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动物精子线粒体调节精子质量的研究进展

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摘要 优质的动物精子是确保高质量育种的基本要求, 是完成人工授精、体外受精等辅助生殖技术的重要前提。精子线粒体作为精子内部重要的细胞器, 是精子的能量代谢中心, 参与调节精子超激活运动、精子获能、顶体反应等过程, 从而影响动物精子质量和受精效果。因此, 精子线粒体受到越来越多的研究和关注。由于精子体外保存时, 精子线粒体会受到不同程度的损伤, 导致精液质量、人工授精和体外受精效果下降。近年来, 随着对精子线粒体和精子体外保存介质的深入研究, 精子体外保存时线粒体损伤变小或其功能增强能够维持或提高精子体外保存质量, 从而满足生产需要。本文综述了精子线粒体的结构特性, 及其氧化磷酸化产生三磷酸腺苷(ATP)、活性氧(ROS)和维持精子细胞内钙(Ca²⁺)稳态的功能对精子质量的调节及其相互耦合作用, 以期探究精子线粒体调节精子质量的机制和优化精液体外保存介质提供一定的思路及方向。

关键词 精子线粒体; 活性氧; Ca²⁺稳态; ATP; 精子质量

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精子线粒体氧化磷酸化产生ATP, 为精子运动提供能量; 而氧化磷酸化过程发生电子泄露产生的少量活性氧(reactive oxygen species, ROS), 可以促进精子超激活运动、精子获能和顶体反应等, 从而提高精子活力和受精能力。精子线粒体摄取的Ca²⁺可参与维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态, 也可激活合成ATP所需酶活性, 以保证精子运动所需ATP的正常产生。线粒体损伤或功能受阻时会导致精子形态异常, 运动能力降低^[1]。精液在生产或加工过程中, 易使精子发生氧化应激^[2]或Ca²⁺超载^[3], 导致精子线粒体通透性过渡孔打开, 使细胞色素c等凋亡因子释放, 胱天肽酶(caspases)被激活, 造成精子细胞凋亡。因此, 线粒体对维持精子功能和精液质量至关重要。

本文系统综述了精子线粒体如何通过能量代谢(ATP生成)、氧化还原产生ROS及钙稳态等功能调控精子质量, 并探讨精子线粒体功能在高活力精子筛选、体外保存技术优化中的应用潜力, 以期对合理利用精子线粒体功能来提高精子质量提供新思路。

1 精子线粒体结构特性

线粒体是精子内部重要的细胞器, 位于精子尾部中段^[4], 细长的精子线粒体以螺旋的方式包裹在外层致密的纤维轴突复合体周围, 从而形成了圆柱形的线粒体鞘。在鞘内, 相邻的线粒体两端及沿其外侧表面相互连接, 线粒体在精子内的排列方式可用于某些精子所需蛋白质的共同翻译, 提高蛋白质合成速率^[5]。精子线粒体有2层膜: 线粒体外膜(outer mitochondrial membrane, OMM)和线粒体内膜(inner mitochondrial membrane, IMM), 这2层膜被膜间隙隔开^[6]。OMM是多孔的, 含有线粒体孔蛋白, 允许离子和不带电的小分子自由通过; IMM是一种富含蛋白质的脂质双分子层, 离子和代谢底物只能通过特定的运输蛋白进入。IMM折叠形成嵴, 延伸到基质中, 负责线粒体的能量转换^[7], 并进行氧化磷酸化形成ATP。Ca²⁺可通过位于IMM的单向转运体(MCU)进入基质空间^[8], 参与维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态。精子线粒体内含有环状基因组、线粒体DNA和特定核糖体^[9], 可合成蛋白质, 保证精子运动。

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优质的精子具有较高的顶体完整率、受精能力、超激活运动,较低的精子畸形率等。精子线粒体能够在成熟精子中保留,并影响精子质量^[10]。Gu等^[11]研究了7种哺乳动物(人、鼠、狗、兔、山羊、猪、公牛)的精子形态和线粒体功能,发现伴随线粒体数量增多,精子活力和ATP产量也上升,这表明精子线粒体在一定程度上影响精子质量。总之,精子线粒体具有多种功能,包括合成ATP、产生ROS、维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态^[12]。因此,维持动物精子线粒体功能对于保证精子质量至关重要。

