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## circPPP1R12A 激活 p53 信号通路调控骨关节炎中软骨细胞增殖和凋亡 \*

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**摘要 目的:**探讨 circPPP1R12A(circ\_0000423)调控 p53 信号通路对骨关节炎(osteoarthritis, OA)中软骨细胞增殖和凋亡的影响。  
**方法:**采用 qRT-PCR 检测 circPPP1R12A 在 OA 软骨细胞中的表达水平。在 OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后,采用 CCK-8 检测细胞增殖情况;免疫荧光检测 Ki-67 阳性细胞表达率;流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡情况;qRT-PCR 检测 Ki-67 和 p53 表达水平;Western Blot 检测 Cleaved-caspase3、P53、BCL-2 和 BAX 的表达水平。**结果:**OA 软骨细胞中 circPPP1R12A 的表达水平明显高于正常软骨细胞。过表达 circPPP1R12A 能够抑制 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进细胞凋亡,通过上调 p53 表达激活 p53 信号通路,低表达 circPPP1R12A 能够促进 OA 软骨细胞增殖和抑制细胞凋亡,通过下调 p53 表达阻滞 p53 信号通路。在 OA 软骨细胞中同时低表达 circPPP1R12A 和过表达 p53 能够反转单独低表达 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞增殖和凋亡的影响。**结论:**circPPP1R12A 在 OA 软骨细胞中明显高表达,circPPP1R12A 能够通过激活 p53 信号通路抑制骨 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进软骨细胞凋亡。circPPP1R12A 可能成为 OA 治疗的干预靶点。

**关键词:**骨关节炎;circPPP1R12A;增殖;凋亡;p53 信号通路

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## CircPPP1R12A Activates p53 Signaling Pathway to Regulate Chondrocyte Proliferation and Apoptosis in Osteoarthritis\*

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**ABSTRACT Objective:** To investigate the effect of circPPP1R12A (circ\_0000423) regulating p53 signaling pathway on chondrocyte proliferation and apoptosis in osteoarthritis (OA). **Methods:** The expression level of circPPP1R12A in OA chondrocytes was detected by qRT-PCR. After transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A in OA chondrocytes, CCK-8 was used to detect cell proliferation; immunofluorescence was used to detect the expression rate of Ki-67 positive cells; flow cytometry was used to detect cell apoptosis; qRT-PCR was used to detect the expression levels of Ki-67 and p53; Western Blot was used to detect the expression levels of Cleaved-caspase3, P53, BCL-2 and BAX. **Results:** The expression level of circPPP1R12A in OA chondrocytes was significantly higher than that in normal chondrocytes. Overexpression of circPPP1R12A inhibited OA chondrocyte proliferation and promoted apoptosis, and activated p53 signaling pathway by up-regulating p53 expression. Low expression of circPPP1R12A promoted OA chondrocyte proliferation and inhibited cell apoptosis, and downregulated p53 expression to block p53 signaling pathway. Simultaneous low expression of circPPP1R12A and overexpression of p53 in OA chondrocytes reversed the effects of low expression of circPPP1R12A alone on the proliferation and apoptosis of OA chondrocytes. **Conclusions:** circPPP1R12A was significantly highly expressed in OA chondrocytes, and circPPP1R12A inhibited the proliferation of bone OA chondrocytes and promoted chondrocyte apoptosis by activating the p53 signaling pathway. circPPP1R12A may become an intervention target for OA treatment.

**Key words:** Osteoarthritis; circPPP1R12A; Proliferation; Apoptosis; p53 signaling pathway

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### 前言

骨关节炎(osteoarthritis, OA)作为最常见的关节炎,严重影响

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响着中老年人的健康和生活质量<sup>[1,2]</sup>。OA的主要临床症状为关节疼痛、肿胀、僵硬、畸形和功能障碍<sup>[3,4]</sup>。然而,骨关节炎的发病机制尚未完全清楚。环状RNA(circRNA)是一种新型的非编码RNA,具有共价闭环结构,没有5'-3'极性和多腺苷尾<sup>[5]</sup>。近期研究表明,CircRNAs与OA软骨细胞增殖分化、炎症反应、细胞外基质(Extracellular matrix,ECM)降解、信号通路等的发生发展密切相关<sup>[6,7]</sup>。研究显示在OA中存在136个差异性表达CircRNAs,其中64个CircRNAs上调和72个CircRNAs下调<sup>[8]</sup>。最近有研究显示circPPP1R12A(circ\_0000423)在OA中明显高表达,并能够调控miRNA-27b-3p/MMP-13轴促进OA软骨细胞ECM降解<sup>[9]</sup>。然而circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞的生物学功能未完全明确。因此,本研究在OA软骨细胞中分别过表达和低表达circPPP1R12A后,探讨circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞增殖和凋亡的影响及机制。

