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# Cellular Senescence as a Key Player in Chronic Heart Failure Pathogenesis: Unraveling Mechanisms and Therapeutic Opportunes

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#### **Abstract**

Chronic Heart Failure (CHF) is the final stage of heart disease and can be assected a vicinity of factors in clinical practice. Unfortunately, CHF has a poor prognosis and a high mortality rate. Recent studies have that as a difficult risk factor for developing CHF and that cellular senescence plays a vital role in its development. There is a difficult risk factor for developing CHF and that cellular senescence plays a vital role in its development. There is a difficult risk factor for developing CHF and that cellular senescence in CHF from different types of cellular senescence, mitto dysfunction in senescent cells, autophagy in senescent cells, and Senescence-Associated Secretory Phenot and treatment of CHF.

**Keywords:** Chronic heart failure; Senescence-associated secretory phenotype; Mitochondrial dysfunction; 2'-deoxyadenosine

#### Introduction

Chronic Heart Failure (CHF) is a clinical condition characte by typical symptoms swelling, and fatigue often accompanied caused by structural or functional cardiac abnormalities, such neck venous pressures, lung rales, and extremity edema symptoms can worsen as the disease progresses, ofter an by signs of structural or functional abnormalities in eart [2] is estimated that over 64 million people worldwide atter from C [3]. The clinical features of the disease become vpical with age, and the mortality rate is higher, resulting in incre thcare costs and a greater socioeconomic burd mainly treated by reducing cardiac load an lating the ne crine efficacy system to relieve symptoms, but the nited long-ter the inthogenesis of [5]. Therefore, it is crucial to thoroughly i CHF and develop more relevant the Cells typically rapeutic a differentiation, go through several stages, in ifferent growth, maturation, senesc death. In 1961, Hayflick et al., of progressive and irreversible state first described cellular senes of loss of pr natic cells based on the ve poten uman s in human fibroblasts in irreversi plication cultur [6].

ding to panifestations of cellular senescence is categorized into acute cellular enescence. Acute cellular senescence senes is charac a clear senescence triggering mechanism, shortrapid clearance of senescent cells, which term senesce beneficial to the human body, with a short is a physiologica cell cycle stagnation me; Chronic cellular senescence is a variety of sustained stress acting on tissues and organs, which makes it impossible for senescent cells to be efficiently eliminated, and more and more senescent cells are accumulated and induced to senesce more severely through autocrine or paracrine secretion of SASP ultimately leading to dysfunction of the heart and other organs. Therefore, there may be a certain pathophysiologic relationship between cellular senescence and CHF. This review summarizes the relationship between different types of cellular senescence and CHF, and the roles of mitochondrial dysfunction, senescent cell autophagy, and SASP in the pathogenesis of CHF, potentially opening new avenues for the targets in the treatment of CHF (Figure 1).

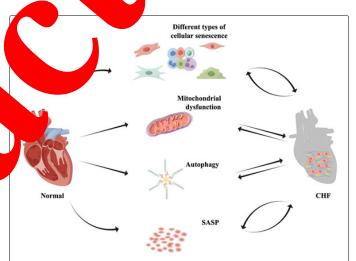


Figure 1: Cellular senescence's involvement in the mechanism of action of CHF: Different types of cellular senescence, mitochondrial dysfunction in senescent cells, autophagy in senescent cells, and Senescence-Associated Secretory Phenotype (SASP).

## Literature Review

# Different types of cellular senescence and CHF

The pathophysiology of CHF is closely related to the process of senescence in various cell types , including cardiomyocytes, endothelial cells, Vascular Smooth Muscle Cells (VSMC), fibroblasts/

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myofibroblasts, and immune cells. Studies have revealed that these cells share similar senescence drivers, such as oxidative stress, mitochondrial dysfunction, telomere shortening, and DNA damage [7,8]. However, there are significant differences in the regulatory mechanisms. In the following sections, we will describe the roles and mechanisms of different types of cellular senescence in the development of CHF.