2 精子线粒体氧化磷酸化产生ATP调节精子质量

精子运动需要能量^[13],受精前精子所经历的过程,如运动、超激活、获能和顶体反应所需的能量均由ATP提供。在精子鞭毛的不同区域主要通过2种代谢途径产生ATP,即线粒体呼吸(氧化磷酸化过程)^[14]和糖酵解^[15]。Sun等^[16]在小鼠精液中添加氧化磷酸化解偶联剂——羰基氰化物间氯苯腈,抑制精子线粒体活性,从而建立糖酵解模型;加入丙酮酸作为线粒体氧化磷酸化底物,从而建立线粒体呼吸模型;2种模型均加入氟化钠(NaF),发现线粒体呼吸模型中精子的活力和ATP的产量显著降低,而糖酵解产生的ATP没有降低,证明了线粒体呼吸产生的ATP可在一定程度上影响精子运

动,当线粒体呼吸产生的ATP降低时,精子活力随之下降。因此,线粒体氧化磷酸化受阻时会影响精子活力。

如图1所示,线粒体呼吸时,内膜上还原性烟酰胺腺嘌呤二核苷酸脱氢酶(nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide, NADH)氧化脱氢,电子经呼吸链传递给氧生成水,在电子传递过程中释放大量自由能驱动H⁺从线粒体基质跨过内膜进入膜间隙,从而形成跨线粒体内膜的H⁺梯度,这形成的电势驱动二磷酸腺苷磷酸化形成ATP。H⁺进入膜间隙导致线粒体内膜两侧质子及其他离子浓度分布不对称,这时形成线粒体膜电位(mitochondrial membrane potential, MMP)^[17]。在此过程中,酶活性、线粒体呼吸速率和耗氧量、MMP均与精子质量相关^[18]。线粒体电子传递链(electron transport chain, ETC)的酶活性会对精子活力产生影响。例如,Ruiz-Pesini等^[19]通过检测222份人精液样本中线粒体酶活性(柠檬酸合酶和呼吸复合物I, II, I+III, II+III和IV)与精液质量的相关性,发现线粒体酶活性与精子活力相关,其中柠檬酸合酶和复合物II(琥珀酸脱氢酶)与精子活力高度相关。Tomar等^[20]通过研究不育男性和正常男性精子琥珀酸脱氢酶的活性,发现在正常男性的精子中琥珀酸脱氢酶高度集中在精子尾部中段,在不育男性精子头部和尾部中段区域观察到弥漫和分散的琥珀酸脱氢酶,这说明集中分布在精子尾部中

