

American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine

AIRFLOW-3: Randomized Sham-Controlled Trial of Targeted Lung Denervation in Patients with COPD

AIRFLOW-3: COPD 病人標靶肺去神經術之隨機假對照試驗

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核心發現摘要

核心訊息：AIRFLOW-3 未達到主要終點（減少 COPD exacerbation），但發現 TLD 可保留肺功能並改善呼吸困難。Post hoc 分析識別出 responder phenotype。

主要結果：

- **Primary endpoint:** Moderate/severe exacerbation HR 1.27 (95% CI, 0.988-1.628), 未達統計顯著
- **Dyspnea 改善:** TLD 組 TDI ≥ 1 point improvement 35.4% vs Sham 24.1% (P=0.021)
- **肺功能保留:** TLD 組 FEV₁ 無下降, Sham 組顯著下降 (P<0.001)

Contents

1	文獻概述	2
1.1	作者資訊	2
1.2	研究註冊	2
2	背景	2
2.1	COPD 治療的未滿足需求	2
2.2	Targeted Lung Denervation (TLD)	2
3	研究方法	2
3.1	研究設計	2
3.2	納入條件	3
3.3	排除條件	3
3.4	介入方式	3
4	研究終點	4
4.1	Primary Endpoint	4
4.2	Secondary Endpoints	4
5	主要結果	4
5.1	Baseline Characteristics	4

5.2	Primary Endpoint 結果	5
5.3	Secondary Endpoints 結果	5
5.3.1	Dyspnea	5
5.3.2	Lung Function	5
5.3.3	Quality of Life	5
6	Post Hoc 分析: Responder Phenotype	6
6.1	分析結果	6
7	安全性	6
7.1	Serious Adverse Events (0-12 months)	6
7.2	Periprocedural SAEs (0-3 months)	6
8	Discussion	7
8.1	Primary Endpoint 未達成的原因	7
8.2	正面發現	7
9	Take-Home Message	7
10	縮寫對照表	7
11	參考文獻	8

1 文獻概述

本篇為 American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine 的 Original Article，由英國 Royal Brompton Hospital 的 Shah 等人代表 AIRFLOW-3 Study Group 撰寫，報告 Targeted Lung Denervation (TLD) 在 COPD 病人的 randomized sham-controlled trial 結果。

1.1 作者資訊

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1.2 研究註冊

ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT03639051

2 背景

2.1 COPD 治療的未滿足需求

- 許多 COPD 病人即使接受 optimal medical treatment 仍有症狀
- 人類肺臟由 vagus nerve 的 pulmonary branches 廣泛支配
- 在 COPD 中，autonomic nervous system 失調
- Airway smooth muscle tone (受 vagal control) 導致過度支氣管收縮及 hyperinflation

2.2 Targeted Lung Denervation (TLD)

- 單次門診手術，在全身麻醉下進行
- 使用 D'Nerva system 在 mainstem bronchi 交界處進行 circumferential radiofrequency (RF) ablation
- 目的：永久性阻斷 parasympathetic nerve signaling，減少 neural hyperactivity
- 先前研究顯示可減少 COPD exacerbations 並穩定肺功能

3 研究方法

3.1 研究設計

項目	內容
設計	Prospective, multicenter, 1:1 randomized, sham-controlled, double-blind

項目	內容
Randomization	388 patients (TLD: 198, Sham: 190)
研究地點	32 sites (美國 19 sites, 歐洲及英國 12 sites)
研究期間	September 2019 - August 2023
追蹤期間	12 months

3.2 納入條件

- 年齡 ≥ 40 歲
- 吸菸史 ≥ 10 pack-years
- COPD 診斷, moderate to severe airflow obstruction:
 - Postbronchodilator FEV₁ $\geq 25\%$ 但 $\leq 80\%$ predicted
 - FEV₁/FVC ratio $< 70\%$
- 前 12 個月有 ≥ 2 moderate 或 ≥ 1 severe exacerbation (GOLD class E)
- CAT score ≥ 10
- 接受 optimal medical treatment (至少 LABA/LAMA dual therapy \pm ICS)

3.3 排除條件

- Whole-lung emphysema $> 50\%$ (density mask threshold < -950 HU)
- Symptomatic gastric motility disorder (Gastroparesis Cardinal Symptom Index > 18)
- Dominant non-COPD lung disease (如 cystic fibrosis、asthma)

3.4 介入方式

組別	處置
TLD Group	Active treatment: fluoroscopy + RF energy delivery + 持續 optimal medical treatment
Sham Group	D'Nerva catheter 置入 + balloon inflation, 但無 fluoroscopy 或 RF energy + 持續 optimal medical treatment

4 研究終點

4.1 Primary Endpoint

Time to first moderate or severe COPD exacerbation through 12 months

重點提醒

COPD Exacerbation 定義:

- 呼吸症狀 (cough、sputum、wheezing、dyspnea、chest tightness) 新發或惡化
- 至少一種症狀持續 ≥ 3 天
- 需要 antibiotics 及/或 systemic steroids 治療 (moderate)
- 需要住院 (severe)

4.2 Secondary Endpoints

- Time to first severe COPD exacerbation (0-12 mo)
- 12-month change in SGRQ-C score
- 12-month change in FVC, FEV₁, RV
- 12-month change in SF-36 score
- 12-month TDI score
- Proportion achieving MCID in CAT at 12 months

5 主要結果

5.1 Baseline Characteristics

兩組基線特徵良好匹配:

