成瘾药物可通过激活细胞信号通路，经遗传或表观遗传途径<sup>[20]</sup>改变关键回路神经元中编码重要蛋白质的基因表达水平<sup>[21]</sup>，促使细胞骨架重塑，

导致神经突触可塑性改变<sup>[22-24]</sup>。这表明，相关基因表达水平的变化可能通过改变神经回路的结构功能参与成瘾障碍的发病过程。进一步研究发现，神经递质受体在一些外周组织或细胞（如外周血淋巴细胞（peripheral blood lymphocyte, PBL））中的表达水平可能反映了其在大脑中的表达。例如，精神

分裂症患者大脑中多巴胺受体表达增加, 相应地, 其PBL中多巴胺受体的mRNA水平也表现出升高<sup>[25]</sup>。同时, PBL中多巴胺受体的表达水平与精神分裂症的症状严重程度高度相关, 而抗精神病药物治疗可降低其PBL中多巴胺受体的mRNA表达水平<sup>[26]</sup>。相反, 帕金森病患者纹状体中多巴胺递质释放及其受体表达减少<sup>[27-28]</sup>, 其PBL中的多巴胺受体含量也降低, 且降低水平与帕金森病症状的严重程度相关<sup>[29]</sup>。因此, 尽管当前仍无法直接考察药物滥用患者活体大脑中相关蛋白质基因的表达水平, 但许多研究尝试通过考察外周血中相关蛋白质的mRNA表达水平来反映药物滥用个体的成瘾状态。

## 2 不同成瘾阶段的外周血免疫细胞潜在生物标记物

近年来, 研究陆续发现了一些神经递质受体蛋白<sup>[15]</sup>、激素<sup>[30]</sup>、神经肽<sup>[31]</sup>、小分子代谢物<sup>[31]</sup>以及ΔFosB<sup>[32]</sup>、microRNA<sup>[33]</sup>等转录(后)调控因子具有药物成瘾相关外周血生物标记物的潜力, 且这些标记物的表达水平在患者戒治期和药物治疗期等不同阶段往往有相应的变化特点。相比血清或血浆中的代谢物质或游离递质, 免疫细胞中表达的神经递质受体水平与成瘾的相关性更强也更加稳定, 因此综合考虑与成瘾的相关性和已有研究的丰富性, 本文主要对成瘾密切相关的神经递质受体蛋白进行介绍, 包括多巴胺受体、阿片受体、大麻素受体、N-甲基-D-天冬氨酸(N-methyl-D-aspartate, NMDA)受体。此外, 由于外周血免疫细胞中上述标记物的表达量往往较低且在受体亚型上存在差异, 目前研究大多采用更为灵敏且易于区分受体亚型的mRNA定量分析技术对标记物表达水平进行分析, 因此后文将主要介绍标记物的mRNA表达水平的变化。

### 2.1 初次吸食到药物依赖阶段

从初次吸食到形成药物依赖是成瘾的关键环节, 这个过程涉及到最初的机体应激反应、奖赏反应、神经系统致敏与行为敏化(sensitization)到最后强迫性觅药等多个生理行为过程, 多种神经递质系统和应激免疫系统均参与其中。目前研究主要发现, 药物依赖患者外周血免疫细胞中的多巴胺受体、阿片受体、大麻素受体、NMDA受体的mRNA水平发生了相应的变化。