## 1 材料和方法

### 1.1 主要试剂

青霉素-链霉素溶液(100X)、BCA蛋白浓度测定试剂盒、PVDF膜、超敏ECL化学发光试剂盒、CCK-8试剂盒和Annexin V-FITC细胞凋亡检测试剂盒购自中国上海碧云天生物技术有限公司。TRIZol试剂和SYBR Green荧光定量PCR试剂盒购自日本TaKaRa公司。DMEM培养基和FBS购自美国Gibco公司lipofectamine 3000购自美国Invitrogen公司。Cleaved-caspase3、P53、BCL-2、BAX和GAPDH抗体购自美国abcam公司。转染质粒购自中国上海吉凯基因有限公司。qRT-PCR引物购自上海生工生物工程技术服务有限公司。

### 1.2 方法

**1.2.1 细胞培养与转染** OA软骨细胞和正常软骨细胞采用两步酶消化法进行分离,第3代用于后续实验。细胞在含10%FBS和1%青霉素-链霉素的DMEM/F12细胞培养基在37℃、5%CO<sub>2</sub>平衡湿度培养箱中培养。采用lipofectamine 3000分别转染oe-NC、oe-circPPP1R12A、sh-NC、sh-circPPP1R12A和sh-circPPP1R12A+p53至OA软骨细胞。根据细胞转染情况不同分为oe-NC组、oe-circPPP1R12A组、sh-NC组、sh-circPPP1R12A组和sh-circPPP1R12A+p53组。

**1.2.2 qRT-PCR** 采用Trizol试剂提取软骨细胞中的总RNA。通过逆转录试剂盒逆转录合成cDNA。SYBR Green PCR试剂盒实时荧光定量PCR检测Ki-67和p53表达水平。以GAPDH作为内参,采用 $2^{-\Delta\Delta C_t}$ 法计算相对表达量。

**1.2.3 流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡** 细胞转染48 h后,PBS清洗和重悬细胞,加入Annexin-V-FITC和PI在室温下避光10 min后上机检测,ModFit LT软件分析凋亡数据。

**1.2.4 Western blot** 收集转染48 h后的细胞,RIPA裂解液提取总蛋白。BCA试剂盒测量蛋白质浓度。将40 μg蛋白质添加到SDS-PAGE凝胶,250 mA,110 V电泳后转移至PVDF膜,5%脱脂奶粉37℃封闭1小时。加入Cleaved-caspase3、P53、BCL-2、BAX和GAPDH蛋白一抗,并在4℃条件下孵育过夜。TBST洗涤3×10 min,二抗37℃孵育1 h,然后TBST洗涤3×30 min,ECL显色。以GAPDH作内参分析各组蛋白的相对表达水平。

**1.2.5 免疫荧光** 收集转染48 h后的细胞,用PBS清洗细胞,加入冷甲醇固定细胞20 min,0.1% Triton X-100通透10 min,PBS洗涤。使用LC3的一抗在4℃下在含1%BSA的PBS中处理细胞过夜,然后在室温下加入二抗1 h。细胞核用DAPI染色5 min,然后将盖玻片固定在载玻片上,用Leica荧光显微镜观察细胞并拍照。

### 1.3 统计学分析

所有计量资料以平均值±标准差( $\bar{x} \pm s$ )表示,并使用GraphPad Prism 9.0进行统计学分析。用t检验分析两组间的差异,用ANOVA比较多组间方差的统计学意义。 $P < 0.05$ 被认为具有统计学意义。

