

维生素A类物质在昆虫中的研究进展

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摘要: 维生素A类物质包括视黄醇(维生素A)、视黄醛和视黄酸等, 自1913年被发现以来, 已被证明在动物发育、生殖和免疫等方面发挥着积极作用, 可以调控细胞增殖、器官发育、生长繁殖和视觉感受等。该文在总结维生素A类物质吸收及转化过程的基础上, 对维生素A类物质在昆虫视觉形成、生长发育和行为调节等方面的作用进行综述, 目前对维生素A类物质在昆虫中的作用研究相对较少, 根据模式动物(哺乳动物)中的相关报道对维生素A类物质在昆虫发育、免疫调节、神经元可塑性和行为认知等方面的潜在功能进行展望, 以期为昆虫维生素A类物质的研究提供借鉴和参考。

关键词: 视黄醇; 视黄醛; 视黄酸; 昆虫; 生长发育; 视觉

Research progress on vitamin A substances in insects

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Abstract: Vitamin A substances include retinol (vitamin A), retinol, and retinoic acid. Since their discovery in 1913, they have been proven to play a positive role in animal development, reproduction, and immunity. These substances regulate cell proliferation, organ development, growth and reproduction, and visual perception. This article summarizes the absorption and transformation processes of vitamin A and reviews its role in visual formation, growth and behavioral regulation in insects. At present, there is relatively little research on vitamin A substances in insects. Mainly based on relevant reports in model animals (mammals), the article explores the potential functions of vitamin A substances in insect development, immune regulation, neuronal plasticity, and behavioral cognition. This work aims to provide reference and guidance for future research on vitamin A substances in insects.

Key words: retinol; retinal; retinoic acid; insects; growth and development; vision

维生素是动物生长发育过程中不可或缺的一类微量有机物, 可以维持生物体正常的生理功能, 在发育、生殖和免疫等方面发挥着积极作用(Bates, 1995)。维生素A又名视黄醇, 是众多维生素种类中的一类。自1913年被发现以来, 经过百余年的研究, 已证实维生素A类物质包括维生素A及其衍生物在动物基因转录调节(Clagett-Dame & Knutson,

2011; Semba, 2012)、细胞分化和增殖(de Luca, 1991)、胚胎发生(Mark et al., 2006)、生长发育(Duester, 2008)、视觉形成(Bar-El Dadon & Reifen, 2017)、维持上皮细胞完整性和免疫功能等过程中发挥着重要的调节作用(Stephensen, 2001)。对维生素A类物质的早期研究主要集中于人和模式动物种, 近期的研究表明, 其在昆虫生长发育过程中也发挥着重

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要作用(Dewett et al., 2021a; Kumar et al., 2022; Li et al., 2024)。本文通过总结模式动物中维生素A类物质的研究成果,结合维生素A类物质在昆虫中的最新研究进展,对视黄醇、视黄醛和视黄酸3种主要维生素A类物质的代谢途径和生物学功能进行阐述,以期为进一步研究维生素A类物质在昆虫中的生物学功能提供借鉴和参考。

1 维生素A类物质的代谢

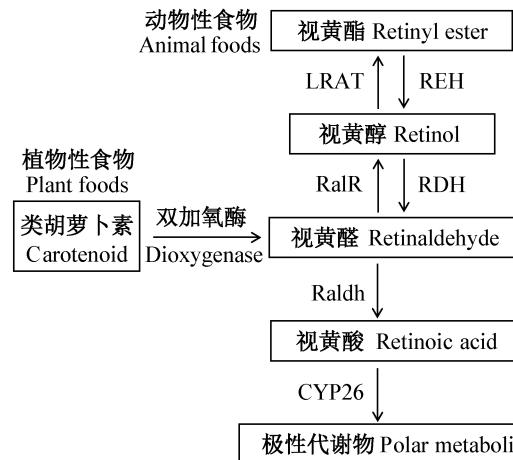
维生素A被称为必需营养素,必须从食物中积极获取(Dawson, 2000),维生素A类物质主要包括视黄醇、视黄醛和视黄酸等物质(Takahashi et al., 2022)。视黄醇、视黄醛和视黄酸在生物体内通过相互转化,共同参与动物的生理生化和环境适应过程,并在生长发育和繁殖等过程中发挥着重要作用(Wiseman et al., 2017; Carazo et al., 2021; Takahashi et al., 2022)。在靶细胞中,视黄醇通过短链视黄醇脱氢酶转化为视黄醛,视黄醛被视黄醛脱氢酶氧化为视黄酸(Napoli, 2012)(图1)。植物性食物在被摄入后, β -胡萝卜素-15在动物体内肠道中可以在15'-双氧酶(双加氧酶)的催化下转变为2分子的视黄醛(Ross & Moran, 2020),视黄醛在视黄醛还原酶作用下也可以还原为视黄醇,进一步在卵磷脂视黄醇酰基转移酶作用下转化为视黄酯储存起来(Brun et al., 2016)(图1)。通过相同的途径到达靶组织,视黄醇转化为视黄醛,然后转化为视黄酸,此外视黄酸会被细胞色素P450 26(cytochrome P450 26, CYP26)家族进一步氧化代谢(Ross & Zolfaghari, 2011)(图1)。