#### 2.1.1 多巴胺受体

多巴胺(dopamine, DA)是强化奖赏系统的关键因子<sup>[34]</sup>, 在成瘾的初期, 药物的摄入会促使大脑组织与血液中的多巴胺递质含量水平升高<sup>[5]</sup>, 而反复的药物暴露则会进一步导致多巴胺受体的表达与功能<sup>[24]</sup>发生改变, 引起机体的不良适应性变化<sup>[35]</sup>, 促使成瘾心理与行为的产生。多巴胺受体是由7个跨膜区域组成的G蛋白偶联受体(G protein-coupled receptors)家族, 目前已分离出了5种由不同基因编码的受体亚型(D1、D2、D3、D4和D5); 根据对腺苷酸环化酶的作用, 又被分为多巴胺I型受体(dopamine receptor I, D1R)和多巴胺II型受体(dopamine receptor II, D2R)两大类<sup>[36]</sup>。不同亚型的多巴胺受体在成瘾过程中的作用与变化趋势存在差异。在大脑多巴胺回路中, D1受体与D2受体高度表达, 且往往特异性表达在不同的神经元中。其中, 特异性表达D1R的神经元被称为D1神经元(D1 neurons, D1N), 特异性表达D2R的神经元被称为D2神经元(D2 neurons, D2N), 二者分别构成直接通路和间接通路(图1), 且分别在成瘾药物的初期奖赏与敏化、后期强迫觅药负强化过程中扮演重要角色<sup>[37]</sup>。研究表明, 在药物依赖形成阶段D1受体在部分脑区表达增多, 在部分脑区没有变化<sup>[38]</sup>, 而D2受体的表达水平降低则是药物易感和药物成瘾的重要标志<sup>[39-40]</sup>。在外周血淋巴细胞中, 多巴胺受体mRNA表达水平也出现了相应改变, 且这种改变与药物种类、受体亚型存在一定关系。例如, 海洛因依赖患者的PBL中D3受体的mRNA水平增加, D4多巴胺受体的mRNA水平降低<sup>[41]</sup>, 酒精成瘾患者PBL中D4受体的mRNA水平增高<sup>[42]</sup>, 尼古丁成瘾患者PBL中D3受体的表达水平则明显低于对照组<sup>[43]</sup>。

可以看出, 目前研究发现的有标记物潜力的外周血多巴胺受体亚型与大脑中的亚型存在一定差异, 这可能与不同受体亚型本身在不同组织中的表达分布的差异有关。不同于D1受体与D2受体, D3、D4和D5受体大脑中的表达含量较低。不过, D3受体由于具有较高的多巴胺亲和度, 在大脑多巴胺回路介导药物敏化过程中起到重要作用<sup>[44]</sup>, 而D4受体与D5受体不仅在NAc、DS等关键脑区中的分布很少<sup>[45]</sup>, 在成瘾相关研究中的关注度也不如D3受体<sup>[41]</sup>。相比之下, 在外周血免疫细胞中D4受体mRNA的表达水平却呈现出相比其他几类

受体更强也更稳定的成瘾状态敏感性。此外，D3受体对海洛因依赖敏感，而D5受体mRNA表达水平则对美沙酮治疗表现出较强的敏感性。事实上，研究发现，D4受体激动剂本身并不具有类成瘾药物的奖励特性，但D4受体拮抗剂可特异性地消除成瘾药物的复吸现象，且不影响对食物的奖赏反应，表明D4受体可能通过非奖赏途径介导了成瘾药物复吸的过程<sup>[46]</sup>。此外，亲代吗啡暴露还会影响F1雄性后代D4受体与D5受体在不同脑区的表达含量<sup>[47]</sup>。可见，D4受体与D5受体在药物成瘾中的关键作用还有待进一步挖掘。

