

昆虫生物钟分子调控研究进展^{*}

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摘 要 昆虫生物钟节律的研究是人类了解生物节律的重要途径。昆虫在生理和行为上具有广泛的节律活动,如运动、睡眠、学习记忆、交配、嗅觉等节律活动,其中昼夜活动行为为节律的研究广泛而深入。昆虫乃至高等动物普遍具有保守的昼夜节律系统,昼夜生物钟节律主要包括输入系统:用于接受外界光和温度等环境信号并传入核心振荡器,使得生物时钟与环境同步;核心时钟系统:自我维持的昼夜振荡器;输出系统:将生物钟产生的信号传递出去而控制生物行为和生理的节律变化。早期分子和遗传学研究主要关注昼夜节律振荡器的分子机制及神经生物学,阐明了昼夜生物钟节律的主要分子机制及相关神经网络。最近更多的研究关注生物钟信号是如何输入和输出。本文以果蝇运动节律的相关研究为主要内容,围绕生物钟输入系统、振荡器、输出系统这3个组成部分对昆虫生物钟研究进展进行总结。

关键词 昆虫, 昼夜节律, 生物钟, 钟基因, 神经网络

Advances in molecular regulation of insect circadian clock

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Abstract Insects display a wide range of circadian rhythms in their behavior and physiology, such as locomotor activity, sleep, learning and memory, mating and smell. Almost all animals have conserved circadian systems. Animal circadian systems include input pathways, a core clock system and output pathways. Input pathways are the means by which circadian oscillators receive information from the environment, such as light signals and temperature changes. This allows the oscillator to remain synchronized with the environmental day-night cycle. The core clock system is an oscillator that contains the molecular mechanism that generates self-sustained rhythmicity. Output pathways transmit signals from the oscillator to produce observable rhythms in behavior and physiology. Early genetic studies, which focused on molecular mechanisms of circadian oscillators and neurobiology, clarified the main molecular mechanism and neural networks involved in circadian rhythms. More recent research focuses on how the clock receives signals from the input system and transmits signals to the output system. In this paper, we summarize research on the insect circadian clock's input and output pathways and oscillator.

Key words insect, circadian rhythm, clock, clock genes, neural network

许多生物过程以内源时钟机制维持其自身的生理和行为过程以适应外界环境。从低等生物到高等生物,都处在昼夜交替的节律之中,它们的许多行为活动表现出相应的节律性。昆虫生物钟节律的研究是人类了解生物节律的重要途径。昆虫的许多生理和行为如睡眠、趋光性、学习记忆、羽化、取食和代谢、交配产卵、免疫等都表现出一定

的生物钟节律(Allada and Chung, 2010)。

生物钟由3个主要部分构成,1. 输入系统:接受外界环境信号并传入核心振荡器,使得生物时钟与环境同步;2. 核心时钟系统:是能够自我维持的昼夜振荡器,由一组呈现节律表达的钟基因和相应的蛋白组成,用于控制时间;3. 输出系统:将生物钟产生的信号传递出去而控制生物行为和

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生理变化 (Cermakian and Sassone-Corsi, 2000)。这三部分彼此协调,相互作用形成复杂的昼夜节律网络,使得生物的各种活动具有节律性 (Lakin-Thomas, 2000)。输入系统由感受器和传入路径组成,是指生物体接受外界环境信号(如光照、温度、食物等)并传入到振荡器,从而导引生物钟,调节相关基因的表达。输入系统包括一个自我调控的反馈环路,并且能够被中央振荡器所调控

(Lakin-Thomas, 2000)。昼夜振荡器由一组呈现节律性表达的钟基因和钟蛋白组成生物钟运作的核心元件,接收外界信号,引起钟基因启动和表达,控制钟信号的输出系统。输出系统将昼夜振荡器产生的时间信号传出到特定的外周组织,经体液和神经途径传递至效应器,从而调节特定的生理、生化和行为过程(图1)。本文将从上述3个方面对昆虫生物钟的研究进展进行阐述。