1.1 视黄醇

视黄醇是一种具有脂环的不饱和一元醇,具有脂溶性,主要以酯类与长链脂肪酸结合的形式存在(Marceau et al., 2007),视黄醇被摄入后,视黄酸诱导蛋白6与视黄醇结合蛋白4结合并共同作为膜转运体引导视黄醇穿过细胞膜,进入靶细胞中发挥作用(Shabtai & Fainsod, 2018)。已有研究表明,视黄醇在视觉形成、细胞生长、生殖和免疫过程中都发挥着重要作用(Wald, 1935; Clagett-Dame & DeLuca, 2002; Tworak et al., 2023)。

视黄醇作为一种必需营养元素不能在生物体内合成,可以从植物性食物和动物性食物中摄取(常世敏和张智强,2005)。当生物体摄取动物性食物时,视黄酯通过肠道吸收进入体内并转化为视黄醇(Ross & Moran, 2020)。视黄醇在体内以视黄酯的形式被储存起来(图1),也可以在需要时转化为其

他形式的维生素A参与新陈代谢和生理功能(Shirakami et al., 2012)。当需要维生素A时,通过视黄酯水解酶将视黄酯转化为视黄醇,然后转移到目标位点发挥作用(Ross, 1993)。



LRAT: 卵磷脂视黄醇酰基转移酶; REH: 视黄酯水解酶; RalR: 视黄醛还原酶; RDH: 视黄醇脱氢酶; Raldh: 视黄醛脱氢酶; CYP26: 细胞色素P450 26。LRAT: Lecithin retinol acyltransferase; REH: retinol ester hydrolase; RalR: retinal reductase; RDH: retinol dehydrogenase; Raldh: retinal dehydrogenase; CYP26: cytochrome P450 26。

图1 维生素A的生物循环

Fig. 1 Biological cycle of vitamin A

1.2 视黄醛

视黄醛由视黄醇氧化而来,该转化过程通常在细胞质内进行,其生理效应主要与视觉有关(Kiser & Palczewski, 2021),视黄醛在光照作用下能引起快速的顺式-反式异构化反应形成视觉(Choi et al., 2021)。视黄醛的视觉功能依赖于蛋白质修饰(Wald, 1968; Patel et al., 2004),在视网膜中存在着视杆细胞和视锥细胞,两者都含有视色素,均对维持正常的明暗视觉和辨别颜色起着重要作用(杨小凡等, 2022)。

视黄醛作为视紫红质的辅基,在视觉细胞内11-顺式视黄醛与视蛋白中的赖氨酸结合形成视紫红质,11-顺式视黄醛在吸收光后会异构为全反式视黄醛,与视蛋白分离而失色,从而使感弱光的视紫红质构象发生改变(Kiser & Palczewski, 2021),并分解形成视蛋白和全反式视黄醛,启动了对大脑的神经脉冲,最后信号被传递到视神经,从而形成视觉,因此在进入暗处时不能视物(Choi et al., 2021)。全反式视黄醛可以还原形成反式视黄酯(或异构为顺式视黄酯)并储存于色素上皮中,由视网膜中的视黄酯水解酶将视黄酯转化为反式视黄醇(Napoli, 2020),