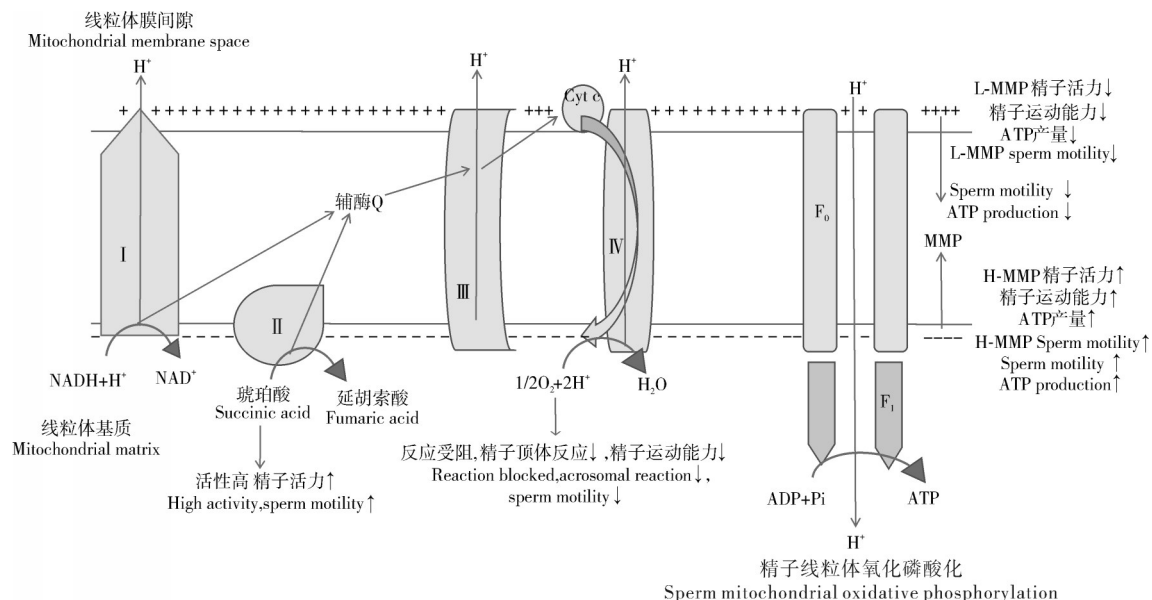


图1 精子线粒体电子传递链与氧化磷酸化调控机制及其对精子活力的影响^[17,19,21-22,25]

Fig.1 Regulation mechanism of electron transport chain and oxidative phosphorylation in sperm mitochondria and its effect on sperm motility

段的琥珀酸脱氢酶参与维持精子活力,且琥珀酸脱氢酶的数量和分布可以影响精子活力。氧化磷酸化消耗氧气,线粒体呼吸速率和耗氧量影响精子顶体反应和精子运动能力。例如,Ramió-lluch等^[21]研究公猪精子体外获能和黄体酮诱导的顶体反应期间的线粒体活性变化,观察到线粒体顶体反应期间耗氧量的峰值。Stendardi等^[22]在研究人类精子体外获能过程中测定正常男性精子和进行游泳选择精子的线粒体耗氧量和精子活力,发现进行游泳选择的精子具有较强的运动活力,且其线粒体表现出较高的耗氧量,同时精子线粒体呼吸和磷酸化之间存在良好的耦合。因此,线粒体呼吸速率和耗氧量与精子活力呈正相关。

MMP与精子质量之间也存在正相关^[23]。线粒体内外膜之间的电位差是维持线粒体功能和能量产生的重要因素。低MMP(L-MMP)精子ATP的产生较低,造成精子活力下降,而高MMP(H-MMP)精子则表现出较好的精子活力。Gallon等^[24]将男性精子分选出H-MMP精子和L-MMP精子并进行比较评估,发现H-MMP精子运动能力、正常精子数目、自发顶体反应率、受精能力显著优于L-MMP精子。Kumar等^[25]通过收集成年大鼠精子并评估线粒体膜电位,发现H-MMP精子运动能力较强,精子活力高,但H-MMP精子会随着时间的增加而减少。Triin等^[26]通过测量公牛精子线粒体活性并进行精子活力分析,发现解冻后和游泳选择后精液的MMP与精子活力呈极显著($P<0.01$)正相关。因此,MMP反映了精子线粒体的能量状态,线粒体ATP产量增加,MMP则越高,精子活力就越强。

精子线粒体呼吸速率、耗氧量和MMP可以用来监测精子线粒体ATP产量变化。精子线粒体ATP产量增多,精子活力增强,伴随线粒体呼吸速率、耗氧量和MMP增强。因此,线粒体呼吸速率、耗氧量和MMP可用来筛选运动能力较强的精子。但目前通过精子线粒体判断精子活力强弱的方法较为有限,成本较高,可加大对精子线粒体代谢的研究,以开发更好的方法判断精子活力强弱,更好应用于生产需要。

3 精子线粒体产生ROS调节精子质量

精液在体外保存或体外加工时,易产生ROS影

响精子质量。精液中ROS生成途径包括内源性和外源性,其中内源性途径是通过精子质膜氧化还原系统和ETC链生成ROS^[27-28]。在线粒体内膜上氧化磷酸化产生ATP时,ETC链上的电子传递会发生电子泄露,部分氧被还原成超氧化阴离子(O_2^-),而线粒体基质中的锰超氧化歧化酶(manganese superoxide dismutase, Mn-SOD)在线粒体膜间隙迅速将超氧化阴离子(O_2^-)歧化成过氧化氢(H_2O_2)^[29]。若此过程失衡,会产生一系列活性氧(ROS),其中既包括 O_2^- 、 $\cdot OH$ 等自由基,也包括 H_2O_2 等非自由基。