#### Cardiomyocyte senescence and CHF

The percentage of senescent cardiomyocytes increases with age, leading to a decrease in the renewal rate of cardiomyocytes, which ultimately causes CHF. Studies have shown that Rb1 and Meis homology box 2, which act as cell cycle inhibitors, can accelerate cardiomyocyte senescence. However, inhibiting both can significantly enhance the proliferation capacity of adult rat cardiomyocytes, reduce the infarct area after myocardial infarction, and alleviate the large-scale loss of cardiomyocytes and CHF [9]. Diabetes can cause an increase in the production of Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS), which promotes cardiomyocyte senescence and can lead to CHF [10]. These findings provide valuable insights into the repair mechanism of cardiomyocyte senescence and CHF, and also suggest potential therapeutic interventions. Anderson et al., quantified *mRNA* encoding the cyclindependent kinase inhibitors p<sup>16INK4a</sup> and p<sup>21CIP</sup> in cardiomyocyte populations from 3 and 20-month-old animals [11].

They found that senescent cardiomyocytes activate the senescence pathway of p<sup>21CIP</sup> and p<sup>16INK4a</sup>, leading to atypical SASP compare normal cardiomyocytes. These SASP may cause pro-fibrotic and prohypertrophic effects on the heart under pathological stress, can eventually lead to cardiac hypertrophy. Cardiac is characterized by several changes, including the tion of myofibroblasts, an increase in cardiomyocyte size i erstitial and perivascular fibrosis, and an increase in protein sis. If these alterations are not resolved within a short period, Mey ressively worsen and ultimately result in CHF 2]. ardiac ng in CHF leads to the death of cardiomyocy pertrophy of гd worsens the cardiomyocytes, and fibrosis [13]. This nage ey factor in the caused by cardiomyocyte senescence, which development of CHF in the elderly. Therefore, in omyocyte senescence at the cardiac level is CHF.

### Endothelial cell senescence

s for the formation Endothelia the m cent endothelial cells of the clos lar duct nd enlarg uctures with posypioid nuclei in contrast to have flat othelial co [14]. Vascular endothelial cell senescence is norm ntribu s a condition where the heart a si ody's needs. IL-17A is a cytokine cant pur mphocytes. Zhang et al., discovered that IL-17A produced by induces endoth pescence through the NF-κB/p53/Rb pathway in mice of different igh in vitro assays [15]. They also found pression of SERCA2α and Cav1.2, which that IL-17A inhibits t contributes to the development of CHF [16]. Clinical manifestations of CHF include increased infarct size, deterioration of cardiac function, increased myocardial fibrosis, and cardiomyocyte apoptosis.

These factors further exacerbate CHF. Therefore, it is clear that endothelial cellular senescence plays a crucial role in the initiation and progression of CHF, particularly in vascular aging [17]. Furthermore, in a mouse model of senescence, endothelial cell inflammation was induced by a high-fat or high-salt diet. As a result, the mice developed typical symptoms of CHF, including left atrial dilatation, left ventricular hypertrophy, and fibrosis. These findings suggest that there may be a connection between endothelial cell senescence and CHF [18]. In

conclusion, senescent endothelial cells contribute to changes in vascular structure and function, exacerbating inflammation, thrombosis, and atherosclerosis. This can lead to cardiac circumstance dysfunction syndromes and ultimately the development of CAF.

# Vascular smooth muscle cell senesce CHF

Vascular Smooth Muscle Cell Senescence produces an extracellular matrix, which is response nstriction and is involved in arterial rep npared with normal cells, senescent VSM and hypertrophied has a fi cell morpholog educed pr ration lev increased P16 and P21 expression ls, and in Senesc ce-Associated Beta-Galactosidase (SA-β-9 activit findings suggest that senescence has a sign production of VSMC in ts. S secrete a variety of SASP mediators various as nescer (e.g., IL6, (MCP1), re pression of anti-inflammatory on, Normal T cell Expressed and molecules llated on Ac Secreted (RA) d Interleu n 1 Receptor Type II (IL1R2), and degrade the extrac [21].