### 2.1.2 阿片受体

阿片受体是广泛分布于神经与免疫系统中的内源性递质受体，主要包含μ受体、κ受体和δ受体3种经典亚型。其中，μ受体被认为是吗啡、海洛因等阿片类药物的主要靶点，与配体结合后能产生欣快感、躯体依赖等反应，κ受体与配体结合会引发烦躁作用和镇静作用，在整个成瘾过程中具有反奖励作用或负强化作用，δ阿片受体与配体结合则诱导抗焦虑作用<sup>[48]</sup>。如前文所述，阿片系统可以通过与多巴胺系统联合作用参与药物成瘾过程<sup>[18]</sup>，同时还可通过介导神经免疫过程参与药物成瘾<sup>[49]</sup>。过往研究表明，药物依赖个体大脑的不同脑区中阿片受体的不同亚型甚至同种受体亚型的不同基因剪切体的表达水平均存在差异<sup>[50-51]</sup>，且其表达水平与药物使用时间有关<sup>[51-52]</sup>。这种表达差异性也在外周血免疫细胞中有所体现。研究表明，阿片类药物依赖患者PBL中两种μ受体剪接变体(hMOR-1A和hMOR-36O)的mRNA水平均未发生显著改变<sup>[53]</sup>，但κ受体的mRNA水平明显低于正常对照组<sup>[54]</sup>。此外，在阿片药物依赖患者的PBL中κ受体内源性配体强啡肽(dynorphin, DYN)的前体蛋白强啡肽原(precursor protein prodynorphin, PDYN)与pPDYN的mRNA水平也呈现上升的变化趋势，因此，研究者认为PBL中κ受体的变化可能是对PDYN上调的补偿性下调<sup>[54]</sup>。

### 2.1.3 大麻素受体

大麻素受体是内源性大麻素系统的基本组成部分，通过与内源性大麻素结合发挥多种心理生理调节功能，也是外源性大麻素及其衍生物作用于有机体影响中枢和外周神经系统活动的靶点。大麻素受体是一种由7个跨膜区域组成的G蛋白偶联受体家族，目前主要分为两种亚型：大麻素I型受体(cannabinoid receptor I, CB1R)和大麻素II型受体

(cannabinoid receptor II, CB2R)。其中，CB1R主要分布于中枢神经系统，大多表达在突触前末梢，参与轴突末梢神经递质释放的调控<sup>[55]</sup>，CB2R则主要表达在外周免疫细胞和造血细胞中，在中枢也有一定的表达<sup>[56]</sup>。考虑到中枢系统在药物成瘾过程中的核心地位，过往药物成瘾的机制研究主要集中于对CB1R在成瘾过程中作用的考察。当前主流的观点认为长期的大麻药物暴露会导致包括纹状体在内的多个脑区CB1R的下调<sup>[57]</sup>，但其下调与受体基因的表达水平似乎关系不大，因为绝大部分脑区在长期大麻药物暴露后并没有表现出mRNA水平的下降<sup>[58]</sup>，反而长期的大麻或甲基苯丙胺暴露会导致纹状体CB1R mRNA表达水平的上升<sup>[58-59]</sup>，同时，大麻滥用导致多个脑区表现出CB1R下调，但前临床和临幊上却常用CB1R的拮抗剂来非特异性治疗物质成瘾<sup>[60]</sup>。此外，近期研究发现，慢性可卡因给药剂量依赖性地上调大脑(皮层和纹状体)和外周(脾脏)中的CB2R基因表达<sup>[7]</sup>。而在外周血中，相比健康被试，大麻成瘾患者外周血单个核血细胞(peripheral blood mononuclear cell, PBMC)中CB1R与CB2R的mRNA表达水平显著增加<sup>[61]</sup>，PBL中CB1R的mRNA水平显著增加<sup>[62]</sup>。此外，急性吸食大麻后的不同时间点内，大麻使用者PBL中CB2R的mRNA水平的变化趋势与吸食大麻的浓度有关，高剂量(13.4%)四氢大麻酚组PBL中CB2R mRNA水平随时间延后而增加，而低剂量(5.9%)组则出现相反趋势<sup>[63]</sup>。