- 平均年齡: 67.8 vs 67.7 歲
- 女性: 56.1% vs 54.2%
- 平均 FEV₁: 41.6% vs 40.5% predicted
- GOLD III 佔多數: 64.1% vs 70.0%
- 前一年 exacerbations: 2.9 vs 3.0 次
- 使用 Triple therapy (LABA+LAMA+ICS): 91.9% vs 93.2%

5.2 Primary Endpoint 結果

重點提醒

Primary Endpoint 未達成:

Hazard Ratio: 1.27 (95% CI, 0.988-1.628)

兩組無統計顯著差異

- Cox proportional hazards model 的 proportional hazards assumption 無效 (P=0.013)
- 使用 prespecified 3-12 month window 重新計算: HR 0.793 (95% CI, 0.534-1.177), 仍無顯著差異

5.3 Secondary Endpoints 結果

5.3.1 Dyspnea

指標	TLD	Sham	P
TDI \geq 1-point improvement	35.4%	24.1%	0.021
mMRC change from baseline	-0.25 \pm 0.96	-0.02 \pm 0.93	0.006
mMRC \geq 1-point decrease	35.4%	25.8%	0.051

5.3.2 Lung Function

參數	TLD Change	P vs baseline	Sham Change	P vs baseline
FVC (L)	-0.01 \pm 0.41	0.720	-0.07 \pm 0.45	0.039
FEV ₁ (L)	-0.01 \pm 0.15	0.281	-0.05\pm0.17	<0.001
RV (L)	-0.02 \pm 1.03	0.791	+0.16 \pm 0.88	0.017

重點提醒

重要發現:

- **TLD 組:** FEV₁ 12 個月內無下降 (P=0.281 vs baseline)
- **Sham 組:** FEV₁ 顯著下降 (P<0.001 vs baseline)
- COPD 病人預期 FEV₁ 每年下降約 50 mL

5.3.3 Quality of Life

- SGRQ-C: 兩組均較 baseline 改善, 但組間無顯著差異
- CAT score: TLD 組改善 -2.2 \pm 6.8, Sham 組改善 -1.2 \pm 7.3 (P=0.104)

6 Post Hoc 分析：Responder Phenotype

重點提醒

關鍵發現：Post hoc 分析識別出 TLD 治療的 responder profile:

Airway-Predominant Phenotype:

- Lung hyperinflation (高 RV% predicted)
- 無顯著 emphysema (低% emphysema score)

6.1 分析結果

- Baseline emphysema 程度與 12-month FEV₁ 改善呈負相關 (Pearson r = -0.21 for TLD)
- 在 baseline hyperinflation 較高且 emphysema 較低的病人中：
 - FEV₁ 改善幅度較大
 - COPD exacerbation 減少幅度較大
- 這些發現與 patient sex、age、blood eosinophilia、study site/region 無關

7 安全性

7.1 Serious Adverse Events (0-12 months)

項目	TLD	Sham
Overall SAE rate	37.4%	34.2%
COPD exacerbation	21.7%	15.8%
Respiratory failure	2.5%	3.2%
GI disorders	6.6%	3.7%
All-cause mortality	4.5%	4.2%
Respiratory-related mortality	2.0%	3.7%

7.2 Periprocedural SAEs (0-3 months)

- TLD 組 SAE rate 較高：21.7% vs 10.5%
- 主要由 respiratory 及 GI SAEs 驅動
- GI SAEs: TLD 5.1% vs Sham 1.1% (GI events 是 TLD 的已知併發症)
- 1 例 bronchoesophageal fistula (0.5%)，導入 esophageal cooling device 後無再發生

8 Discussion

8.1 Primary Endpoint 未達成的原因

- TLD 組在術後前 3 個月有較高 exacerbation rate
- 與其他 bronchoscopic intervention 試驗觀察一致
- AIRFLOW-3 有 42% 病人在前一年有 hospitalization，高於 AIRFLOW-2 (24%)
- Prior-year severe exacerbation history 與 periprocedural respiratory SAE 相關

8.2 正面發現

- 肺功能保留：TLD 組 FEV₁ 無下降，consistent with previous TLD trials
- **Dyspnea 改善**：TDI 及 mMRC 均顯示改善
- **Responder phenotype 識別**：Airway-predominant phenotype (hyperinflation without significant emphysema)

9 Take-Home Message

1. **Primary Endpoint 未達成**：AIRFLOW-3 未達到主要終點（減少 time to first moderate/severe COPD exacerbation）
2. **肺功能保留**：TLD 組展現肺功能保留，Sham 組則有預期的 FEV₁ 下降
3. **Dyspnea 改善**：TLD 組有較高比例達到 dyspnea MCID（TDI 35.4% vs 24.1%）
4. **Responder Phenotype**：Post hoc 分析識別出 responder profile: hyperinflation without significant emphysema (airway-predominant phenotype)
5. **未來方向**：正在設計 prospective RCT 以確認在 responder phenotype 病人中的效益

10 縮寫對照表

縮寫	全名
TLD	Targeted Lung Denervation (標靶肺去神經術)
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
RF	Radiofrequency
GOLD	Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease
CAT	COPD Assessment Test
LABA	Long-Acting Beta-Agonist
LAMA	Long-Acting Muscarinic Antagonist
ICS	Inhaled Corticosteroid
FEV ₁	Forced Expiratory Volume in 1 second

縮寫	全名
FVC	Forced Vital Capacity
RV	Residual Volume
TDI	Transitional Dyspnea Index
mMRC	Modified Medical Research Council
SGRQ-C	St. George's Respiratory Questionnaire for COPD
MCID	Minimal Clinically Important Difference
SAE	Serious Adverse Event
GI	Gastrointestinal
ITT	Intention-To-Treat
HR	Hazard Ratio
CI	Confidence Interval

11 參考文獻

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