经氧化和异构化后再次形成11-顺视黄醛并与视蛋白重新结合为视紫红质,恢复对弱光的敏感性,从而能在一定亮度的暗处视物(Kiser & Palczewski, 2021)。视黄醇与视黄醇结合蛋白结合后参与光化学反应,若缺乏视黄醇则会导致视黄醛供给不足,视紫红质再生慢且不完全,导致产生黑暗适应障碍,更严重时可能出现夜盲症等视觉病症(Choi et al., 2021)。此外,视黄醛作为一种重要的信号分子,在生物的基因转录调节和免疫应答过程中也发挥着重要作用(Fritz et al., 2011; Shim et al., 2012)。

1.3 视黄酸

视黄酸是视黄醛的氧化产物,是一种脂溶性小分子(Szymański et al., 2020),其分子结构中侧链和极性基团的不同导致视黄酸存在多种同分异构体,常见的包括全反式视黄酸、9-顺式视黄酸、11-顺式视黄酸和13-顺式视黄酸等(Isoherranen & Zhong, 2019)。视黄酸作为维生素A类物质在生物体内发挥活性的物质,参与生物体内的基因表达、细胞增殖和分化等诸多生理过程,是维生素A类物质参与动物生命活动的主要形式(Ott & Lachance, 1979; Fritz et al., 2011; Shim et al., 2012)。

自1987年发现视黄酸核受体和类视黄酸受体以来(Giguere et al., 1987),科研人员对视黄酸的作用机制进行了深入研究,发现视黄酸通过与目标细胞核受体结合才能发挥作用。视黄酸核受体和类视黄酸受体以高亲和力分别与全反式视黄酸和9-顺式视黄酸结合(di Martino & Welch, 2019),这些核受体识别并结合特殊的DNA序列,以启动或抑制靶基因的转录(Xu et al., 2020),从而调节生物的早期发育(Berenguer & Duester, 2022)。同时,在研究过程中也合成了视黄酸核受体的一些激动剂和拮抗剂(Uray et al., 2016; de Almeida & Conda-Sheridan, 2019)。

在细胞质中,视黄酸与细胞视黄酸结合蛋白结合后在其携带下进行转运(Napoli, 2017),通常包括以下2条通路:一是在细胞视黄酸结合蛋白-II携带下将视黄酸转运至靶细胞的细胞核内,与视黄酸核受体组成的异源二聚体结合形成受体复合物,在其DNA结合区识别并结合靶标基因的视黄酸应答元件,进而调控靶标基因的转录与表达(Dong et al., 1999; Theodosiou et al., 2010);二是在视黄酸结合蛋白-I的帮助下完成视黄酸的代谢分解(Ross & Zolfaghari, 2011; Napoli, 2017),其将细胞质内的视黄酸转运至细胞内质网,在微粒体内的细胞色素P450作用下视黄酸氧化失活后被代谢清除(王萍和刘晓

东, 2011; Kedishvili, 2016)。视黄酸可以在细胞色素P450家族的作用下被分解形成极性代谢物,避免过量的视黄酸对生物体产生不利影响(Petkovich, 2001)。例如在小鼠 *Mus musculus* 中,CYP26家族的CYP26B1在雄性小鼠生殖细胞发育中通过抑制胚胎睾丸中的视黄酸信号传导,防止胚胎过早减数分裂,从而维持胚胎的正常发育(Ross & Zolfaghari, 2011);在大鼠 *Rattus norvegicus* 中,细胞色素P450 2E1(cytochrome P450 2E1, CYP2E1)在乙醇的诱导下可以降解视黄酸,从而降低肝脏细胞的分化增殖速率,减少过量乙醇致癌的风险(Liu et al., 2001)。

2 维生素A类物质调控昆虫生命活动

维生素A类物质具有广泛的生物学功能,其中视黄醇、视黄醛和视黄酸作为代表形式参与多个代谢和调控途径,对昆虫而言,维生素A类物质的相关研究起步较晚,但其在昆虫生长发育过程中的重要作用日渐凸显(Goldsmith & Warner, 1964; Dewett et al., 2021a; Freedman & Kronforst, 2023)。