精子内适量的ROS可以提高精子质量。例如精子发生期间,ROS可氧化附睾尾侧的精蛋白和大多数半胱氨酸残基以形成二硫键,使染色质更紧凑,从而形成稳定的核DNA,使精子能够保证正常的形态和稳定的遗传功能^[30]。O'Flaherty等^[31]研究发现,冷冻保存的牛精子解冻后,在被肝素激活的精子中添加SOD或过氧化氢酶,发现溶血磷脂酰胆碱诱导的顶体反应被抑制,而在精液中添加外源性 O_2^- ,发现在获能期间用溶血磷脂酰胆碱诱导牛精子发生顶体反应的精子数量显著增加。适量的ROS也可以通过氧化还原反应调节蛋白酪氨酸磷酸化促进精子获能,显著提高精子结合透明带的能力,促进精卵质膜融合^[32]。因此,将ROS产生的速率保持在生理水平对精子功能很重要。适量的ROS水平,可维持并促进正常的精子功能,特别是运动性、获能、顶体反应、超激活和受精能力、细胞信号传导和精子-卵子相互作用^[1,33-34]。

精子内ROS水平过高时,会影响精子质量并增加遗传缺陷的风险,导致氧化应激。例如,在25%~40%的不育男性精子中检测出高水平ROS,这可能是导致男性不育的关键原因^[35-36]。Darr等^[37]通过使用流式细胞仪、DHE荧光探针测量马精子 O_2^- 的产生来监测精子细胞中ROS的生成,评估发现平均精子活力、平均精子运动速度与ROS产生呈显著负相关。Awda等^[38]将新鲜公猪精子暴露于黄嘌呤(xanthine, X)和黄嘌呤氧化酶(xanthine oxidase, XO)的ROS生成系统30 min后,发现多数精子在暴露于ROS生成系统时会增加精子中 H_2O_2 含量和脂质过氧化水平(lipid peroxidation, LPO),从而抑制精子活力。牛统娟^[39]在研究常温保存过程中ROS诱导猪精子凋亡时,将大白公猪精液稀释后于4℃常温保存不同时长(0、1、3、5、7、9 d),诱导ROS产生,分别测定保存不同时间的ROS水平和精子质量,发现保存时

间越长,产生ROS越多,精子存活率、精子质膜完整率、精子顶体完整率也显著降低。Zhang等^[40]将猪精液浸没在-196℃的液氮中冷冻保存28 d,精液冷冻过程中生成的ROS会攻击质膜上的不饱和脂肪酸,从而改变精子的功能和结构,解冻后发现精子线粒体膜电位改变、线粒体数量减少、线粒体DNA受损、ATP水平显著降低,精子活力、质膜完整性、精子染色质结构受损,部分精子细胞凋亡。Urata等^[41]将人精液与内毒素接触孵育60 min,测量ROS活性,发现内毒素显著诱导ROS产生;同时对精子质量进行评估,发现精子活力显著降低。Treulen等^[42]将男性精液在37℃条件下用Bcl-2促凋亡蛋白(T-737)的模拟物处理4 h,诱导线粒体外膜透化(mitochondrial outer membrane permeabilization, MOMP),增加细胞内ROS水平,发现MMP降低,精子运动速度下降。Liu等^[43]将山羊精液低温(4℃)保存诱导ROS增加,发现精子线粒体膜发生LPO,线粒体膜通透性降低,精子细胞凋亡。Ma等^[44]通过研究在山羊精子培养基中加入溶菌酶质粒孵育前后(37℃, 30 min)线粒体功能和运动性的变化,发现山羊精子在加入溶菌酶质粒后,精子活力下降,线粒体膜电位降低,产生ROS,进一步促进细胞色素c的表达,最终导致精子功能障碍,精子细胞凋亡。Baumber等^[45]通过研究分离马精子与精浆,将精子放于X和XO中孵育30 min产生