### 2.1.4 NMDA受体

谷氨酸是一种广泛分布在大脑中的兴奋性神经递质，在皮层-中脑边缘系统的多巴胺能投射相互作用中扮演重要角色<sup>[64]</sup>。研究发现，当使用受体拮抗剂阻断纹状体中谷氨酸与受体的结合时，滥用药物(如可卡因和吗啡)的奖赏效应和强化特征会显著减少<sup>[65]</sup>，表明谷氨酸及其受体在药物成瘾过程中的关键作用。谷氨酸受体主要包含离子型和代谢型两类受体，其中NMDA受体是由7种亚基组成(GluN1、GluN2A~D和GluN3A、B)的谷氨酸离子型四聚体受体。作为多种精神药物(如氯胺酮、苯环利定)的作用靶点，NMDA受体在成瘾药物寻求和复吸行为形成过程中起关键作用<sup>[65]</sup>，例如NAc脑区NMDA受体的GluN3B亚基占比升高介导了可卡因戒断引起的药物渴求孵化<sup>[66]</sup>。研究表明，NMDA受体在外周组织如PBLs中也有表达<sup>[67]</sup>。有研究者考察了阿片类药物成瘾患者PBL

中NMDA受体几种亚基的mRNA水平与正常对照的差异,发现其PBL中GluN2D、GluN2A和GluN3A亚基的mRNA水平与正常组无显著差异,但GluN3B亚基的mRNA水平显著升高<sup>[68-69]</sup>。除NMDA受体以外,大脑中的其他谷氨酸受体亚型(AMPA受体和代谢型谷氨酸受体)在药物依赖形成过程中也有表达水平的相应变化<sup>[70]</sup>,但目前尚未见到外周血中表达水平的相关报道。

## 2.2 药物戒断与治疗阶段

在药物依赖形成以后进行药物的戒断往往会引起戒断综合征,这一阶段的突出特点是成瘾患者的多巴胺系统功能紊乱和伴随的生理症状与情绪障碍<sup>[71]</sup>。此时,个体的行为模式由正强化转化为负强化<sup>[8]</sup>,药物戒断带来的负面体验成为持续性的厌恶性背景刺激,而消除这种背景性厌恶刺激成为获取药物的主要目的。大量研究发现,多种成瘾药物的戒断会导致纹状体和伏隔核中的胞外多巴胺水平下降<sup>[72]</sup>,同时伴随多巴胺受体、阿片受体、谷氨酸受体等受体表达水平和功能活性的变化<sup>[71, 73]</sup>,且表达水平变化趋势与其受体类型有关。

在外周血免疫细胞中,药物戒断经历对患者的相关受体表达水平的影响与受体类型和药物类型都有关。阿片类药物成瘾患者在长期戒断后,相较于依赖阶段,其PBL中D4受体的mRNA水平依然处于降低水平,但D3受体的mRNA水平增加不再明显(相较于依赖组),且D5受体的mRNA水平出现明显下降<sup>[41, 74]</sup>,而对于阿片受体,长期戒断的阿片类药物成瘾患者PBL中两种μ受体间接变体和κ受体mRNA水平均显著下降,长期戒断后GluN3B亚基的mRNA水平则显著高于正常对照组,且与成瘾组没有显著差异。美沙酮作为阿片类药物成瘾维持治疗药物已被证明可以有效缓解戒断综合征<sup>[75]</sup>。研究发现,服用美沙酮可升高成瘾者PBL中hMOR-1A的mRNA水平,GluN3B亚基的mRNA水平相比正常对照组也有升高(低于依

