

Neuroimmune Mechanisms and Intervention Strategies of Sleep Disorders Regulated by Plateau Intestinal Flora

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Abstract

High-altitude hypoxia often leads to sleep disorders, significantly impairing human health and work capacity. Currently, the pathological mechanisms of this condition are not fully elucidated, and effective preventive and therapeutic approaches are lacking. In recent years, the gut microbiota, serving as a pivotal bridge between the environment and host physiology, has garnered increasing attention for its role in hypoxia-induced sleep disturbances. Based on the gut-brain axis theory, this review systematically elaborates on the cascade mechanisms through which high-altitude hypoxia induces intestinal microbiota dysbiosis, impairs gut barrier function, and thereby triggers sleep disorders via multiple pathways, including immune-inflammatory activation, neurotransmitter metabolic abnormalities, and central regulatory dysfunction. It highlights the intermediary roles of key microbial metabolites and discusses the potential of probiotics to improve sleep through multi-target strategies, such as repairing the intestinal barrier, modulating immune homeostasis, and restoring neurotransmitter balance, thereby providing new theoretical foundations and translational avenues for the prevention and treatment of sleep disorders at high altitude.

Keywords

High altitude; Sleep disorders; Gut microbiota

高原肠道菌群调控睡眠障碍的神经免疫机制与干预策略

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摘要

高原低氧环境常导致睡眠障碍,严重影响人体健康与工作能力。目前,该病症的病理机制尚未完全阐明,且缺乏有效的防治手段。近年来,肠道菌群作为环境与宿主生理之间的关键桥梁,在低氧所致睡眠障碍中的作用日益受到关注。本文基于“肠脑轴”理论,系统阐述了高原低氧引起肠道菌群结构紊乱、破坏肠道屏障功能,进而通过免疫炎症激活、神经递质代谢异常及中枢调控失调等多途径引发睡眠障碍的级联机制。重点分析了关键菌群代谢产物在其中的中介作用,并探讨了益生菌通过多靶点修复肠道屏障、调节免疫稳态及恢复神经递质平衡以改善睡眠的潜力,为高原睡眠障碍的防治提供新的理论依据与转化路径。

关键词

高原;睡眠障碍;肠道菌群

1 引言

每年有数百万人进入高海拔地区,超过8000万人长期居住在海拔2500米以上区域。急性低氧暴露可引发高原病,如急性高原病、高原脑水肿与肺水肿等。研究表明,快速进入高海拔的人群中睡眠障碍发生率高达71%–93%^[1]。典型症状包括入睡困难、频繁觉醒、早醒及醒后疲劳,主要表现为睡眠效率下降,深度非快速眼动睡眠减少,慢波睡眠比例降低^[2]。良好的睡眠应包括持续时间、效率和规律性等维度^[3]。而高原低氧环境严重影响急进与长期居住人群的睡眠结构

与质量,引发周期性呼吸与低氧血症等睡眠障碍,严重损害身心健康与作业能力^[4]。值得注意的是,高原原住民族群(如藏族)在长期低氧适应过程中形成独特的肠道菌群结构,表现为厚壁菌门与普雷沃菌属的富集^[5],这种菌群结构被认为有助于维持整体适应能力,包括睡眠稳态。研究显示,肠道菌群及其代谢产物在宿主低氧适应中发挥关键作用^[6],核心菌属(如 *Blautia*) 在增强低氧耐受性与维持肠道健康中具有重要作用。动物与临床研究一致表明,睡眠障碍状态下产丁酸盐菌丰度下降,粪便与血清中丁酸水平显著降低^[7];机制上,丁酸可通过肠脑轴降低下丘脑食欲素神经元活性,增加非快速眼动睡眠时间,改善睡眠结构^[8]。菌群移植实验进一步证实肠道菌群丁酸睡眠障碍之间的因果联系。因此,高

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原低氧可能通过改变肠道菌群结构与功能,减少丁酸等关键代谢物生成,干扰下丘脑食欲素系统,成为高原睡眠障碍的重要机制。本文系统综述高原低氧对肠道菌群的影响及其通过肠脑轴调控睡眠障碍的神经免疫机制,并探讨益生菌干预的潜在作用与策略。