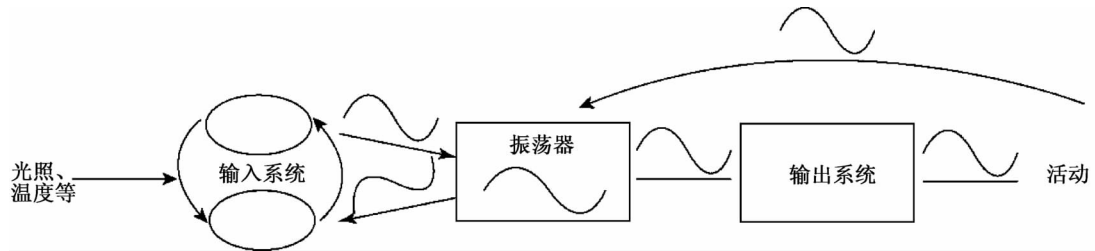


图1 果蝇昼夜生物钟的黑匣子模型 (Lakin-Thomas, 2000)

Fig. 1 The 'black box' model of circadian system in *Drosophila* (Lakin-Thomas, 2000)

波浪线表示有节律的信号。The squiggle indicates a rhythmic signal.

1 昆虫节律生物钟导引

1.1 输入系统

环境中周期性变化的光照、温度、食物以及系统交互作用都能诱导生理节律的昼夜振荡,而光照则普遍认为是节律生物钟最重要的环境因子。在 12L/12D (light-dark, LD) 的光周期条件下,野生型黑腹果蝇具有 2 个明显的昼夜运动节律。一个是在早高峰(黎明或开灯前),另一个发生在晚高峰(黄昏或关灯前)。光感受器是昆虫导引或重置生物钟的重要元件,比如昆虫的复眼等。遗传学研究显示,果蝇的外在光感受器位于复眼和单眼,内围的光感受器位于视网膜下的 H-B 小眼和对蓝光敏感的光受体蛋白隐花色素 (CRYPTOCHROME, CRY) (Emery *et al.*, 2000b; Hall, 2000)。光信号是由视紫素 (rhodopsin, Rh) 和 CRY 传导的。光能激活 CRY 蛋白并结合 TIM 蛋白,引起其降解,从而导引生物钟时相变化 (Stanewsky *et al.*, 1998; Ceriani *et al.*, 1999) (图2)。CRY 依赖的 TIM 降解是一间接的过程,通过 F-box 蛋白 JETLAG 的参与 (Koh, 2006; Peschel *et al.*, 2009)。除了作为一个感受器外,CRY 也可能参与外周时钟的维持,发挥转录抑制

的作用 (Collins *et al.*, 2006), 并且介导时钟对温度的反应。CRY 缺失的情况下, TIM 介导的生物钟在一些神经元起搏器中仍然存在,因此还有其他重要的时钟相关光感受和同步化机制存在。Chen 等 (2011) 发现 QUASIMODO (QSM) 表达于 CRY 阴性的钟神经元,能够独立于 CRY 在一些神经元介导光输入。在 LD 条件下, Cry^b (一种 CRY 功能缺失的突变体) 仍维持一定的运动节律,说明视紫素对 CRY 的功能缺失具有一定的补偿效应 (Collins *et al.*, 2005)。研究表明, Rh1 和 Rh6 参与红光的导引 (Hanai *et al.*, 2008), Rh1, Rh5 和 Rh6 则参与绿光和黄光 (Hanai and Ishida, 2009) 的导引。

温度是昆虫另外一个重要的环境因子,尤其是在黑暗的环境中。温度的周期或梯度变化可以引起生物钟发生相位改变以适应环境的时间周期 (Zimmerman *et al.*, 1968; Ikeda and Tomioka, 1993)。但是,温度导引的生物钟同步化分子机制目前还不清楚。在果蝇中发现,温度梯度变化影响钟基因的转录水平。全光照条件下,温度梯度递增上调 *clk* 基因的表达,而梯度递减则下调其表达。相反, *per*, *tim*, *vri*, *pdple* 的表达与温度递增和递减方向相反。对温度的节律振荡反应在 Clk^{jrk}