赖组的水平)<sup>[69]</sup>,但对于PBL中其他阿片受体以及D4受体、D5受体的mRNA水平没有明显作用<sup>[53-54]</sup>,此外阿片药物戒断患者和美沙酮维持患者的PBL中PDYN与pPDYN的mRNA水平都呈现上升的变化趋势。大麻戒断影响的研究主要围绕CB1R和CB2R开展:长期滥用大麻患者在戒断大麻超过半年后,其PBMC中CB2R的mRNA水平相比正常对照组显著增加,而CB1R mRNA水平没有明显变化<sup>[76]</sup>。对于酒精成瘾,有研究表明酒精依赖患者PBL中NMDA受体GluN1亚基和GluN2B亚基的表达水平本身没有变化<sup>[77]</sup>,但在戒断的早期阶段(第1天),患者PBL中GluN2B亚基的mRNA水平出现了显著增加<sup>[78]</sup>。此外酒精依赖患者在长期戒断后,其PBL中D4受体的mRNA水平由升高(依赖阶段)变为降低<sup>[74]</sup>,这与动物研究发现前额叶皮层(prefrontal cortex, PFC)向NAc的谷氨酸投射回路中谷氨酸受体GluN2B亚基上调介导复吸行为的结果一致<sup>[79]</sup>。事实上,药物戒断的不良适应反应是造成药物复吸行为产生的重要原因。类似地,D1受体和D3受体表达与功能活性的下调与药物复吸密切相关<sup>[40, 80]</sup>,这与药物戒断过程中PBL中受体<sup>[41]</sup>的变化趋势一致。

综合来看,目前的证据指向外周血免疫细胞中相关递质受体mRNA水平在不同药物类型和不同成瘾发展阶段呈现特异性的变化趋势(表1)。不过,多巴胺受体(尤其是D4受体)在跨药物和跨阶段的指示作用上最有效力,而大麻素受体则主要特异地反映不同阶段的大麻成瘾状态。此外,GluN3B亚基的mRNA水平在海洛因成瘾的不同阶段呈现出稳定的上升水平,且对美沙酮治疗表现出下降反应,提示其作为海洛因成瘾的生物标记物有较高的潜力,而D4受体mRNA水平在酒精依赖阶段和酒精戒断阶段表现出明显的反向变化趋势,也反映D4受体mRNA在指示酒精成瘾状态中的潜力。

**Table 1 Changes in mRNA expression of potential biomarkers in peripheral blood immunocyte at different stages of drug addiction**

**表1 不同药物成瘾阶段外周血免疫细胞中潜在生物标记物mRNA表达水平的变化情况**

发展阶段	药品类型	细胞类型	标记物	mRNA变化趋势(相比于健康组)	参考文献
药物依赖阶段	海洛因(阿片)	PBL	多巴胺受体	D3受体mRNA ↑	[41]
			阿片受体	D4受体mRNA ↓	[41]
			μ阿片受体剪接变体mRNA	→	[53]
			κ受体mRNA	↓	[54]

续表1

发展阶段	药品类型	细胞类型	标记物	mRNA变化趋势 (相比于健康组)	参考文献
药物戒断阶段	海洛因 (阿片)	大麻	NMDA受体	GluN3B mRNA ↑ [68-69]	
			大麻素受体	CB1R mRNA ↑ [61]	
				CB2R mRNA ↑ [61]	
			PBL	CB1R mRNA ↑ [62]	
		酒精	PBL	D4受体mRNA ↑ [42]	
		尼古丁	PBL	D3受体mRNA ↓ [43]	
		尼古丁	PBL	D3受体mRNA → [41]	
				D4受体mRNA ↓ [41, 74]	
				D5受体mRNA ↓ [41]	
			NMDA受体	GluN3B mRNA ↑ (与依赖组无差异) [69]	
		美沙酮治疗	PBMC	CB1R mRNA → [76]	
			大麻素受体	CB2R mRNA ↑ [76]	
			酒精 (长期)	PBL 多巴胺受体 D4受体mRNA ↓ [74]	
			NMDA受体	GluN1B mRNA → [77]	
				GluN2B mRNA → [77]	
			酒精 (早期)	NMDA受体 GluN2B mRNA ↑ [78]	
			PBL 多巴胺受体	D4受体mRNA → [41]	
				D5受体mRNA → [41]	
			阿片受体	μ阿片受体剪接变体hMOR-1A mRNA ↑ (相比于依赖组) [56]	
			NMDA受体	GluN3B mRNA ↑ (低于依赖组) [69]	

