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基于酸响应性探针的细菌免疫吞噬过程成像
研究

Optical tracking of bacterial immune phagocytosis based on
acid-responsive probes

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**Optical tracking of bacterial immune phagocytosis based on
acid-responsive probes**

A Thesis Presented

by

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摘要

细菌感染与免疫杀死代表着病原体与宿主相互关系中很重要的两个方面，研究细菌感染与免疫反应的关系，有助于对病原体致病机理的理解。吞噬作用作为生命体防御感染的一道防线，是最古老的，也是最基本的防卫机制之一。吞噬细胞通过吞噬感染的细菌形成吞噬体，随后吞噬体逐渐与溶酶体融合形成吞噬溶酶体。溶酶体是细胞的消化器官，其内部 pH 为 4~5，含有各种水解酶。细菌在吞噬溶酶体内被酸性 pH 及水解酶的协同作用降解杀死。

细胞吞噬作用异常则会导致机体的免疫功能缺陷，从而引发一系列的疾病。能够实时追踪细菌吞噬作用的过程对于研究病原微生物的致病机理具有重要意义。目前研究中常利用荧光素标记的乳胶粒子、绿色荧光蛋白(GFP)转染的大肠杆菌来观测吞噬作用。但是这些方法存在诸多缺点，比如乳胶粒子不能模仿真实的细菌感染细胞；GFP 转染的方法不适用于所有的细菌，GFP 荧光一直存在，并且 GFP 的荧光在溶酶体酸性条件下会减弱，导致观测时背景信号很高，不便于区分细胞内外的细菌；同时 GFP 作为一种荧光蛋白在溶酶体中易被降解丧失活性。因此需要发展一种新颖的、简单的可用于示踪病原体入侵细胞的方法。

为了克服以上缺点，我们希望合成一种溶酶体酸响应性荧光探针，将其引入细菌上。当细菌被吞噬细胞吞噬时，在细胞外无荧光进入细胞内产生荧光。为此我们通过非共价键和共价键两种标记细菌的方式来评估其对吞噬成像的效果。第一种是用带有正电荷的二苯基膦基团连接酸响应探针，通过细菌细胞膜跨膜电势差聚集到细菌内部细胞质中实现对细菌的荧光标记。第二种是用 D 型氨基酸连接的酸响应探针共价键标记细菌细胞壁。细菌在生长过程中，吸收 D 型氨基酸构建细胞壁从而把荧光分子代谢到肽聚糖上。细菌在 pH 中性的细胞质中无荧光，而如果被内吞到吞噬溶酶体，探针被酸激活则产生荧光。这种方法有效降低了观察时的背景信号。同时我们合成了一系列探针，实现了用不同颜色的荧光对不同种类细菌的双重标记，这种标记方法几乎不改变细菌表面的天然结构，有效用于自然条件下微生物与宿主细胞间的相互作用的研究。

为了实时动态观测吞噬作用我们采用 D 型赖氨酸连接的酸激活荧光探针罗丹明 101 (ROX) 内酰胺分子标记细菌，同时用异硫氰酸荧光素 (FITC) 连接的 D 型

赖氨酸共同标记，借助于 FITC 的荧光一直存在，可作为内标分子指示吞噬前后细菌的位置。细菌被吞噬之前，ROX 无荧光，当细菌进入吞噬溶酶体内，ROX 被酸激活产生荧光。利用吞噬前无荧光吞噬后产生荧光这一变化来跟踪细菌被细胞吞噬后的情况。实验结果显示，D 型赖氨酸连接的 ROX 内酰胺分子可以有效的标记革兰氏阳性菌和革兰氏阴性菌的细胞壁，完成对吞噬作用实时观测。

实验结果证明我们的方法具有如下优点：该荧光分子具有很好的稳定性在吞噬溶酶体中不容易被降解；该探针在中性 pH 时无荧光而进入吞噬溶酶体后产生荧光有效降低观测时的背景信号；该方法几乎不改变细菌表面的天然结构，有益于研究自然条件下细菌与宿主细胞间的相互作用。

关键词：细菌、肽聚糖、荧光成像、吞噬作用

Abstract

Bacterial infection and immunological eradication are two key aspects of host-pathogen interplay. A precise understanding of host-pathogen interaction is critical for treatment of a variety of infectious diseases. Phagocytosis is an effective anti-bacterial defense. Phagocytes engulf bacteria into phagosomes, which then fuse with lysosomes to form phagolysosomes. Lysosomes are the digestive organelle of cells, characterized by an acidic luminal pH (pH 4-5), and contain many hydrolytic enzymes. Bacteria endocytosis into lysosomes is degraded by the effects of acidic pH and these hydrolytic enzymes.

Abnormal phagocytosis results in disrupted immunity homeostasis and leads to repeated bacterial infection. Realtime visualization of pathogen phagocytosis is of significance for studying pathogenesis. Currently phagocytosis is examined by fluorescently labeled latex particles, or green fluorescent protein (GFP) transfected *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*). These approaches have many shortcomings, with limited choice of bacteria, are often incapable of differentiating ingested particles from extracellular particles owing to intrinsic “always-on” fluorescence, as well as the fluorescence of GFP would be degraded and quenched in the lysosomes.

In order to overcome these problems, we synthesized lysosomal pH responsive probes. We realized the fluorescence labeling of bacteria via non-covalently and covalently forms, and evaluated the effects of phagocytosis imaging. The first way is to use triphenylphosphonium (TPP is a cationic hydrophilic vector) conjugated rhodamine-lactam accumulate in the bacterial cytoplasm due to the transmembrane potentials of bacterial cell membrane. The second way is to use D-Lysine conjugated with ROX-lactam for covalent incorporation into the bacterial cell wall. Bacteria readily absorb D-amino acids to peptidoglycan. Utilizing this metabolic pathway, ROX-D-Lys was incorporated into peptidoglycan. Bacteria are non-fluorescent in neutral cytoplasm, if swallowed into phagolysosomes, would be activated by acid and given fluorescent. This method will effectively reduce the background signal when observing phagocytosis. We have

synthesized a series of probes achieved dual-labeling with different fluorescent colors in different types of bacteria. This method hardly changed the natural structure of the bacterial surface, which is beneficial for reconstitution of the natural bacteria-host cell interaction.

To real-time dynamic observe phagocytosis, we used the covalent labeling of bacterial peptidoglycan with D-lysine conjugated rhodamine X-lactam activatable to acidic pH to give intense fluorescence and D-lysine conjugated FITC which serves as the internal signal reference. Before the bacteria are swallowed, ROX have no fluorescence. When bacteria enter phagolysosome, the fluorescence of ROX activated by acid. By the use of the changes in fluorescence to track bacterial phagocytosis.

As shown by the results, Culturing of *E. coli* and *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus*) with D-lysine conjugated rhodamine-lactam and fluorescein isocyanate (FITC) leads to efficient metabolic incorporation of FITC and rhodamine-lactam into bacterial peptidoglycan. Which could be real time and in situ tracking of phagocytosis. The fluorescent molecule has a good stability in phagolysosomes, which has non-fluorescent in neutral pH and given fluorescent in phagolysosomes. This way maintains the integrity of bacterial surface molecular landscape, which is beneficial for reconstitution of the natural bacteria-host cell interaction.

Key Words: bacteria, peptidoglycan, fluorescence imaging, phagocytosis

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