

Analysis of the Therapeutic Effect of Nano-Silver on Periodontitis and Its Influence on Disease Recurrence

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Periodontitis is a chronic oral inflammatory disease that is difficult to treat and is therefore the subject of clinical research seeking new and effective treatment. Nano-silver has antibacterial and anti-inflammatory effects; however, its application in periodontitis is not well studied. In this study, we show decreases in periodontitis-associated inflammatory cytokines interleukin IL-4, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, and tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF- α) ($P < 0.05$) and in oxidative stress ($P < 0.05$) under intervention with nano-silver solution. The protein expression of CCL21, heat-shock protein 90 (HSP90), and E-selectin in periodontal tissues decreased ($P < 0.05$), while bone structure improved ($P < 0.05$). This work suggests that nano-silver solution can effectively inhibit the inflammatory response and oxidative stress response of periodontitis and improve the periodontal tissue and tooth structure to some extent; it may provide a new periodontitis treatment in the future.

Keywords: Nano-Silver Solution, Periodontitis, Inflammatory Cytokines, Oxidative Stress.

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INTRODUCTION

Periodontitis is a chronic oral disease with a very high incidence worldwide [1]. According to current research, periodontitis has been detected in 69.9% of people aged 55–64 in China, and its incidence is increasing with declining oral hygiene habits [2, 3]. Moreover, there are no particular symptoms of early-stage periodontitis, so patients easily ignore this [4, 5]. At present, the clinical treatment of periodontitis mainly includes gingival cleaning and scaling, periodontal pocket cleaning, and stabilizing loose teeth [6]. In clinical practice, different or even multiple targeted treatments are required according to the patient's conditions. Not only is the treatment cycle relatively long, but most patients experience recurrence [7, 8]. In view of the limitations of the current treatment of periodontitis and the extent of its incidence in the population, it is urgent that a new and effective clinical treatment be found.

Nano-silver has an extremely stable molecular structure, a long half-life, and better human

metabolic rate, all of which confer advantages over the use of multiple drugs [9–11]. It is an extremely significant antibacterial and anti-inflammatory substance that has proven effective in wound repair and as an antibacterial treatment in clinical practice [12–22]. Rao et al. showed that nano-silver has a significant effect on arthritis rats [23]. Periodontitis, which is caused by the inflammatory changes in the periodontal tissues [24], might also be affected by nano-silver; however, research confirming this has been conducted. Here we aimed to confirm the therapeutic effect of nano-silver on periodontitis through experiments and provide a reliable theoretical basis for future clinical treatment of patients with periodontitis.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Animals

A total of 40 Wistar rats weighing 280–320 g were purchased from Beijing Shanyu Zhengzi

pharmaceutical technology Co., Ltd.; the animal use license number was SYXK (Beijing) 2020-0016. Five rats were kept in one cage at 18 °C–25 °C.

Periodontitis Modeling

The rats were divided into four groups ($n = 10$), with two groups used to model periodontitis. Chloral hydrate (10%)

was intraperitoneally injected into anesthetized rats for the modeling groups, and a stainless steel wire was inserted through the junction of the first and second molars and attached to the neck of the teeth. Rats were fed with high sugar and sticky milk for 8 days and then fed normally. Four weeks later, the gingival swelling, bleeding, attachment of food residues to the epithelium, and formation of subosseous pockets of the first molars were observed in all rats; this was considered a successful model of periodontitis.

Preparation of Nano-Silver Solution

Nano-silver was purchased from Shanghai Superwei Nanotechnology; 0.1 g was added to 100 mL deionized water with ultrasonic oscillation mixing to create 0.1% (1 mg/mL) nano-silver solution. The release curve of nano-silver was measured by ultraviolet spectrophotometer, and the morphological characteristics of the nano-silver solution were microscopically observed.

Rat Treatment

Experimental rats were divided randomly into two groups. For the model A group ($n = 10$), periodontal irrigation was performed with 2 mL nano-silver solution twice a day for 1 week. The model B group was treated in the same way but with 2 mL normal saline. “Normal” rats were treated in the same way as the modeling, with nano-silver solution used for washing in group A and normal saline in group B.

Detection of Inflammatory Cytokines

Serum inflammatory cytokines interleukin IL-4, IL-6, IL-8, and IL-10 and tumor necrosis factor alpha (TNF- α) were detected using ELISA in nano-silver solution before flushing, nano-silver solution after flushing at 4 weeks, and extracted neck vein blood of rats; in each case, 2 mL

sample was collected in a coagulation tube, left at room temperature for 30 min, and then centrifuged (400 \times g, 4 °C) for 10 min before serum analysis.