## 2 结果

### 2.1 circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞增殖的影响

采用qRT-PCR检测circPPP1R12A在OA软骨细胞中的表达水平,结果显示circPPP1R12A在OA软骨细胞中明显高表达(图1A, $P < 0.05$ )。为进一步检测circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞生物学功能的影响,在OA软骨细胞中分别转染oe-circPPP1R12A和sh-circPPP1R12A后,转染效率尚可(图1B和C, $P < 0.05$ )。过表达circPPP1R12A后,OA软骨细胞增殖情况明显被抑制(图1D, $P < 0.05$ ),Ki-67 mRNA相对表达水平明显下调(图1F, $P < 0.05$ ),同时Ki-67相对阳性表达细胞数明显减少(图1H和J, $P < 0.05$ )。在低表达circPPP1R12A后,OA软骨细胞增殖情况明显增加(图1E, $P < 0.05$ ),Ki-67 mRNA相对表达水平明显上调(图1G, $P < 0.05$ ),同时Ki-67相对阳性表达细胞数明显减少(图1I和J, $P < 0.05$ )。这提示circPPP1R12A能够抑制OA软骨细胞的增殖。

### 2.2 circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞凋亡的影响

进一步分析circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞凋亡的影响,结果显示在过表达circPPP1R12A后,OA软骨细胞凋亡率明显增加(图2A和B, $P < 0.05$ ),凋亡相关蛋白Cleaved-caspase3的表达明显上调(图2E和F, $P < 0.05$ ),低表达circPPP1R12A后,OA软骨细胞凋亡率明显降低(图2C和D, $P < 0.05$ ),凋亡相关蛋白Cleaved-caspase3的表达明显下调(图2G和H, $P < 0.05$ )。这提示circPPP1R12A能够促进OA软骨细胞的凋亡。

### 2.3 circPPP1R12A对OA软骨细胞中p53信号通路的影响

进一步分析circPPP1R12A调控OA软骨细胞增殖和凋亡的影响,在OA软骨细胞中分别转染oe-circPPP1R12A和sh-circPPP1R12A后,过表达circPPP1R12A明显促进p53 mRNA的表达水平(图3A, $P < 0.05$ ),低表达circPPP1R12A明显抑制p53 mRNA的表达水平(图3B, $P < 0.05$ )。同时在过表达circPPP1R12A后,P53和BCL-2蛋白的表达上调,BAX蛋白的表达水平下调(图3C和E, $P < 0.05$ );低表达circPPP1R12A后,P53和BCL-2蛋白的表达下调,BAX蛋白的表达水平上调(图3D和F, $P < 0.05$ )。这提示过表达circPPP1R12A能够激活p53信号通路,低表达circPPP1R12A能够阻滞p53信号通路。