nescent VSMC cells promotes chemotaxis tor secreted rounding morecytes and macrophages, which enables further of release are expression of adhesion molecules by nonсy Endothelial Cell Senescence (ECs). Furthermore, sen the V main source of collagen production in the fibrous and senescent VSMC leads to plaque fibrous cap thinning, necrotic rmation, and calcification; senescent VSMC also drives plaque on through the release of Extracellular Signal-Regulated RK) and interleukins [22]. Through a combination of these vays, senescent VSMC exacerbates arterial plaque instability, sudden rupture of vulnerable plaques can lead to acute ischemic cardiovascular events in moderately stenotic vascular occlusion, and is more likely to result in adverse clinical events such as malignant heart failure. Compared with cardiomyocytes and endothelial cells, smooth muscle cell senescence can lead to cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases such as atherosclerotic vulnerable plaques, but the specific mechanisms of action and effects in heart disease have been reported less, and further studies are still needed.

# Fibroblast senescence and CHF

Cardiac fibroblasts play a central role in both normal cardiac physiology and cardiovascular disease [23]. Studies have shown that fibroblasts constantly alter the microenvironment by degrading and depositing extracellular matrix proteins. In elderly patients and senescent mice, senescent fibroblasts are responsible for the gradual deposition of Extracellular Matrix (ECM) in the heart, leading to cardiac fibrosis and dysfunction. Persistent fibrosis can ultimately result in CHF [23,24]. High Temperature Requirement A3 (HTRA3) is a crucial regulator of cardiac fibrosis and CHF. According to Ko et al., mild stress experiments involving Transverse Aortic Arch Constriction (TAC) showed that overloaded pressure reduces the expression of HTRA3 in cardiac fibroblasts and activates Transforming Growth Factor-Beta (TGF-β) signaling, inducing cardiac fibrosis and ultimately leading to CHF. Overexpression of HTRA3 in the heart inhibits TGF-β signaling, attenuates cardiac fibrosis, and improves cardiac dysfunction after pressure overload [25]. The findings mentioned above indicate that slowing down CHF can also be achieved by improving cardiac fibrosis.

## Immune cell senescence and CHF

In human cardiac tissue, various types of immune cells regulate inflammatory responses, and cardiomyocyte senescence and contribute to CHF to varying degrees [26,27]. The innate immune system is

made up of several types of cells, including neutrophils, monocytes, macrophages, and Natural Killer (NK) cells. Senescent neutrophils produce ROS in response to mitochondrial oxidative stress, leading to telomere dysfunction and abnormal release of Neutrophil Extracellular Traps (NETs) [28]. Simultaneously, the content of 7-ketocholesterol increases the lipid deposition in blood vessels and reduces blood flow in the internal environment. This ultimately increases the risk of hyperlipidemia, hypercholesterolemia, and atherosclerosis in senescent individuals. Aging monocytes-macrophages produce a variety of proinflammatory factors and macrophages can release the inflammatory factors IL-4 and IL-13 by promoting Signal Transducer and Activator of Transcription 3 (STAT3) phosphorylation, leading to cardiomyocyte hypertrophy.

Persistent myocardial hypertrophy leads to maladaptive ventricular remodeling, which is thought to be the main cause of CHF27; NK cells are central players in the immunological detection of senescent cells and increase in number with age. Senescent NK cells cause decreased cytotoxicity and cytokine secretion in the immune system, increasing the risk of infection and inflammation in the body [29]. All these unfavorable factors are closely related to CHF. In addition, by studying NK cells from healthy volunteers and patients with Coronary Heart Disease (CHD), Hak et al., found that compared with healthy volunteers, NK cytotoxic activity was lower in CHD patients, and the

percentages of CD3-CD56 bright regulatory NK sub-populations and CD3-CD56 $^+$  IFN- $^{\gamma_+}$  cells had a decreased trend [30]. Thus, it is clear that impaired NK cell function is also an important factor affecting coronary heart disease and even CHF. The adaptive immune system comprises T cells and B cells. Senescent CD4 $^+$  T respectively amounts of Interferon-gamma (IFN- $\gamma$ ), where the set the heart, leading to myocardial inflammation and street respectively.