↑表示上升，↓表示下降，→表示无显著变化。

### 3 外周血免疫细胞生物标记物表达水平变化的可能机制

研究表明，外周血免疫细胞自身可合成多巴胺、内源性阿片肽、内源性大麻素等神经递质，同时表达相应的受体。虽然与中枢神经系统有着密切联系，但外周中的神经递质及受体还存在独立的作用机制。例如，免疫细胞释放阿片肽的水平受到自身表达的阿片受体的调节：当血液免疫细胞的阿片受体激活后，磷脂酶C (phospholipase C, PLC) 被 G $\beta\gamma$  依赖性激活并形成 1,4,5-三磷酸肌醇 (inositol trisphosphate, IP3)，进一步激活内质网中的 IP3 受体，诱导免疫细胞内 Ca<sup>2+</sup>介导的阿片肽释放，而释放的阿片肽又可激活外周神经元阿片受体进而参与相关生理过程。此外，免疫细胞中阿片受体的表达量远低于神经细胞（孤啡肽受体除外），且其表达水平不仅受到各种细胞因子（如 IL-1 $\beta$ 、IL-2、IL-4、IFN $\gamma$  等）的动态调节<sup>[81-82]</sup>，还会在外源性阿片类物质的作用下发生变化<sup>[81]</sup>。可见，外周血中各种免疫细胞阿片受体的表达和功能一方面与神经元中阿片受体存在差异和联系，另一方面与机体免疫功能息息相关。这也一定程度上解释了药

物依赖依赖患者外周血细胞中阿片受体的表达水平与以往中枢研究的结果也存在一些差异<sup>[50]</sup> 的原因。同时，研究发现相比正常对照，海洛因药物依赖患者血清中 IL-1 $\beta$ 、IL-4 等细胞因子的含量出现了显著上升<sup>[83-84]</sup>，表明成瘾药物引起的细胞因子水平变化有可能是诱导药物依赖患者外周血中阿片受体表达水平变化的重要因素。与阿片受体类似，免疫细胞中 CB1R 和 CB2R mRNA 的表达水平也受到免疫刺激和大麻素配体作用等因素的调节，例如低浓度的 CB1R/CB2R 混合激动剂会诱导 CB1R mRNA 的表达<sup>[85]</sup>，IL-1 $\beta$ 、IL-6 和 TNF- $\alpha$  等促炎细胞因子可上调 PBMC 中 CB1R 和 CB2R 的表达<sup>[86]</sup>。可见，成瘾药物自身作用和其带来的免疫反应可能是外周血生物标记物表达变化的重要原因。

### 4 应用前景与未来研究展望

寻找可行有效的生物标记物近年来一直受到临床疾病研究的关注，在癌症、药物成瘾、抑郁症、孤独症等多种疾病研究领域中被广泛探讨。对药物成瘾的诊断与治疗而言，当前评估的手段主要依据心理行为学上的指标，但在当前评估体系下，成瘾患者戒断后的复吸现象时有发生。前期证据表明，

长期戒断的患者其外周血中相关神经递质受体的 mRNA 表达水平仍处于异常状态, 表明生物标记物可能比心理行为指标在评估成瘾状态上具有更强的灵敏性。因此, 通过获取与成瘾相关的生物标记物, 可以更加有效地识别有成瘾和复吸风险的人群, 也能针对成瘾易感人群和复吸易感人群提供更有效的预防和支持性干预措施。此外, 虽然直接考察大脑中靶蛋白/肽含量的变化能更准确地研究药物成瘾对大脑功能及相关分子表达水平的影响, 但当前的技术还无法实现无/低创性地对人类活体大脑蛋白质分子表达水平进行监测。相反, 临床证据表明, 外周组织与中枢神经系统中蛋白质和肽的变化呈正相关, 采用外周组织(如血液淋巴细胞)中的蛋白质和肽等分子作为药物成瘾的生物标记物, 能更加方便地实现对药物成瘾的预测、诊断以及治疗效果的评估, 也为更好地理解成瘾的神经生物学机制提供依据。