### 2.4 circPPP1R12A通过p53信号通路调控OA软骨细胞增殖和凋亡

为进一步验证circPPP1R12A通过p53信号通路调控OA软骨细胞增殖和凋亡,在OA软骨细胞中共转染sh-cir-

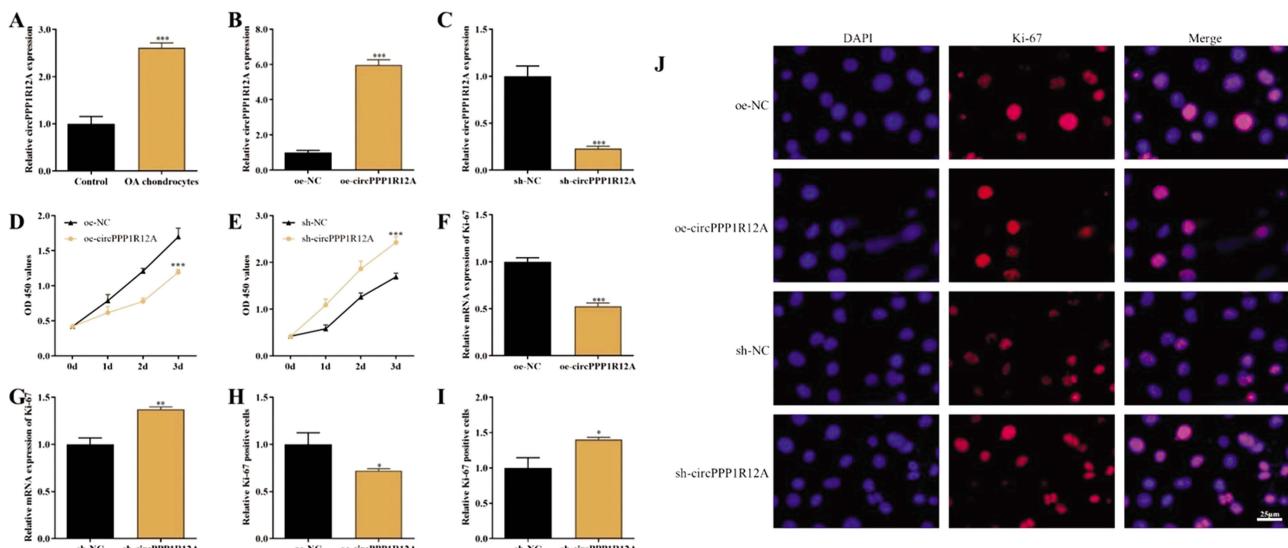


图 1 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞增殖的影响

Fig. 1 The effect of circPPP1R12A on the proliferation of OA chondrocytes

注:与对照组相比,\*P&lt;0.05; \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001。

(A. qRT-PCR 检测 circPPP1R12A 在 OA 软骨细胞和正常软骨细胞中的表达水平;B. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-NC 和 oe-circPPP1R12A 后 qRT-PCR 检测 circPPP1R12A 的表达水平;C. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 sh-NC 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 qRT-PCR 检测 circPPP1R12A 的表达水平;

D 和 E. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 CCK8 检测细胞增殖情况;F 和 G. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 qRT-PCR 检测 Ki-67 mRNA 相对表达水平;H-I. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后免疫荧光检测 Ki-67 相对阳性表达细胞数)

Note: Compared with the control group, \*P&lt;0.05; \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001.

(A. The expression level of circPPP1R12A in OA chondrocytes and normal chondrocytes was detected by qRT-PCR; B. The expression level of circPPP1R12A was detected by qRT-PCR in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-NC and oe-circPPP1R12A, respectively; C. The expression level of circPPP1R12A was detected by qRT-PCR in OA chondrocytes after transfection of sh-NC and sh-circPPP1R12A, respectively; D and E. Cell proliferation was detected by CCK8 in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A; F and G. The relative mRNA expression levels of Ki-67 were detected by qRT-PCR in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A; H-I. The relative number of Ki-67 positive cells was detected by immunofluorescence in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A)

cPPP1R12A 和 p53, 结果显示同时低表达 circPPP1R12A 和过表达 p53 能够反转单独低表达 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞增殖(图 4A,  $P>0.05$ ), Ki-67 mRNA 表达水平(图 4B,  $P>0.05$ ), 凋亡(图 4C 和 D,  $P>0.05$ ), 以及凋亡相关蛋白 Cleaved-caspase3(图 4E 和 F,  $P>0.05$ ) 的影响。这提示 circPPP1R12A 能够通过调控 p53 信号通路抑制 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进细胞凋亡。

### 3 讨论

关节软骨细胞破坏、细胞外基质降解和合成障碍是 OA 发生的重要因素, 然而其具体发病机制尚不清楚<sup>[10,11]</sup>。CircRNAs 是一种非编码环状 RNA, 参与了多种疾病的病理生理过程, 越来越多的研究表明 CircRNAs 与 OA 的发生发展密切相关<sup>[12,13]</sup>。circPPP1R12A 不仅在 OA 中发挥作用, 还能够参与胃癌和结直肠癌的发生发展<sup>[9,14,15]</sup>。研究显示 circPPP1R12A 在结直肠癌中明显高表达, 能够通过激活 Hippo-YAP 信号通路促进结直肠癌细胞的增殖、侵袭和迁移<sup>[15]</sup>。circPPP1R12A 能够靶向 miR-375 调控 CTNNB1 介导结直肠癌细胞的增殖、凋亡和转移<sup>[16]</sup>。circPPP1R12A 能够靶向 miR-582-3p/DIXDC1 轴调控胃癌细胞增殖、侵袭和迁移<sup>[14]</sup>。因此本研究将进一步探讨 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞生物学功能的影响。

在本研究中, circPPP1R12A 在 OA 软骨细胞中明显高表达, 过表达 circPPP1R12A 能够抑制 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进