ROS,并分析精子活力,发现精子活力和顶体完整率下降,线粒体膜电位变低,过氧化氢产量显著增加,精子运动参数显著降低。Zhang等^[46]将鸡精子暴露在16.4 kV的非热等离子体20 s,以扩增ROS信号转导,发现精子活力、顶体完整率和DNA完整性显著下降。Kadirvel等^[47]研究发现,精子中ROS和LPO水平在0~72 h呈线性增加,其中保存48 h和72 h组ROS和LPO水平显著高于新鲜精液,精液中具有高MMP和DNA完整性的精子比例随保存时间增加而呈线性减少,如表1所示。

当精子内ROS水平上升时,精子内部的抗氧化防御系统能中和精子细胞内多余的ROS,其中位于精子细胞质和线粒体中的SOD发挥重要作用^[48]。SOD可以保护细胞免受线粒体电子传递链中电子泄露所产生的O₂⁻·的毒性作用^[49]。然而当ROS水平过高,超过抗氧化防御系统调节范围,则会诱发氧化应激,导致精子活力、运动性、MMP降低,从而严重损害精子质量。由于精子质膜富含多不饱和脂肪酸,ROS可氧化不饱和脂肪酸使精子质膜发生LPO^[50],产生丙二醛^[51],损害精子结构,阻碍精子运动,降低精子活力,影响精子质量。因此,应保持ROS生成和抗氧化防御之间的最佳平衡,以保证优质的精子质量。

严格监测和调控精子内ROS的含量,防止因精子内ROS过多导致精子发生氧化应激、影响精子质

表1 不同应激源及保存条件下哺乳动物精子质量的比较

Table 1 Comparison of mammalian sperm quality under different stressors and preservation conditions

品种 Species	应激源/处理物 Stressor/Disposer	处理时间 Processing time	目的 Aim	效果 Effect	参考文献 Reference
	黄嘌呤和黄嘌呤氧化酶的ROS生成系统	30 min	诱导ROS产生	精子活力降低,精子中H ₂ O ₂ 含量增加,LPO增加	[38]
猪 Boars	常温保存	0、1、3、5、7、9 h	诱导ROS产生	精子活率降低,精子质膜完整率降低,精子顶体完整率降低	[39]
	冷冻保存	28 d	精液冷冻会生成ROS	MMP降低,线粒体数量降低,ATP水平降低,精子活力降低,质膜完整性降低	[40]
	内毒素	60 min	诱导ROS产生	精子活力降低	[41]
人 Human	Bcl-2促凋亡蛋白ABT-737的模拟物	4 h	诱导MOMP,增加细胞内ROS	MMP降低,精子轨迹速度降低,精子直线速度降低,精子平均路径速度降低	[42]
	低温保存(4℃)	30 min	诱导ROS产生	线粒体膜通透性降低,LPO增加,精子死亡率增加	[43]
山羊 Goats	溶菌酶质粒	30 min	比较加入前后线粒体功能和运动性的变化	精子活力降低,MMP降低,精子死亡率增加	[44]
马 Equine	黄嘌呤和黄嘌呤氧化酶的ROS生成系统	孵育30 min	诱导ROS产生	精子活力降低,顶体完整率降低,线粒体膜H ₂ O ₂ 产量增加	[45]
鸡 Chickens	16.4 kV的非热等离子体	20 s	扩增ROS信号转导	精子活力降低,精子顶体完整率降低,DNA的完整性降低,总生育力降低	[46]
水牛 Buffalo	4℃低温液体保存	0、24、48、72 h	诱导ROS产生	高MMP精子数降低,精子DNA完整性降低,LPO增加	[47]

量。首先,氧化应激是电子过剩的结果,因此要防止MMP过高导致的线粒体ROS大量产生,监测并调节线粒体的代谢状态(以ATP合成来衡量)以防止内源性ROS产生过多。其次,在生产中,可以在精液培养基中加入抗氧化剂,增强精液抗氧化系统的功能,抑制ROS自由基的产生,从而显著降低ROS对精子质量的影响。