2 高原环境对肠道菌群的改变

2.1 菌群结构变化

高原低氧(>2500 m)显著降低肠道菌群多样性(如急进4500 m人群 Shannon 指数下降25%^[9],导致有益菌(如乳杆菌、双歧杆菌)减少,条件致病菌(如肠杆菌科)增加^[10],破坏黏膜屏障完整性。动物实验中,低氧小鼠菌群 α 多样性呈现不同变化趋势,部分属如阿克曼菌增加,双歧杆菌减少,厚壁菌/拟杆菌比率改变^[11]

长期低氧暴露对菌群的影响更为持久与全面。睡眠障碍患者同样表现出菌群多样性下降与结构异常^[12,13]。其核心机制在于肠脑轴双向调控紊乱^[14]:一方面,菌群失调导致内毒素等有害物质积累;另一方面,肠道作为人体主要的5-羟色胺(95%)和多巴胺(50%)来源,其功能异常通过迷走神经直接干扰睡眠调控^[15]。

2.2 代谢功能受损:

高原低氧环境下,厌氧菌(如产丁酸的毛螺菌科)丰度显著降低,兼性厌氧菌(如变形菌门)增殖加剧肠道氧化应激^[16,17]。尽管部分有益菌(如 *Blautia A*)在适应初期代偿性增加(相对丰度从4.8%升至21.1%)^[18],整体菌群功能多样性仍显著下降,丁酸合成通路关键酶表达受损,导致短链脂肪酸产量减少约30%,SCFAs(如丁酸)已被证实能通过肠-脑轴增加非快速眼动睡眠时间,其缺乏直接削弱了维持睡眠稳态的关键信号^[19]。

2.3 适应性特征差异

世居高原人群(如藏族)肠道中普氏菌属(*Prevotella*)和布劳特氏菌属(*Blautia A*)持续富集,其SCFAs产量较平原人群高40%。这种适应性变化通过增强肠屏障完整性(ZO-1表达上升1.8倍)和抗炎功能(IL-1 β 表达下降50%),显著提高低氧耐受能力。然而,急进高原人群的菌群结构调整滞后,*Blautia A*的增殖需2-4周,在此期间SCFAs缺乏导致肠脑轴调控紊乱^[20]。

2.4 肠屏障损伤级联反应:

机械屏障:低氧抑制紧密连接蛋白(Occludin、Claudin1)表达,导致肠上皮萎缩与脱落^[21]。*Blautia A*可通过激活丁酸GPR109A信号通路促进ZO1合成,但急进高原初期该机制尚未建立。睡眠剥夺进一步加剧肠道损伤,其机制涉及 α 酮戊二酸积累,通过激活PHD2降解HIF1 α ,削弱其在肠道修复中的作用。

免疫屏障:slgA合成减少50%^[22],脂多糖(LPS)易位入血触发全身炎症(血清LPS \uparrow 2.1倍,TNF- α 上升

60%^[23]。*Blautia A*的缺失实验证实其可通过抑制NF- κ B通路降低IL-1 β 水平下降35%,但高原暴露早期其抗炎作用尚未充分发挥。

化学屏障:胃酸分泌减少致胃液pH升高1.5倍,病原菌清除能力下降^[24]。肠道pH值升高进一步抑制*Blautia A*的定植(最适pH=6.0-7.0),形成恶性循环^[25]。“Li等人的研究为此提供了整合性视角:在低氧暴露大鼠中,不仅观察到HPA轴激素(CRH,ACTH,CORT)的全面升高,还发现了核心生物钟蛋白(CLOCK,BMAL1,PER2,CRY2)的表达紊乱。这表明,神经内分泌、免疫与昼夜节律三大系统在低氧应激下协同失常,共同导致了睡眠稳态的崩塌。