2.1 维生素A类物质对昆虫视觉系统的影响

昆虫视觉形成需要视觉系统和中枢神经(刘军和赵紫华, 2017),Goldsmith & Warner(1964)最早利用甲醇在西方蜜蜂 *Apis mellifera* 视觉系统中提取到维生素A(视黄醇),同时光照条件下视黄醇的含量高于暗环境下,表明在昆虫视觉系统中存在维生素A。维生素A作为视网膜内部感光色素的组成部分,对昆虫视觉系统的维持具有重要意义,视锥细胞和视杆细胞的发育也离不开维生素A类物质各活性物质的参与。维生素A类物质在昆虫的视觉发育中发挥着关键作用(Dewett et al., 2021b),可以有效调节感光细胞的分化和发育(Parker & Crouch, 2010),参与光周期信号调控的生理反应和生物节律变化(Page, 1982; Schulz et al., 1984)。

视黄醇在昆虫视觉系统中通过参与视觉组织的合成对视网膜光感受信号的产生和传递起着关键作用,黑腹果蝇 *Drosophila melanogaster* 缺乏视黄醇时,视觉系统中的视网膜发育不完全,影响视觉色素视紫红质的形成(Dewett et al., 2021b)。果蝇在发育过程中缺乏视黄醇会导致视觉色素丧失,降低光转导蛋白的活力,从而影响视觉信号的放大和传导效率(Kumar et al., 2022),同时复眼感光区和横纹肌形状可能出现异常,横纹肌的表面积显著减少,而通过喂食胡萝卜汁可以纠正上述缺陷症状(Dewett et al., 2021b)。鳞翅目昆虫中的蝴蝶和飞蛾利用类胡

萝卜素裂解加氧酶合成视黄醇,从而保证昆虫的正常视力(Babino et al., 2016)。因此视黄醇的充足供应可以维持昆虫视觉系统的正常发育,保证视觉功能的正常发挥。

视黄醛参与了视紫红质的再生和合成,影响昆虫对于光信号的感知和处理过程。在果蝇的视网膜中,视黄醇脱氢酶的缺失会导致视黄醛含量降低,使得视紫红质缺失和视网膜组织变性,通过补充视黄醛可以纠正视觉色素的功能障碍,维持正常的视觉功能(Wang et al., 2010)。烟草天蛾 *Manduca sexta* 幼虫取食缺乏胡萝卜素的食物会导致复眼的视觉敏感性以及视紫红质含量降低,同时通过高效液相色谱鉴定发现11-顺式视黄醛在烟草天蛾暗适应中处于主导地位(Bennett & White, 1991)。这表明视黄醛构成了光感受器视觉基团的光敏成分,而其代谢紊乱可能导致视觉色素合成受阻,进而影响昆虫的视觉。

视黄酸可以有效调节感光细胞的基因表达和细胞信号传导,影响视觉系统中的细胞分化和功能维持,从而对昆虫的视觉产生影响(Lidén & Eriksson, 2006)。视黄酸缺失会引起视周间充质生长过度,导致昆虫对外界形态产生观察缺陷(Molotkov et al., 2006; Bohnsack et al., 2012)。在致倦库蚊 *Culex quinquefasciatus* 和骚扰库蚊 *Culex pipiens molestus* 视觉相关的基因转录本中,类视黄酸受体的表达量更高,暗示了视黄酸在视觉方面的作用(Gao et al., 2022)。视黄酸同样在视觉发育中发挥着关键作用,其可以有效调节感光细胞的分化与发育,另外视黄酸对视锥细胞发育具有信号靶向作用(王雨薇等, 2018)。Veerman et al.(1985)用缺乏类胡萝卜素的食物饲养菜粉蝶盘绒茧蜂 *Cotesia glomerata*,发现菜粉蝶绒茧蜂没有光周期反应,在食物中添加维生素A后,该昆虫恢复了对短日光周期的反应,表明维生素A的衍生物可能作为光周期反应的感光色素参与反应。在君主斑蝶 *Danaus plexippus* 中节律基因的突变会导致维生素A途径中的几个基因不表达,表明维生素A在生物钟下游发挥了重要作用;同时,对君主斑蝶的类胡萝卜素裂解加氧酶基因进行编辑,该基因突变后君主斑蝶不再对光周期产生响应(Iiams et al., 2019),表明维生素A不仅影响了昆虫的视觉形成,同时也介导了昆虫的光周期反应。