细胞凋亡, 低表达 circPPP1R12A 能够促进 OA 软骨细胞增殖和抑制细胞凋亡。这提示 circPPP1R12A 能够参与调控 OA 软骨细胞的增殖和凋亡。研究显示 circCDK14 在 OA 软骨细胞中明显低表达, 过表达 circCDK14 能够阻滞 miR-1183/KLF5 信号通路促进 OA 软骨细胞增殖和抑制细胞凋亡<sup>[17]</sup>。研究显示 circ\_0136474 在 OA 软骨细胞中明显高表达, 低表达 circ-CDK14 能够激活 miR-665/FGFR1 信号通路促进 OA 软骨细胞增殖和抑制细胞凋亡<sup>[18]</sup>。这提示 CircRNAs 在 OA 中下调或上调均能够参与 OA 软骨细胞增殖和凋亡。

p53 是公认的对细胞凋亡至关重要的凋亡基因, 能够抑制细胞增殖和诱导细胞凋亡。研究显示 circSCAP 能够激活 p53 信号通路抑制非小细胞肺癌细胞的增殖和侵袭, 促进细胞凋亡<sup>[19]</sup>。缺氧诱导的 circWSB1 通过与 USP10 相互作用调控 p53 稳定性促进乳腺癌进展<sup>[20]</sup>。本研究结果显示过表达 circPPP1R12A 明显促进 p53 mRNA 的表达水平, 低表达 circPPP1R12A 明显抑制 p53 mRNA 的表达水平。同时在过表达 circPPP1R12A 后, P53 和 BCL-2 蛋白的表达上调, BAX 蛋白的表达水平下调; 低表达 circPPP1R12A 后, P53 和 BCL-2 蛋白的表达下调, BAX 蛋白的表达水平上调。这提示过表达 circPPP1R12A 能够激活 p53 信号通路, 低表达 circPPP1R12A 能够阻滞 p53 信号通路。研究显示 circ-DMNT1 能够靶向结合 p53 激活 JAK/STAT 信号通路调控滋养细胞增殖、凋亡、迁移和侵袭<sup>[21]</sup>。研究显示