Detection of Oxidative Stress

As above, venous blood was extracted from rats before and after irrigation; malondialdehyde (MDA) was detected by the thiobarbituric acid method and in serum. The kit was purchased from Beijing Solebao Biological Technology Co., Ltd. Immunofluorescence assay for reactive oxygen species (ROS) was used. The kit was purchased from Beijing Baiolaibo Technology Co., Ltd. For the xanthine oxidase method, the superoxide dismutase (SOD) kit was purchased from Beijing Box Manufacturing Technology Co., Ltd.

Protein Detection

After 4 weeks, all rats were killed under anesthesia, and the periodontal tissue was removed. Chemokine CCL21, heat-shock protein 90 (HSP90), and E-selectin protein expressions in the periodontal tissues were detected by western blot.

Dental Histomorphometry

Micro-CT was used to examine the bone images at the roots of molars in molar tissue samples, and bone tissue parameters, such as bone volume (BV/TV), bone trabecular thickness (Tb.Th), and bone trabecular number (Tb.N), were analyzed.

Statistical Method

SPSS 22.0 statistical software was used for statistical analyses. One-way ANOVA was used for a LSD postmortem test to determine the differences among all groups, along with paired t-test both pretherapy and posttreatment. The results were statistically significant ($P < 0.05$).

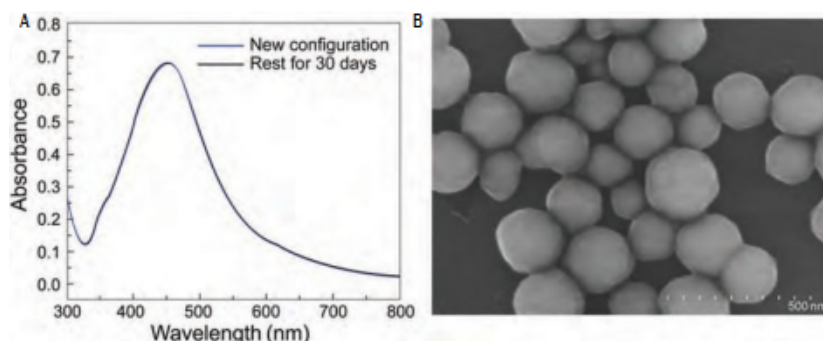
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Preparation Effect of Nano-Silver Solution Absorbance of nano-silver solution by UV spectrophotometry steadily decreased, confirming that nano-silver solution was released and had a long half-life (Fig. 1(A)). Microscopic analysis of nano-silver solution showed a spherical shape with a size of about 150–250 nm, a smooth surface and uniform distribution, and a relatively neat distribution structure (Fig. 1(B)).

Contrast Inflammatory Cytokines

No differences were detected in IL-4, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, and TNF- α between models A and B in pretreatment, in either control or experimental groups ($P > 0.05$).

Fig. 1.
Nano-silver solution morphology. (A) Release curve; (B) nano-silver morphology.



After treatment, IL-4, IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, and TNF- α of model A rats were lower than of model B rats but higher than those of control A and B groups (Figs. 2(A-E)) ($P < 0.05$). The inflammatory cytokines in model A were all lower than before treatment, while those in model B were higher (Figs. 2(A-E)) ($P < 0.05$). IL-4, IL-6, IL-

8, IL-10, and TNF- α showed no differences after treatment between control A and B groups (Figs. 2(A-E)) ($P > 0.05$).

Comparison of Oxidative Stress

There was no difference detected in MDA, ROS, and SOD in models A and B, and no difference in controls A and B before treatment (Figs. 3(A-C)) ($P > 0.05$). After cure, MDA and ROS were lower in model A than in model B, but SOD was increased in model A (Figs. 3(A-C)) ($P < 0.05$). MDA and ROS in model A were lower, while SOD was higher than before treatment ($P < 0.05$). MDA and ROS were lower in model B (Figs. 3(A-C)) ($P < 0.05$).

Fig. 2.
Comparison of inflammatory cytokines. (A) Comparison of IL-4 concentration; (B) IL-6 concentration contrast; (C) IL-8 concentration contrast; (D) IL-10 concentration contrast; (E) TNF- α concentration contrast. Contrast the same group before cure, * $P < 0.05$; contrast model A after treatment, # $P < 0.05$; contrast model B after treatment, & $P < 0.05$.