4 精子线粒体参与维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态

研究发现精子中存在很少的mRNA转录和翻译^[52]。因此,精子常通过控制细胞内信使的浓度来控制“遗传”蛋白质的活动,包括环核苷酸(cAMP和cGMP)、一氧化氮和Ca²⁺,而通过线粒体摄取Ca²⁺调节蛋白质功能是一系列活动的核心^[53]。在动物精子中,调节细胞内Ca²⁺浓度的系统包括线粒体^[54]、CatSper通道^[55]和电压门控钙离子通道^[56]等。线粒体是Ca²⁺最重要的调节剂和靶标之一,精子线粒体可以参与维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态。

Ca²⁺通过精子线粒体内膜上的MCU积累到线粒体基质中,精子线粒体摄取Ca²⁺时能够激活TCA脱氢酶,促进ATP产生,为精子运动提供能量^[57]。Li等^[58]将杜洛克公猪精子在含Ca²⁺培养基中孵育2.5 h后进行精子活力评估、蛋白质检测、ATP测定,发现在低浓度Ca²⁺培养基中糖酵解关键酶——磷酸脱氢酶的活性高,精子活力强。因此,Ca²⁺也可以通过调节GAPDH活性来调节ATP产量,从而影响精子质量。Bravo等^[59]在男性精液中添加Ru360进行MCU阻断,阻止Ca²⁺内流,结果发现MCU阻断显著降低了精子活力和ATP水平,表明Ca²⁺通过MCU进入线粒体基质在维持精子活力和ATP水平方面发挥着重要作用。当精子细胞内Ca²⁺浓度较高时,线粒体通过Na⁺/Ca²⁺交换剂将精子细胞内游离Ca²⁺排出,以维持精子细胞内Ca²⁺稳态^[60]。通过允许Ca²⁺从细胞外空间进入线粒体或由线粒体排出到细胞质来实现Ca²⁺的信号传导,维持精子细胞内的Ca²⁺稳态。Yanagimachi^[61]在仓鼠精子培养基中添加Ca²⁺,可以体外维持精子的超激活。Marquez等^[62]研究pH值是否影响Ca²⁺引起的精子超激活时发现,对牛精子施加碱性刺激能够有效引发Ca²⁺内流,从而使牛精子超激活。Suarez等^[63]发现Ca²⁺与鞭毛轴突相互作用开启了精子的超激活,增强了精子脱离输卵管壁的能力,增强了精子穿透卵母细胞

透明带的能力,提高了精子的活力,从而提高了受精能力。Krausz等^[64]研究发现用黄体酮刺激男性精子可促进精子细胞内Ca²⁺浓度增加,提高精子活力,增加受精率。精子细胞内Ca²⁺水平升高是受精前的一个重要特征,Ca²⁺可以参与调节精子获能、超激活和顶体反应,提高精子活力,增加受精能力^[65-66]。

虽然精子线粒体具有积累Ca²⁺的功能,然而当精子细胞内Ca²⁺异常增加、无法排出时,会发生Ca²⁺超载导致精子线粒体结构损伤和功能障碍,影响精子质量^[67]。Li等^[58]将杜洛克公猪精子在含Ca²⁺培养基中孵育2.5 h后进行精子活力评估、蛋白质检测、ATP测定,发现精子在高浓度Ca²⁺培养基中活力较差,ATP产生较少,精子质量较差。低于引起Ca²⁺超载阈值的Ca²⁺水平对ATP的产生至关重要,高水平的Ca²⁺会导致能量稳态的完全崩溃。当线粒体处于Ca²⁺超载状态时,氧化磷酸化ADP的能力会受到损害,从而影响精子活力,降低精子质量^[68]。而细胞内Ca²⁺的持续升高会导致线粒体功能受损从而诱导细胞凋亡^[69]。因此,细胞内Ca²⁺水平也可作为检测精子质量的1个指标。Fanaei等^[70]在男性精子培养基中应用钙离子载体(A23187)诱导精子Ca²⁺超载,发现精子活力显著降低,精子死亡率和DNA损伤增加。然而当精子在含有A23187和 α -生育酚组合的培养基中孵育时,发现 α -生育酚可以有效缓解A23187导致的Ca²⁺超载,减少对精子的毒害作用。因此,实际生产中可在精子培养基中添加 α -生育酚以缓解精子细胞Ca²⁺超载导致的精子凋亡。此外,Bhounik等^[71]通过研究发现山羊精子活力所需的细胞外Ca²⁺的最佳浓度为10 μ mol/L,超过该值则会明显抑制其精子活力。因此,当确定了动物精子活力所需的细胞外最佳Ca²⁺浓度,可在生产中适当调整精子培养基中的Ca²⁺浓度,以提高精子活力,从而提高动物精子受精能力。