突变体果蝇中几乎消失,这表明 *clk* 基因可能是温度导引节律变化的重要组成 (Yoshii *et al.*, 2007)。另外,研究发现 *nocte* 和 PLC 可能也参与温度导引的生物钟节律 (Glaser and Stanewsky, 2005)。PLC 参与温度介导的 *per* 剪切 (Majercak *et al.*, 2004),在低温条件下,*per* 基因 3'UTR 一个内含子的剪切增强,导致 PER 蛋白的快速聚集 (Majercak *et al.*, 1999)。

1.2 昆虫节律生物钟网络

通过 *tim*、*per* 等钟基因的 mRNA 或蛋白的检测,目前已发现果蝇成虫脑中有大约 150 个钟神经元(果蝇大约有 250 000 个神经元)(Zerr *et al.*, 1990; Ewer *et al.*, 1992; Kaneko *et al.*, 1997)。按照位置大致分为 8 组 (Chang, 2006; Helfrich-Förster, 2006):4 组位于视叶 (optic lobe) 和脑中中部之间的侧神经元 (lateral neurons, LNs),包括腹侧神经元 (ventral lateral neurons, LNvs)、背侧神经元 (dorsal lateral neurons, LNds)。其中,腹侧神经元分为大的腹外侧神经元 (large ventral lateral neurons, l-LNv)、小的腹外侧神经元 (small ventral lateral neurons, s-LNv) 和神经色素驱散因子 (pigmented dispersing factor, PDF) 阴性的第 5 小腹外侧神经元 (5th s-LNv)。一组位于脑中部后侧的神经元,称为侧后神经元 (lateral posterior neurons, LPNs)。其余 3 组神经元位于脑背部,称为背神经元 (dorsal neurons, DN),包括 DN1、DN2、DN3 3 组神经元 (Hall, 2000)。

侧神经元 LNs 是唯一表达 PDF 的神经元 (Renn *et al.*, 1999)。关于钟神经元的显示,3 个 Cry 阳性的 LNds 神经元和 1 个 PDF 阴性的 5th s-LNv 神经元控制着果蝇晚峰活动,而在 LD 条件下,4 个 PDF 阳性的 s-LNv 控制着早峰活动,并且对全黑暗 (DD) 条件下的活动节律具有重要的调控作用 (Stoleru *et al.*, 2004; Picot *et al.*, 2007)。DNs 神经元对运动节律的维持有一定作用,因为 LNs 神经元缺失的果蝇还能维持几天的正常运动节律 (Murad *et al.*, 2007)。DN1 特异性地驱动全光照 LL 条件下的昼夜振荡行为 (Murad *et al.*, 2007; Stoleru *et al.*, 2007)。LPN 神经元最早被发现只表达 TIM 而不表达 PER (Kaneko and Hall, 2000),现在被认为是钟神经元,发现其与 DN2 神经元共同在温度同步化中起特定的调节作用

(Yoshii *et al.*, 2005; Miyasako *et al.*, 2007)。

事实上,类似的时钟网络在其它昆虫上也有报道,包括丽蝇、蟋蟀、蟑螂等 (Lupien *et al.*, 2003; Wen and Lee, 2008; Shiga and Numata, 2009)。蟑螂和蟋蟀上,PER 神经元位于视叶,类似于果蝇上 LNvs 神经元。并且电生理等实验也验证其对活动节律的产生至关重要 (Colwell and Page, 1990; Tomioka and Chiba, 1992)。类似果蝇上 DN 神经元,位于蟋蟀背原脑的神经元对控制运动节律起着重要作用 (Tomioka and Matsumoto, 2010)。