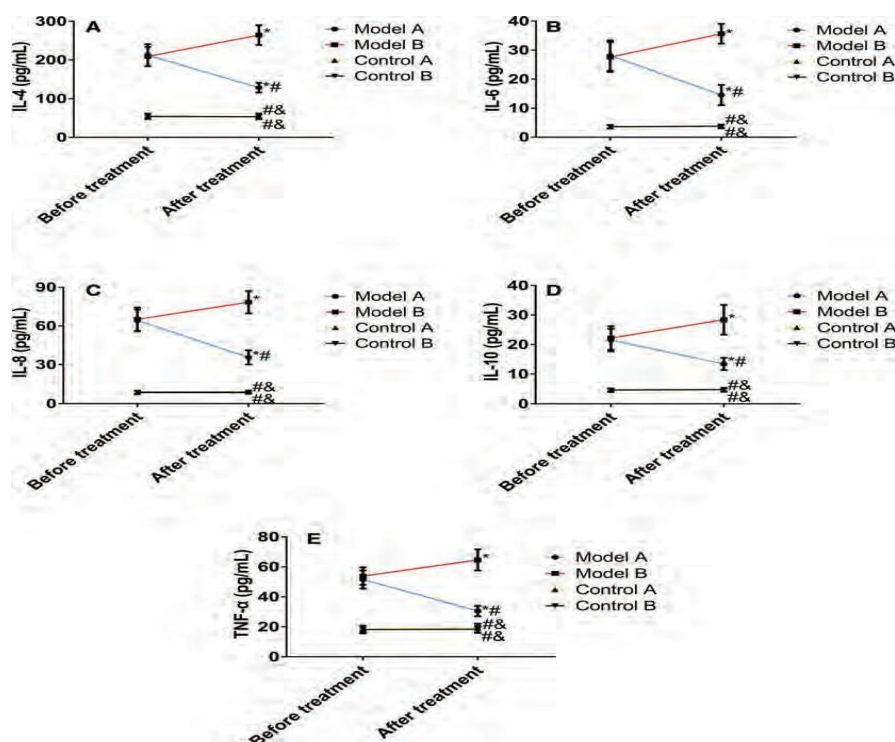
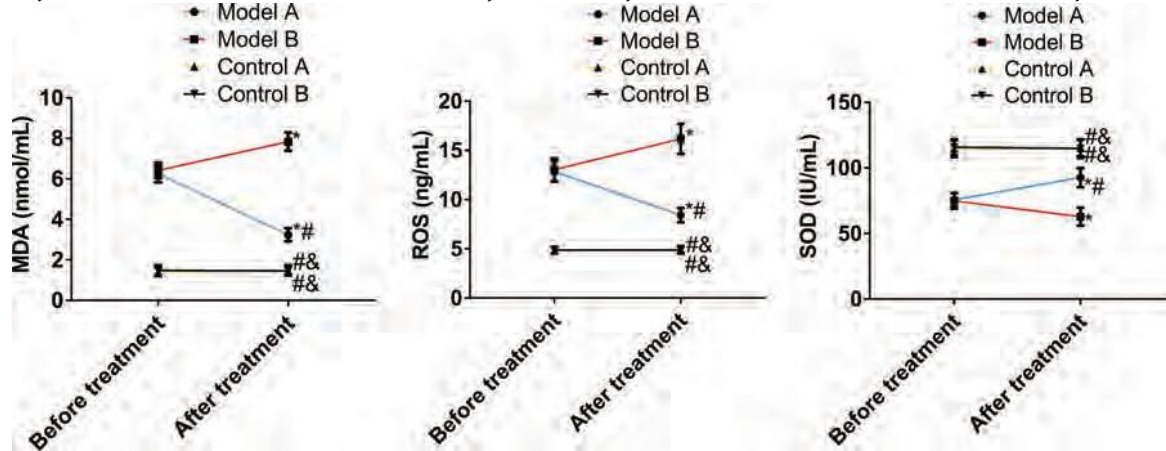


Fig. 3.

Comparison of oxidative stress. (A) Comparison of MDA concentration; (B) comparison of ROS concentration; (C) comparison of SOD concentration. Contrast the same group before cure, * $P < 0.05$; contrast model A after treatment, # $P < 0.05$; contrast model B after treatment, * $P < 0.05$.



Protein Expression Comparison

Protein expression of CCL21, HSP90, and E-selectin in model A was greater than in model B (Figs. 4(A–D)) ($P < 0.05$). No differences were found between control groups in CCL21, HSP90, and E-selectin protein expression (Figs. 4(A–D)) ($P > 0.05$).