5 结语与展望

精子线粒体呼吸链联合ETC链产生ATP,ETC链电子泄露产生少量ROS,以及位于IMM的MCU可摄取少量Ca²⁺,均可调节精子质量。精子线粒体摄取的Ca²⁺可激活合成ATP所需酶活性,保证ATP的产生,从而为精子运动提供能量;精子线粒体摄取的Ca²⁺与产生的少量ROS调节精子超激活、精子获能和顶体反应,提高精子活力。但是,若精子线粒体在产生ATP过程中ETC链受损,则导致精子活力下

降;ROS产生和摄取Ca²⁺过多可发生氧化应激和Ca²⁺超载,导致Caspases被激活,精子细胞发生凋亡。

精子线粒体对于维持雄性动物精液质量起着至关重要的作用,其氧化磷酸化效率、ROS动态平衡及Ca²⁺稳态的协同作用,是维持精子质量的关键生物学基础。因此,在精液生产加工过程中,应密切关注精子内ROS水平和Ca²⁺浓度,可通过优化保存介质氧分压,抑制ETC链的电子泄漏,减少O₂^{-·}等自由基的过量生成;也可依据物种特异性设定细胞外Ca²⁺最佳阈值,避免线粒体Ca²⁺超载引发的膜电位崩溃及凋亡通路激活。在未来也可增加对预防动物精子细胞内Ca²⁺超载药物的研究,以维持精子活力;同时,应深入探究动物精子线粒体调节精子质量的机制,以期开发有效的干预措施,比如开发能够提高精子线粒体氧化磷酸化产生ATP水平、抑制ROS产生和具有最佳Ca²⁺浓度的储存介质,也可构建基于MMP和ATP/ROS比值的精子质量实时监测体系,结合人工智能算法预测精子最优保存条件,突破现有精液保存技术的瓶颈,提高动物体内外精子质量及其保存效果,实现高效繁殖。

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Progress on regulation of quality of sperm by mitochondria in animal sperm

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Abstract Sperms with high-quality in animals are the fundamental requirement for ensuring the breeding with high-quality and an important prerequisite for the completion of assisted reproductive technologies including artificial insemination and *in vitro* fertilization. Mitochondria in sperms, as important organelles inside sperm, are the energy metabolism center of sperm and participate in regulating processes including the hyperactivation and capacitation of sperms, the reaction of acrosome, etc., thereby affecting the quality of sperm and the efficiency of fertilization in animals. Therefore, mitochondria in sperms are receiving more and more researches and attention. The quality of semen, artificial insemination, and *in vitro* fertilization may decrease due to the varying degrees of damage to mitochondria in sperms during *in vitro* storage. The reduction of mitochondrial damage or the enhancement of mitochondrial function during *in vitro* storage of sperms can maintain or improve the quality of sperm *in vitro* storage to meet needs for production with the in-depth study of mitochondria in sperms and the media for *in vitro* storage of sperms in recent years. This article reviewed the structural characteristics of mitochondria in sperms and the functions of mitochondria in sperms in regulating the quality of sperm through oxidative phosphorylation to produce adenosine triphosphate (ATP), reactive oxygen species (ROS), and maintaining the intracellular homeostasis of calcium (Ca^{2+}) in sperm cells to regulate the quality of sperm and its mutual coupling. It will provide some ideas and directions for studying the mechanism of mitochondria in sperms in regulating the quality of sperm and optimizing the media for *in vitro* storage of semen.

Keywords sperm mitochondria; reactive oxygen species (ROS); homeostasis of calcium; adenosine triphosphate (ATP); quality of sperm

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