2.5 神经内分泌通路

肠道菌群是多种神经活性物质的重要来源。低氧导致GABA菌减少,脑内GABA水平随之降低。同时,肠道嗜铬细胞活性受抑,5-羟色胺(5-HT)合成与释放减少^[26]。5-HT作为关键的睡眠调节分子,其匮乏通过迷走神经削弱对睡眠中枢的抑制。此外,易位的LPS通过激活TLR4/NF- κ B通路,刺激下丘脑-垂体-肾上腺(HPA)轴,导致皮质醇过度释放。高水平的皮质醇具有强烈的促觉醒作用,显著抑制慢波睡眠,导致睡眠结构片段化^[27]。动物模型证实,低氧暴露下丘脑中谷氨酸、去甲肾上腺素等促觉醒神经递质水平升高,而5-HTR1A受体表达下调,共同营造了不利于睡眠的神经化学环境^[28]。

2.6 免疫炎症通路

高原低氧诱导的肠道菌群失调是驱动免疫炎症通路的核心始动因素,其通过破坏肠道局部免疫稳态,导致促炎细胞因子(如IL-6、TNF- α)大量释放入血,并引起Th17/Treg比例失衡^[29]。这些外周炎症信号一方面可能通过受损的血脑屏障直接进入中枢,另一方面,菌群代谢产物(如LPS)及其调控的免疫细胞可经体循环影响大脑^[30-32]。在中枢内,这些信号激活小胶质细胞,催生神经炎症环境,进而直接抑制下丘脑促睡眠神经元功能并干扰褪黑素正常分泌节律,最终导致睡眠结构片段化与深度睡眠减少^[33]。研究证实,补充乳杆菌可通过重塑菌群结构、改善肠道屏障功能并下调系统性炎症,从而有效改善睡眠^[34]。炎症信号可能通过受损的血脑屏障进入中枢,加剧神经炎症,从而扰动睡眠。

2.7 代谢物信号转导

在低氧应激下,肠道菌群失调导致其关键代谢产物短链脂肪酸(SCFAs),尤其是丁酸盐的生成显著减少^[35]。丁酸盐作为重要的表观遗传调控因子,其缺乏会解除对组蛋白去乙酰化酶(HDAC)的抑制,引起HDAC活性异常升高,进而抑制脑源性神经营养因子(BDNF)等关键基因的表达^[36]。最终削弱与睡眠稳态密切相关的神经可塑性及睡眠压力调节能力。与此同时,低氧环境扰动色氨酸代谢,诱导炎症因子显著上调吡啶胺2,3-双加氧酶1(IDO1)活性^[37],驱

使色氨酸底物主要进入犬尿氨酸通路,而非5-羟色胺(5-HT)合成途径;这一代谢分流不仅造成5-HT合成不足,影响其对睡眠觉醒周期的正常调节,且犬尿氨酸通路下游产生的喹啉酸等神经毒性代谢物,可进一步损伤睡眠相关脑区神经元^[38]。因此,低氧通过肠道菌群依赖的SCFAs缺乏及色氨酸代谢失衡,共同构成损害睡眠稳态的重要代谢物信号转导机制^[39]。

3 益生菌干预高原睡眠障碍的作用机制

3.1 增强肠道屏障功能

益生菌通过增强肠道屏障功能,构成其干预高原睡眠障碍的重要机制之一。其保护作用主要体现在以下几个层面:在机械屏障方面,长双歧杆菌JBLC-141可促进紧密连接蛋白(如闭合蛋白、ZO-1)的表达,抑制低氧诱导的肠上皮细胞凋亡^[40]。韦氏布劳特氏菌能提升紧密连接蛋白水平,改善黏膜通透性;罗伊特氏乳杆菌则通过激活Wnt/ β -catenin信号通路,促进Lgr5+干细胞增殖与上皮修复,从而增强屏障结构完整性^[41]。在化学屏障方面,嗜酸乳杆菌A4与植物乳杆菌P-8等菌株可通过促进黏蛋白MUC2表达,强化黏液层屏障,有效阻止病原菌定植与侵袭^[42,43]。此外,益生菌还通过表观遗传途径调控屏障功能,例如约翰逊氏乳杆菌YH1136通过调节miR196a-1-3p与miR-3060-3p的表达,参与细胞外基质与Hippo信号通路,修复屏障损伤并重塑菌群结构^[44,45]。综上所述,益生菌通过多靶点协同增强肠道屏障,减少内毒素易位与系统性炎症,从而间接改善高原低氧环境下的睡眠质量。