Comparison of Tooth Histomorphology

BV/TV, Tb.Th, and Tb.N were greater in model A than in model B (Figs. 5(A–C)) ($P < 0.05$), with BV/TV of model A being the same as in control A and B (Fig. 5(A)), but Tb.Th and Tb.N were lower than in controls A and B (Figs. 5(B and C)) ($P < 0.05$).

Fig. 4.

Protein expression comparison. (A) Protein imprinting map; (B) CCL21 protein expression; (C) HSP90 protein expression; (D) E-selectin protein expression. Contrast model A, * $P < 0.05$; contrast model B, # $P < 0.05$.

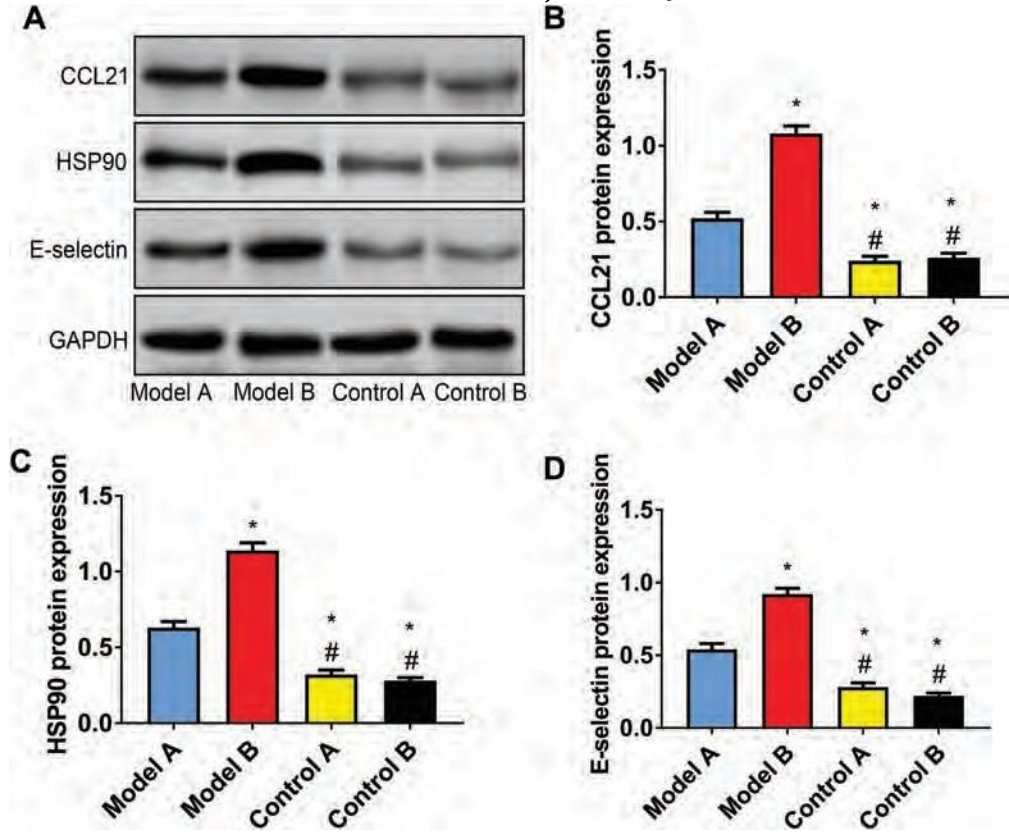
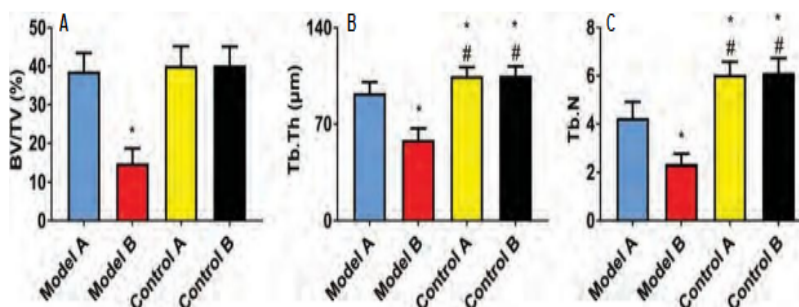


Fig. 5.

Comparison of bone histomorphology. (A) BV/TV comparison; (B) Tb.Th comparison; (C) Tb.N comparison. Contrast model A, * $P < 0.05$; contrast model B, # $P < 0.05$.



Discussion

A new treatment could greatly improve the clinical cure rate and prognosis for periodontitis [25]. The anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial effects of nano-silver solution have been confirmed in clinical practice [26], along with its relatively consistent and targeted effect on periodontitis.