2.2 维生素A类物质对昆虫生长发育的影响

维生素A类物质在昆虫生长发育过程中发挥着重要作用。视黄醇可以与细胞核内的受体结合,调

控基因的表达,对于维持昆虫正常的生长发育过程至关重要。

视黄醇促进了昆虫视觉组织的发育,例如视黄醇缺乏会抑制果蝇视网膜细胞的发育和分化,影响果蝇视觉组织的正常发育(Lee et al., 1996)。视黄醇对细胞的分生和分化也有着调节作用,例如在草地贪夜蛾 *Spodoptera frugiperda* 中视黄醇调节着淋巴细胞的分化和增殖(Grün et al., 1996)。雌性家蚕 *Bombyx mori* 体内的视黄醇含量明显高于雄性家蚕的,调节着胚胎和上皮组织的发育(Dong et al., 2020)。视黄醇也可被外界因素调节,进而影响昆虫的正常发育,如阿司匹林会激活家蝇 *Musca domestica* 幼虫的视黄醇代谢途径,导致视黄酸基因的上调表达,从而影响家蝇幼虫的发育(Li et al., 2024)。

视黄醛参与了视紫红质的再生和合成,在昆虫视觉细胞分化和组织形成过程中发挥了重要作用。果蝇视觉系统的形成离不开视黄醇脱氢酶的作用,视黄醇在该酶的作用下氧化形成视黄醛,视黄醛的缺失会导致视紫红质的发育障碍,引起视网膜的发育缺陷(Wang et al., 2010)。视黄醛也影响着柑橘凤蝶 *Papilio xuthus* 视觉色素的再生(Wakakuwa et al., 2003)。

视黄酸作为维生素A的氧化形式,参与昆虫体内的基因调控网络,影响昆虫的胚胎发育、免疫功能和细胞分化。如在昆虫始红蝽 *Pyrrhocoris apterus*、离带棉红蝽 *Dysdercus cingulatus* 和黄粉虫 *Tenebrio molitor* 中注射浓度介于0.003 ng/头至3 μg/头之间的视黄酸,发现其可以在这些昆虫的形变、胚胎发生和繁殖等生理进程中发挥类似保幼激素的功能(Němec et al., 1993)。飞蝗 *Locusta migratoria* 早期胚胎发育时没有蜕皮激素受体,此时视黄酸受体途径会成为其替代途径(Nowickyj et al., 2008)。在培养飞蝗细胞的过程中视黄酸同样发挥了重要作用,且视黄酸在前期胚胎和神经细胞发育过程中的作用比胰岛素、神经生长因子和蜕皮激素更重要(Sukiban et al., 2014)。家蚕超气门(ultraspiracle, USP)蛋白在其生长发育过程中不仅能与蜕皮激素受体形成异二聚体响应蜕皮激素的信号,同时也可结合全反式视黄酸后参与类胡萝卜素代谢及其代谢产物的信号途径,调节家蚕的生长发育(范明亮, 2022)。

2.3 维生素A类物质对昆虫行为的影响

维生素A类物质也是幼年和成年生物个体体内的有效信号分子,能够调控多种神经基因表达,调节

神经的发生和传递,进而调控昆虫行为(Maden, 1998; Ay et al., 2020)。欧洲玉米螟 *Ostrinia nubilalis* 幼虫在发育过程中更趋向于取食富含维生素 A 的食物,而苏云金芽孢杆菌 *Bacillus thuringiensis* 与 β -胡萝卜素联用会延长其发育时间且增加欧洲玉米螟的死亡率,同时保幼激素和蜕皮激素的含量显著升高,暗示着视黄醇及其活性衍生物在欧洲玉米螟取食和滞育方面具有一定的潜在功能(Girón-Calva et al., 2021)。烟草天蛾在幼虫阶段摄入视黄醇前体 β -胡萝卜素会影响成虫的行为,可通过在幼虫期增加维生素 A 类物质摄入来影响成虫视觉和嗅觉的形成,从而影响成虫的觅食行为,而在幼虫期喂食的 β -胡萝卜素浓度越高,成虫嗅觉的发育就越好,取食无味食物的概率也会增加(Goyret et al., 2009)。

视黄醇参与调节昆虫的神经系统功能,影响其行为模式和觅食行为,充足的视黄醇供应可以维持昆虫神经系统的正常功能,保障其正常的行为表现。视黄醛和视黄酸在哺乳动物中参与神经递质的合成及释放,影响着神经细胞的发育和突触传输功能(Janesick et al., 2015; Althaus & Sutton, 2021; Dumetz et al., 2022),表明维生素 A 在维持生物的神经元可塑性和认知功能方面也发挥着一定作用,对昆虫的行为表现产生调节作用,但目前该方面的研究报道较少。