2 昆虫节律生物钟分子机制

早期通过遗传学和生物化学研究节律行为的方法已经揭示了生物钟的分子机制。到目前,果蝇上已鉴定出多个时钟基因,这些时钟基因及其表达产物组成的相互依赖的转录-翻译反馈环路构成生物钟的核心分子机制 (Hardin, 2006; Kyriacou *et al.*, 2008)。核心时钟基因包括 *period* (*per*)、*timeless* (*tim*)、*clock* (*clk*)、*cycle* (*cyc*) 和 *clockwork orange* (*cwo*)。果蝇 *per* 基因是第 1 个被鉴定和分离出来的生物钟基因 (Konopka and Benzer, 1971),正是对 *per* 的表达研究导致时钟振荡第 1 个分子模型的发现。*per* 发现多年以后,与 *per* 基因同样重要的 *tim* 时钟基因被发现 (Sehgal *et al.*, 1994)。4 年以后,*clk*、*cyc*、*dbt* 等与时钟相关的基因被发现 (Allada *et al.*, 1998; Price *et al.*, 1998; Rutila *et al.*, 1998)。紧接着,*vri* (*vri*) (Blau and Young, 1999) 和 *shaggy* (*sgg*) (Martinek *et al.*, 2001) 时钟基因被发现。最近发现的 *cwo* 基因也是生物钟分子机制的重要组成 (Matsumoto *et al.*, 2007)。所有这些钟基因及其蛋白产物参与复杂的正向和反向反馈环路,从而在单个细胞内分子水平上产生稳定的节律振荡。我们把这些分子机制总结成转录调控、转录后调控和翻译后调控 3 个水平。

2.1 转录调控

转录调控是节律生物钟分子机制的核心。根据蛋白的功能,这些钟基因可以分为转录激活子和转录抑制子两大类。转录激活子包括 Clk、Cyc、PDP1 ϵ , 转录抑制子包括 Per、Tim、Vri 和 Cwo (Hardin, 2005)。Clk/Cyc 异二聚体蛋白在细胞核中结合到启动子含有 E-box 元件 (通常是 CACGTG

酸激酶 DOUBLTIME (DBT), CASEIN KINASE2 (CK2), SHAGGY (SGG) 和磷酸酶 PROTEIN PHOSPHATASE 2A (PP2A), PROTEIN PHOSPHATASE1 (PP1) 等的修饰 (Fang *et al.*, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2007; Kivimae *et al.*, 2008; Meissner *et al.*, 2008)。磷酸化的 PER 和 TIM 可与 E3 泛素化连接酶 SUPERNUMERARY LIMBS (SLIMB) 结合, 引起蛋白的降解 (Chiu *et al.*, 2008) (图 2)。

3 输出系统

在认识果蝇脑部存在不同神经元簇和不同振荡器后, 存在的问题是这些神经元之间是如何传递节律信息并把其输出的? 内在神经元之间的沟通, 需要维持基本的分子节律。改变起搏器的膜兴奋性或者破坏不同神经元之间的肽信号会中断

或抑制分子节律 (Nitabach *et al.*, 2002)。在 LNvs 神经元中过表达钾离子通道会消除行为节律, 同时消除这些细胞的分子节律 (Nitabach *et al.*, 2002)。

果蝇昼夜生物钟的输出主要涉及神经递质和膜兴奋性的研究。谷氨酸和多种神经肽 (PDF、NPF、sNPF、ITP、IPN-amide (NPLP1)) 可能成为果蝇生物钟输出的重要信号分子 (图 3)。果蝇脑部 DN1s 和 DN3s 神经元发现囊泡膜谷氨酸转移酶, 而 sLNv 发现有代谢型谷氨酸受体, 下调受体功能后发现 LD 条件下果蝇活动模式发生变化, DD 条件下周期延长。遗传学、解剖学和药理学等实验也验证了其它一些小分子可能参与生物钟神经环路的突触传递等。如乙酰胆碱、组胺、五羟色胺和 γ -氨基丁酸 (Wegener, 2003; Yuan *et al.*, 2005; Hamasaka and Nässel, 2006)。