3.2 调节肠道免疫应答

益生菌通过调节肠道免疫应答,构成其干预高原睡眠障碍的另一关键机制。其核心作用在于重塑低氧环境下失衡的肠道免疫稳态,从而减轻系统性炎症对睡眠中枢的负面影响。具体而言,益生菌及其代谢产物通过多途径发挥免疫调节作用:厚壁菌门来源的丁酸通过HIF-1 α /糖酵解途径抑制促炎的M1型巨噬细胞极化并促进抗炎的M2型极化,有效下调IL-1 β 、IL-6和TNF- α 等促炎因子水平,同时上调IL-10和TGF- β 等抗炎因子表达^[46],约翰逊氏乳杆菌通过细胞外囊泡增强M2型巨噬细胞极化;长双歧杆菌JBLC-141通过激活Nrf2信号通路抑制IL-6分泌并促进IL-10产生;发酵乳杆菌和唾液乳杆菌则通过调节miR-155和miR-223表达,调控Treg/Th17平衡,抑制促炎因子产生。这些免疫调节作用共同减轻了肠道及系统性炎症水平,阻断了炎症信号通过循环系统向中枢神经系统的传递,从而减轻神经炎症对睡眠调节中枢的干扰,改善睡眠结构紊乱^[47]。

3.3 红细胞—炎症—脑轴

除了肠道菌群依赖的途径外,高原低氧还通过“红细胞-炎症-脑”轴独立影响睡眠调节。研究表明,低氧诱导的红细胞代偿性增多(表现为红细胞计数、血红蛋白和红细胞

比容升高)可作为上游事件,驱动全身性炎症反应(白细胞计数增加)[48]。这种红细胞介导的炎症状态不仅直接损害前额叶执行功能,还导致主观睡眠质量(PSQI评分)下降。重要的是,该通路揭示了睡眠与认知的双向干扰模式:睡眠质量下降通过影响注意力定向网络(P1和N1波幅改变)损害执行功能,而认知功能受损又通过炎症机制反馈性加剧睡眠紊乱,形成以红细胞-炎症为基础的恶性循环。神经电生理证据显示,睡眠效率高的个体其岛叶激活更强,提示该脑区可能在整合炎症信号与维持睡眠-认知稳态中发挥关键作用^[48]。因此,红细胞-炎症-脑轴作为肠-脑轴的并行通路,共同构成了高原睡眠障碍的神经免疫调控网络。

4 结语

高原低氧通过“菌群-肠-脑轴”诱发睡眠障碍的病理机制已逐渐明晰。其核心路径可概括为:低氧暴露导致肠道菌群结构与功能紊乱,进而破坏肠道屏障完整性,引发代谢产物(如SCFAs、GABA)减少与炎症因子(如LPS、IL-6)释放,最终通过神经内分泌紊乱、免疫炎症激活及代谢信号转导异常等多重机制,干扰中枢睡眠调控网络,造成睡眠结构失调。此外,高原低氧亦可能经“红细胞-炎症-脑轴”等肠外通路直接加剧神经炎症与睡眠-认知恶性循环。

在干预策略方面,益生菌展现出多靶点防治潜力,其通过增强肠道屏障功能、调节免疫稳态与恢复神经递质平衡,有效阻断了上述病理进程的多个关键环节,为高原睡眠障碍的微生物干预提供了理论依据。未来研究应致力于:深入解析特定菌株及其代谢产物在睡眠调控中的具体作用机制;阐明菌群-脑信号转导的精确通路;开展基于人群特征的精准益生菌干预研究,推动针对高原睡眠障碍的新型微生物制剂的研发与应用。通过多组学整合与机制探索,有望为高原特殊环境下睡眠健康的维护提供新策略。

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