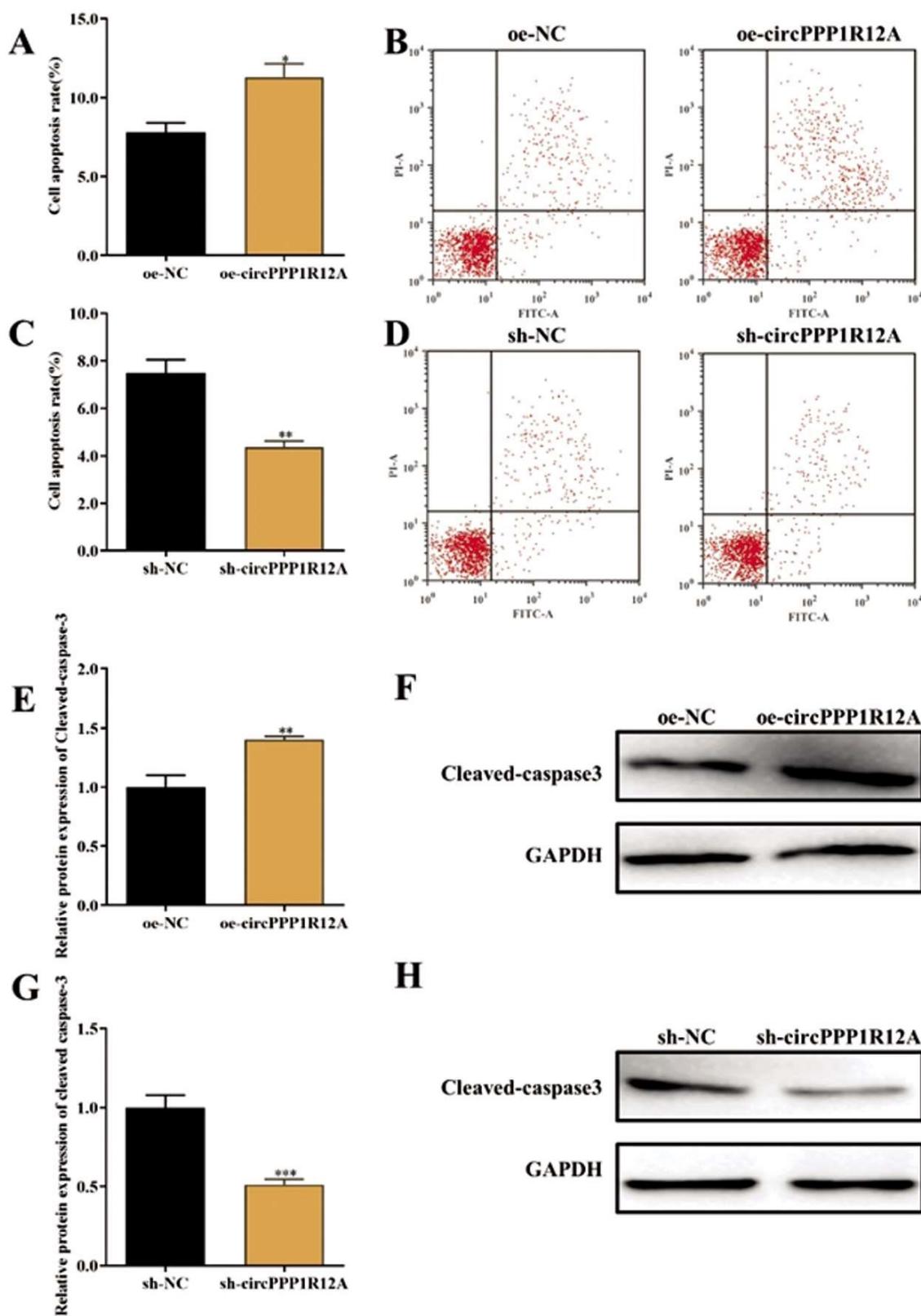


图 2 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞凋亡的影响

Fig. 2 The effect of circPPP1R12A on apoptosis of OA chondrocytes

注:与对照组相比,\*P&lt;0.05; \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001。

(A-D. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡情况;E-H. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 WB 检测 Cleaved-caspase-3 蛋白的表达水平)

Note: Compared with the control group, \*P&lt;0.05; \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001.

(A-D. The apoptosis was detected by flow cytometry in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A; E-H. The protein expression level of Cleaved-caspase-3 was detected by WB in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A)

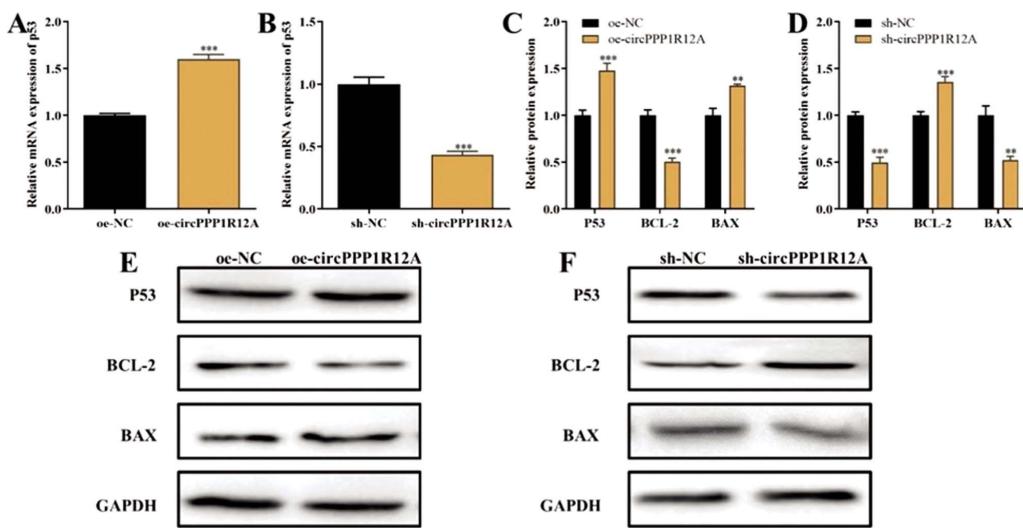


图 3 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞中 p53 信号通路的影响

Fig. 3 The effect of circPPP1R12A on p53 signaling pathway in OA chondrocytes

注:与对照组相比, \*\*P&lt;0.01, \*\*\*P&lt;0.001。

(A-B. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 qRT-PCR 检测 p53 mRNA 的表达水平; C-F. OA 软骨细胞中分别转染 oe-circPPP1R12A 和 sh-circPPP1R12A 后 WB 检测 P53、BCL-2 和 BAX 表达水平)

Note: Compared with the control group, \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001.