本文回顾了前期研究发现的不同药物成瘾患者外周血生物标记物的 mRNA 水平变化, 总结了不同药物成瘾患者在成瘾过程中生物标记物 mRNA 表达的不同变化趋势。值得注意的是, 从目前研究结果来看, 无论是多巴胺受体还是阿片受体, 外周血细胞中对成瘾状态最为敏感的递质受体亚型与中枢系统中发挥关键作用的亚型似乎存在一定差异。这提示, 尽管外周血系统中相关受体激活后缺乏与中枢系统中一致的后效应信号通路, 但外周血中相应受体表达含量的变化可能涉及了药物成瘾在外周系统中的另一套响应模式, 这种响应模式可能与免疫反应有着密切关系<sup>[81-82]</sup>, 最终导致了外周血细胞中不同亚型的受体蛋白表达含量呈现成瘾状态的敏感性。此外, 目前关注的多种标记物蛋白在介导药物成瘾过程中往往存在相互作用<sup>[57]</sup>, 尤其在成瘾发展过程中往往呈现动态性变化, 因此考虑对不同标记物在成瘾过程中动态性变化趋势的整体性观察可能有利于更加准确地评估成瘾状态。

然而, 相比癌症等重大疾病的外周血标记物研究, 目前成瘾外周血标记物相关研究还处于比较零散的状态, 样本量较小, 成瘾患者的戒断状态、治疗方案等因素也不够统一, 且大多缺乏从病理到临床上的系统探究。未来研究可进一步结合动物研究和临床研究对相关标记物从中枢到外周的作用进行系统论证, 尤其对外周系统对成瘾药物的响应机制进行深入探究。同时, 在应用外周血生物标记物时, 应根据实验证据制定相应的标准, 以便增强外

周血生物标记物进行成瘾诊断与治疗的针对性和有效性。此外, 如果不同外周血生物标记物在识别不同药物成瘾状态的灵敏度上存在差异, 未来可考虑个性化地采用某种外周血生物标记物对患者的成瘾状态和治疗效果进行追踪研究, 以此促进成瘾的个性化诊断和治疗方法的发展。

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## Dynamic Characteristics and Application Prospects of Potential Addiction Biomarkers and Their Quantification Analysis of mRNA in Peripheral Blood Immunocyte<sup>\*</sup>

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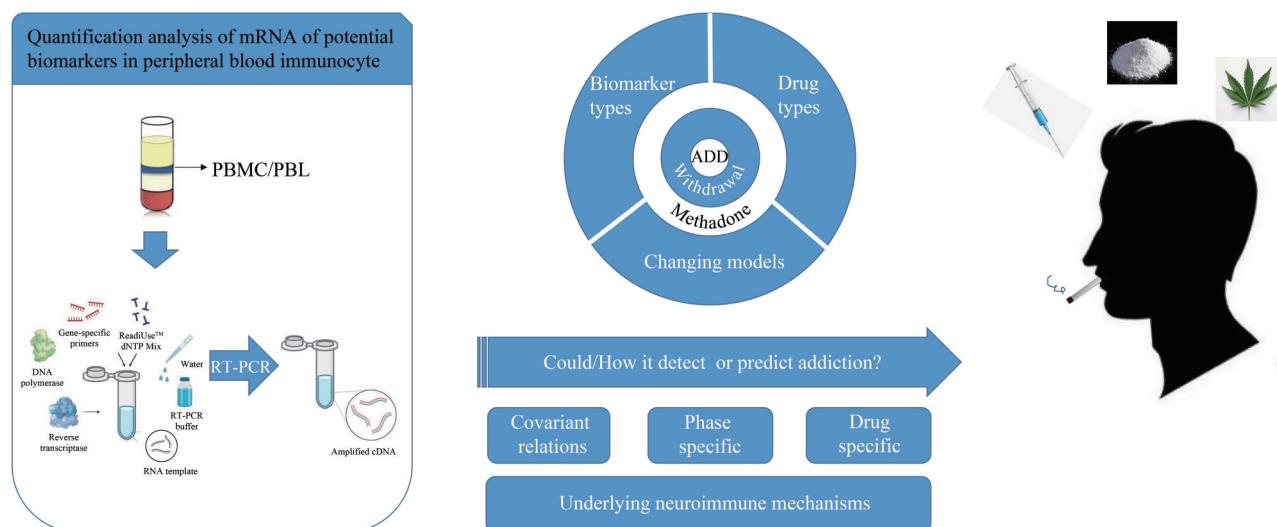
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### Graphical abstract