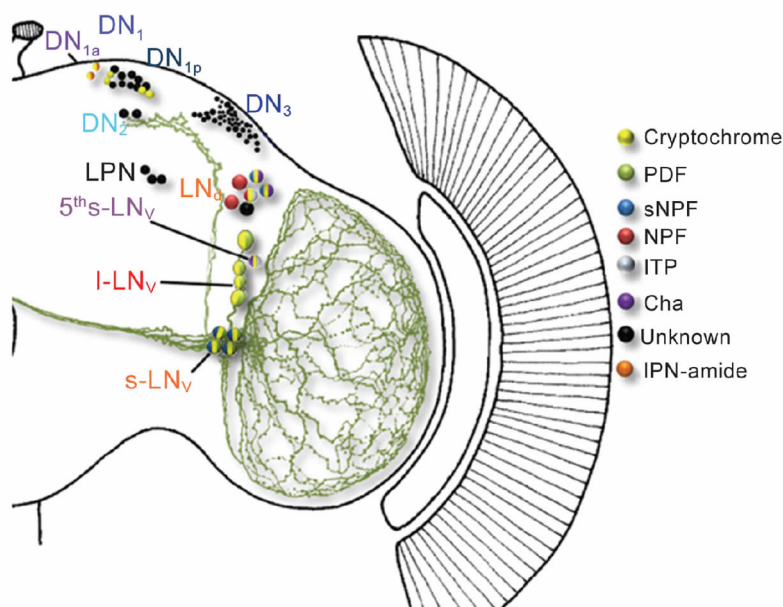


图 3 钟神经元表达相关神经化学物质的基本概况 (Peschel and Helfrich-Förster, 2011)

Fig. 3 A basic overview of clock-gene-expressing neurons and their neurochemical characterization (Peschel and Helfrich-Förster, 2011)

神经肽 PDF 是最重要, 也是研究得比较清楚的果蝇时钟输出的重要因子。PDF 发现与 PER 共定位于 s-LNv 和 I-LNv, 现在被认为是多种昆虫节律生物钟输出的神经递质 (Helfrich-Förster, 1995)。PDF 从 LNvs 神经元释放出来可能连接侧神经元和更多的背神经元, 从而把节律信号传递

给其它神经元 (Shafer *et al.*, 2008)。PDF 基因表达不表现节律性, 而 PDF 从 sLNv 神经元上的释放表现节律性 (Park *et al.*, 2000), 在这些神经元中下调 PDF 后会产生与 PDF 突变体一样无节律的行为 (Shafer and Taghert, 2009)。另外, PDF 还可以独立于节律释放影响其它钟神经元的周期

(Choi *et al.*, 2009; Yoshii *et al.*, 2009)。PDF 受体定位发现其位于很多钟神经元,这也进一步证实 PDF 对这些钟神经元的重要作用(Hyun *et al.*, 2005; Mertens *et al.*, 2005; Lear *et al.*, 2009)。PDF 信号代表着一个重要的同步通路,最近的研究发现其参与睡眠和觉醒、光输入到时钟神经元环路等的调控(Parisky *et al.*, 2008; Shang *et al.*, 2008; Sheeba *et al.*, 2008; Cusumano *et al.*, 2009)。类似果蝇的研究,蟑螂中的研究也显示 PDF 对其节律的调控具有重要作用(Petri and Stengl, 1997; Lee *et al.*, 2009)。