(A-B. The mRNA expression levels of p53 were detected by qRT-PCR in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A;

C-F. The expression levels of P53, BCL-2 and BAX were detected by WB in OA chondrocytes after transfection of oe-circPPP1R12A and sh-circPPP1R12A)

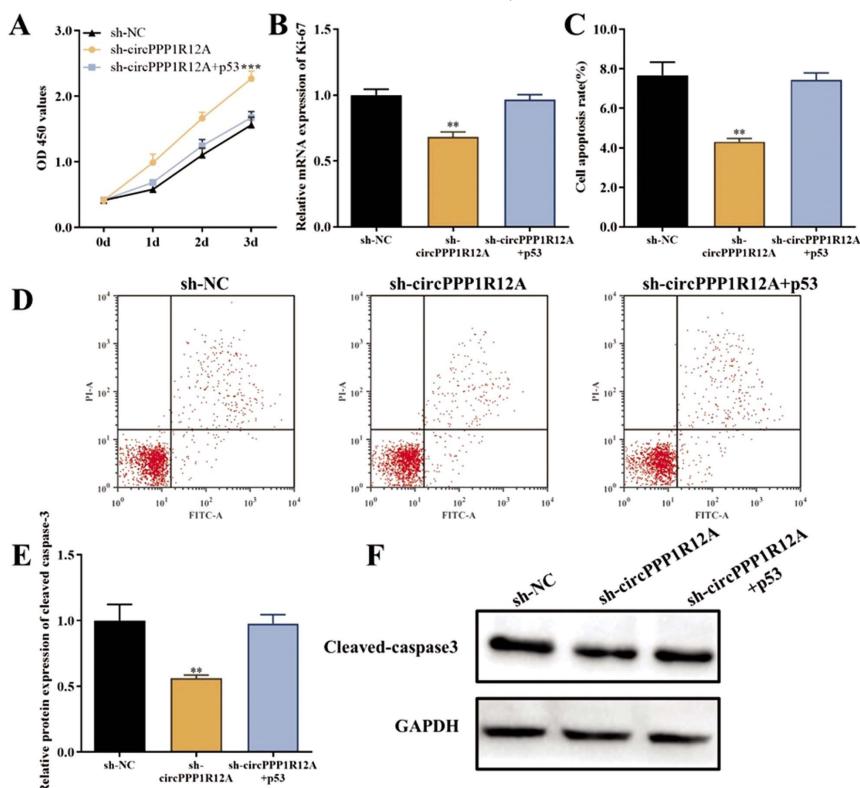


图 4 circPPP1R12A 通过 p53 信号通路调控 OA 软骨细胞增殖和凋亡

Fig. 4 circPPP1R12A regulated OA chondrocyte proliferation and apoptosis through p53 signaling pathway

注:与对照组相比, \*\*P&lt;0.01, \*\*\*P&lt;0.001。

(A. OA 软骨细胞中转染 sh-circPPP1R12A+p53 后 CCK8 检测细胞增殖情况; B. OA 软骨细胞中转染 sh-circPPP1R12A+p53 后 qRT-PCR 检测 Ki-67 mRNA 的表达水平; C 和 D. 流式细胞术检测细胞凋亡情况; E 和 F. OA 软骨细胞中转染 sh-circPPP1R12A+p53 后 WB 检测 Cleaved-caspase-3 蛋白的表达水平)

Note: Compared with the control group, \*\*P&lt;0.01; \*\*\*P&lt;0.001.

(A. Cell proliferation was detected by CCK8 in OA chondrocytes after transfection of sh-circPPP1R12A+p53; B. The mRNA expression levels of Ki-67 were detected by qRT-PCR in OA chondrocytes after transfection of sh-circPPP1R12A+p53; C and D. The protein expression level of Cleaved-caspase-3 was detected by WB in OA chondrocytes after transfection of sh-circPPP1R12A+p53)

circ\_0072309 能够抑制 p53 泛素化，增加 p53 蛋白的稳定性，进而参与胶质瘤的发生发展<sup>[2]</sup>。这提示 circPPP1R12A 可能通过调控 p53 信号通路参与 OA 软骨细胞的增殖和凋亡。

在回复实验中，同时低表达 circPPP1R12A 和过表达 p53 能够反转单独低表达 circPPP1R12A 对 OA 软骨细胞增殖和凋亡的影响。研究显示 circ-Sirt1 通过抑制血管平滑肌细胞中 p53 的激活来减缓衰老，改善新生内膜的形成<sup>[23]</sup>。这提示 circPPP1R12A 能够通过调控 p53 信号通路抑制 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进细胞凋亡。

综上所述，circPPP1R12A 在 OA 软骨细胞中明显高表达，circPPP1R12A 能够通过激活 p53 信号通路抑制骨 OA 软骨细胞增殖和促进软骨细胞凋亡。circPPP1R12A 可能成为 OA 治疗的干预靶点。

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