**Abstract** Drug addiction is a worldwide issue that threatens social stability and development. It has been proved to be a chronic, relapsing disease that results from the prolonged effects of drugs on the various neural networks. Over time, plenty of attention has been paid to find new approaches to enhance the sensitivity and accuracy of assessment on addiction. In recent years, researchers found that the expression of neurotransmitters and their receptors in some peripheral blood immunocyte may reflect their expression in the brain. By analyzing the

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changes of addiction-related neural biomarkers in peripheral blood immunocyte, it is potential to enhance the accuracy and the susceptibility of assessments on addiction and treatment effectiveness, and in turn help to reduce drug relapse. In this review, we summarize the potential biomarkers related to addiction in peripheral blood immunocyte and changing trend of their mRNA expression level in patients using different types of drugs and with different addiction states, and discuss their application prospects and future research directions. Previous studies have found various types of potential addiction biomarkers, including neurotransmitter receptor proteins, hormones, small molecule metabolites, ΔFosB microRNA and other transcriptional (post) regulators. Considering the correlation with addiction and the richness of existing research, this article mainly introduces neurotransmitter receptor proteins closely related to addiction, including dopamine receptors, opioid receptors, cannabinoid receptors, and N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors. The expression levels of these potential biomarkers often change correspondingly at different stages. For example, mRNA expression of dopamine D3 receptor was increased in opioid addicted and methadone-maintained patients, but no change was observed in the heroin abstinent group. In addition, changing patterns of the biomarkers induced by different types of drugs were also various. Although both opioid addiction and alcohol addiction could induce the change of mRNA expression of dopamine D4 receptor, it was decreased in the opioid addiction patients while increased in the alcohol addiction patients. On the basis of the available evidence, dopamine receptors (especially D4 receptors) are most potent at the indicative action across drugs and stages, while cannabinoid receptors mainly specifically reflect different stages of cannabis addiction status. In addition, the mRNA level of the GluN3B subunit showed a steady increase in different stages of opioid addiction and showed a decreased response to methadone treatment, suggesting that it has high potential as a biomarker of heroin addiction. Besides, the mRNA level of D4 receptor showed a clear reverse trend in the stage of alcohol addiction and alcohol withdrawal, which also reflected the potential of D4 receptor mRNA in the state of alcohol addiction. Considering evidences about serum levels changing in patients with drug addiction, immune response induced by drugs may be one possible mechanism of changes in the expression levels of transmitter receptors in the peripheral blood of drug addiction patients. Finally, the current research on biomarkers in peripheral blood for addiction is still relatively fragmented, and lack systematic mechanism exploration. Future studies could further combine animal studies and clinical studies to systematically demonstrate the role of relevant biomarkers and underlying mechanisms. In addition, there are often interactions between multiple biomarker proteins in mediating drug addiction, especially in the process of addiction development. Thus, the overall observation of the dynamic changing of different biomarkers in the addiction process may be helpful to enhance the accuracy of assessment of addiction states. At the same time, when applying peripheral blood biomarkers, corresponding standards should be formulated based on experimental evidences, so as to enhance the pertinence and effectiveness of peripheral blood biomarkers in the diagnosis and treatment of addiction.

**Key words** drug addiction, peripheral blood, biomarkers, inimmunocyte mRNA

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