3 展望

维生素 A 类物质在昆虫中的研究还相对较少,而在哺乳动物中的研究结果则证实维生素 A 类物质参与了哺乳动物的组织发育、免疫、神经和能量代谢等诸多生命活动过程(Ott & Lachance, 1979; Fritz et al., 2011; Napoli, 2022)。因此,对维生素 A 类物质在模式哺乳动物中的功能进行简要概述,将为昆虫中维生素 A 类物质的研究提供借鉴和参考。

维生素 A 在大鼠和小鼠胚胎发育、视觉形成过程中同样发挥着重要作用(Marceau et al., 2007; Sirbu et al., 2020),可以纠正胚胎的缺陷发育(Clagett-Dame & Knutson, 2011),促进卵泡的形成(Franasiak et al., 2017),有效调节感光细胞的分化和发育(Parker & Crouch, 2010),同时还有助于其受伤后的组织修复(Polcz & Barbul, 2019; Zhang et al., 2023)。维生素 A 还影响大鼠整个脂肪组织的发育和功能,较低的维生素 A 含量有利于增加脂肪沉积(Bonet et al., 2003),缺乏维生素 A 则影响脂肪细胞的正常分化和存活(Bonet et al., 2003),而补充维生素 A 可

以促进脂肪的堆积(Yu et al., 2022)。而昆虫滞育过程中往往表现出胚胎发育缓慢、脂质积累等特点(Koštál, 2006; Hahn & Denlinger, 2011),暗示维生素 A 在昆虫滞育中可能存在潜在作用。维生素 A 类物质通常被认为可以增强生物体对感染的免疫反应(Spinas et al., 2015),视黄醇及其衍生物能够提高生物体的免疫系统活性(Semba, 1994),相关研究表明维生素 A 在平衡肠道微生物种群方面也表现出一定的潜在功能(Luo et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024)。视黄醇能调节草地贪夜蛾淋巴细胞的分化和增殖(Grün et al., 1996),暗示视黄醇可能也与昆虫免疫相关。维生素 A 类物质通常被认为可以增强生物体对病原物侵染的免疫反应(Spinas et al., 2015)。如大鼠饲喂缺乏维生素 A 的饮食会导致多个器官感染病原物,最终死亡(Green & Mellanby, 1928)。缺乏维生素 A 会导致大鼠和小鼠抗体反应受损、淋巴细胞发生变化以及 T 细胞和 B 细胞功能改变等多种免疫缺陷(Smith et al., 1987; Ross, 2012; Jeong et al., 2024)。

目前,已明确维生素 A 类物质可以有效调节昆虫感光色素细胞的基因表达和细胞信号传导,影响视觉系统中的细胞分化和功能维持,从而影响昆虫视觉的形成,且在胚胎发生和繁殖等进程中也发挥着重要功能,但是对昆虫中维生素 A 类物质的研究整体局限于视觉形成,与对模式动物中维生素 A 类物质的研究相比仍有诸多方面需要深入探索:一是维生素 A 类物质在组织形成和视觉构建中发挥着重要作用,且视黄醇调节着昆虫神经系统的功能,一定程度上影响昆虫的神经元可塑性和行为认知功能,然而深入的调控机制尚不清楚;二是维生素 A 类物质对昆虫的视觉系统形成有决定性的作用,详细的调控过程有待探索;三是维生素 A 类物质在模式动物免疫系统中发挥着重要作用,推测在昆虫中依然如此,但该项研究仍属空白;四是视黄酸在形变、胚胎发生和繁殖等生理进程中发挥着类似保幼激素的功能,这暗示了其在昆虫发育过程中的潜在作用,但其对激素通路等的调控作用尚不清楚。

综上所述,维生素 A 类物质在模式哺乳动物中的研究较深入,目前虽然已经对其在昆虫视觉形成和胚胎发育等方面的作用进行了一些研究,但整体仍处于起步阶段。关于维生素 A 类物质的进一步研究将有助于加深对昆虫生理生化过程的理解,并根据相关机制科学利用天敌昆虫,实现害虫的绿色高效防控。

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