To determine the effect of nano-silver on periodontitis, we first measured the inflammatory cytokines in rats. The results showed that the inflammatory factors of periodontitis in rats were significantly inhibited after rinsing with nano-silver solution. The results were also consistent with the previous studies on the application of nano-silver, confirming that nano-silver has significant anti-inflammatory effects in periodontitis. IL-6, IL-8, IL-10, and TNF- α , the common inflammatory cytokines in clinical studies, play an important role in periodontitis [27, 28]. Studies have confirmed that periodontal cells and tissues can release a large number of inflammatory mediators during the occurrence of periodontitis, causing tissue damage, oxidation, and necrosis [29]. Therefore, inhibiting the release of inflammatory mediators in the treatment of periodontitis is the key. Nano-silver has a remarkable effect in this respect. In addition, we measured the changes of oxidative stress response in rats, and the results also showed that, under the intervention of nano-silver solution, MDA and ROS were reduced in rats with periodontitis, while SOD was increased. Previous research has shown that MDA, SOD, and ROS are sensitive indicators of oxidative stress response [30]. Elevation of MDA and decrease of SOD indicate that cells under certain stimulation produce a large number of free radicals and ROS, which cause cell damage and necrosis, thus causing diseases [31]. Given our analyses and previous studies, we know that the release of a large amount of inflammatory mediators destroys the balance of oxidative stress in periodontal tissues, damages the gingival tissues, increases the susceptibility of periodontal tissues, damages the local immunity of periodontal tissues, and causes periodontal tissue damage during the

onset of periodontitis [32]. In this environment, it is also conducive to the invasion of anaerobes and toxins and increases the incidence of oral infectious diseases [33]. If this process is not controlled and treated in time, it may cause more serious periodontal injury.

Applying nano-silver solution can effectively reduce oxidative stress injury in rat periodontal tissues, creating possibility for future clinical application. To further understand the effect of nano-silver solution on periodontitis, we also detected CCL21, HSP70, and E-selectin protein in periodontal tissues of rats in each group. Previous studies have confirmed that CCL21, as a chemokine, has the dual role of mediating cell adhesion and cell migration. When abnormal changes occur in tissues, CCL21 can cause inflammatory cytokines to accumulate in large quantities and cause inflammatory cascade reaction [34]. HSP90 is one of the most sensitive members of the HSP family. As a highly conserved protein, HSP90 is synthesized in large quantities under stress stimulation and improves the stress tolerance of cells [35]. E-selectins have a similar effect to CCL21, which can promote the adhesion of endothelial cells and white blood cells, causing a vascular reaction [36]. All three proteins have been proved to have significant functions in periodontitis [37–39].

The elevated expression indicates the intensification of periodontal inflammatory response. In this study, after the intervention of nano-silver solution on periodontitis rats, we found that CCL21, HSP70, and E-selectins in rats were reduced, suggesting that nano-silver solution could inhibit the expression of CCL21, HSP70, and E-selectins, and once again, inflammation inhibited the inflammatory response inhibition effect on periodontal tissues of periodontitis. Finally, we compared the dental tissue of the rats in each group with micro-CT, which showed that the dental tissue structure of the rats with periodontitis was significantly improved after the intervention of nano-silver solution. Micro-CT, as a clinically recognized instrument for the

evaluation of periodontal bone regeneration, can accurately display relevant information into tooth structure [40]. Our experimental results show that nano-silver not only has a good inhibitory effect on periodontal inflammation and oxidative stress but also can improve the integrity of the tooth structure. In the future, it may have a certain improvement effect not only on periodontitis but also on other periodontal diseases.

We also used nano-silver solution in normal rats and found that there was no adverse reaction in normal rats, indicating that nano-silver solution is safe and worthy of clinical application.

However, since we did not use human subjects, there may be some errors between the specific application of nano-silver and the results of our animal experiments. In addition, as no studies on the effect of nano-silver on periodontitis have been conducted, the concentrations chosen here were based on previous studies, and more in-depth experimental analysis is needed to confirm the optimal drug use. However, the exact mechanism of nano-silver solution on periodontitis remains incompletely clear; therefore, more research is needed. We hope that this study can provide a better reference basis for the future application of nano-silver in periodontitis and attract more researchers to carry out subsequent experimental analysis.

CONCLUSION

Nano-silver solution can effectively inhibit the inflammatory response and oxidative stress response of periodontitis and improve the periodontal tissue and tooth structure to some extent. It may be a new direction of periodontitis treatment in the future.

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