神经肽 NPF 的结构类似于脊椎动物神经肽 Y 家族,在果蝇上出现在中肠分泌细胞和中枢神经系统。在果蝇的钟神经元上,NPF 定位发现于雄虫脑部的 LNd 神经元(Lee *et al.*, 2006)。sNPF 发现表达于 4 个 sLN_vs 神经元和 2 个 cry 阳性的 LNd 神经元(Johard *et al.*, 2009),但是其对生物钟节律的具体作用还不清楚。这两簇神经元以 PDF 作为主要的神经递质,并且 sNPF 表达的 LNd 神经元同时还是胆碱能(Cha)神经元,因此,sNPF 可能作为共传递神经递质在时钟环路中起作用(Nässel and Wegener, 2011)。离子转移肽(ITP)表达于 5th s-LN_v 和 NPF、Cry 阳性的 LNd 神经元(Johard *et al.*, 2009)。NPLP1 是分析果蝇幼虫神经系统的相关肽时发现的(Baggerman *et al.*, 2002),NPLP1 是一个前肽,通过测序已经确定其 2 个短肽 IPNamide 和 MTYamide。其中,IPNamide 表达于部分 DN1 钟神经元(Shafer *et al.*, 2006)。

4 昆虫外周生物钟

研究发现节律振荡器存在于昆虫的多个不同组织中。比如,精子的释放,蜕皮激素的分泌等受外周振荡器的控制(Giebultowicz, 1999)。*per* 驱动的荧光素酶转基因果蝇显示 *per* 基因在复眼、触角、翅、腿等部位都表现出节律变化(Plautz *et al.*, 1997)。相似的结果在环腺细胞和马氏管组织中也存在,这些组织是内分泌和排泄的主要组织(Emery *et al.*, 1997; Giebultowicz and Hege, 1997)。体外培养的这些组织 *per* 基因同样也表现出节律性。将光周期颠倒,发现整体和去头果蝇的马氏管 *per* 基因振荡表现出相似的相位移,这表明中枢生物钟并没有介导外周生物钟的导引(Giebultowicz *et al.*, 2000)。嗅觉输出的生物钟也

是如此(Tanoue *et al.*, 2008)。

外周生物钟类似但不完全与中央分子振荡器相同。*cry* 突变体果蝇 *cry^b* 的 sLN_v 神经元 PER 和 TIM 表现出分子振荡,但是这种振荡在马氏管中消失(Ivanchenko *et al.*, 2001)。果蝇对嗅觉刺激的电生理节律反应在 *cry^b* 突变体果蝇中同样消失(Krishnan *et al.*, 2001)。这些结果表明,*cry* 除了在中枢生物钟中作为感受器外,在外周生物钟也起着重要作用(Emery *et al.*, 2000a)。果蝇嗅觉生物钟作为研究外周生物钟的最好模型,将为我们探讨外周振荡器如何在分子水平控制行为输出提供更多的证据。

5 结语与展望

最近关于昆虫节律的生理及分子研究促进了我们对生物节律的基本细胞和分子机制的理解。分子遗传学的研究已经揭示昆虫生物节律调控的重要分子机制。昼夜振荡的分子反馈模型经受住了时间的考验,但是还在不断完善。同时,神经生物学的研究描绘出多个时钟神经元对昼夜节律的调控作用。通过芯片的方法,许多呈现节律表达的基因已经被确定,这些基因可能传递信息控制细胞信号的输出。但是,迄今这些基因只有少数被证明对昼夜节律输出有作用。

我们对生物钟功能了解最少的是振荡器如何调控节律的输出。分子钟如何发送时间信息,调节细胞的输出、生理和行为?外周生物钟的是怎么起作用的?除了运动节律外,其它节律的细胞和分子基础是什么?果蝇上存在很多节律振荡器,如运动、睡眠、学习记忆、交配、嗅觉等节律。目前,研究比较多而且较清楚的是 PDF 作为运动节律输出的重要调控物质。随着越来越多的时钟输出相关物质的发现,相信可以了解调控输出的生理和行为的各种时钟机制。鉴于生物昼夜生物钟节律的保守性,昆虫生物钟的研究将为我们理解生物节律的生物学提供更多的见解。

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