This infiltration may also erode car ial plaqu s been observed that senescent T cells are presennts wit Coronary Artery Disease (CHD), which can worsen sion of the disease and lead to a decline in [32]. Patients ntiate CD4+ T cells in with CHF show an increase in hype advanced stages, indicating veen T cells and CHF correlatio [33]. This su a correlat tween T c and CHF. Additionally, miR-181c ex d and circulating B cells ion was fou were reduced in Q reduced immune function tients, [34]. However, the e enescent B cells on CHF requires further investig ne resea ests that senescent immune cells may k factors for rough various pathways. However, increase engthen these findings. The current needed to further or different types of cellular senescence in research finds ummai

Cell Type	Pathway	Mechanism	Sinical sentation	References
Cardiomyocytes	p <sup>21CIP</sup> /p16 <sup>INK4a</sup>	1. Senescent cardiomyocytes actif ate the spathway of p <sup>21CIP</sup> and p <sup>16INK4a</sup> , lead at to atypical ultimately resulting in CHF.	The activation of myofibroblasts; An increase in cardiomyocyte size; Interstitial and perivascular fibrosis;	[12]
	ROS	ROS promotes cardion pocyte senescent and lead to CHF	An increase in protein synthesis	
Endothelial cells	IL-17A	1. IL- NF-кE pathway.	Increased infarct size;	- [15-17]
	NF-κB/p53/Rb SERCA2α/Cav1.2	2. II-17A inhibit. or on of SERCA2α and Cav1.2, sibutes to compenent of CHF.	Deterioration of cardiac function; Increased myocardial fibrosis; Cardiomyocyte apoptosis	
	-s-(n21/SA-β-g	Anescent VS IC increased P16 and P21 expression and increased SA-β- gal activity.	Plaque fibrous cap thinning, necrotic core formation, and calcification;	[20-22]
	SAS	2. Senescent VSMC secrete a variety of SASP mediators, the expression of anti-inflammatory molecules RANTES and IL1R2), and degrades the extracellular frix.	Arterial plaque instability; Sudden rupture of vulnerable plaques;	
	E. dns	Release of ERK and interleukins to drive plaque inflammation.	Adverse clinical events such as malignant heart failure.	
Fibroblasts	ECM	The gradual deposition of ECM in the heart, leads to cardiac fibrosis and dysfunction. Persistent fibrosis can ultimately result in CHF.	Cardiac fibrosis and dysfunction.	[23-25]
	TGF-β	2. Activation of TGF-β signaling induces cardiac fibrosis, ultimately leading to CHF.	-	

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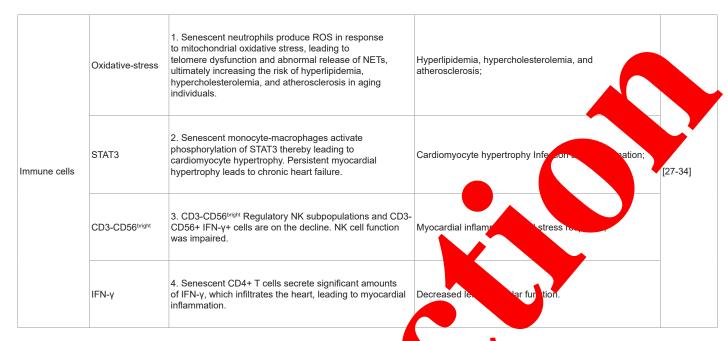


Table 1: Summary of the mechanisms of different types of cellular senescence in CHF.

#### Mitochondrial dysfunction in senescent cells and CHF

Cellular senescence is characterized by a decrease in the level cellular repair capacity, which is dependent on mitochondrial en conversion. Senescent cells exhibit decreased mitochondrial respira capacity and reduced Mitochondrial Membrane Potential (MMP) contribute to arterial aging in mice [35]. These changes lead t eased or decreased respiratory delay and accelerated changes asso rated with w during aging. However, the decrease in mitochondrial au aging typically increases the number of mitochondra. lt, this increase in the number of dysfunctional itocl ndria d compensate for the loss of mitochondrial n. Cigarette (CS) can induce senescence by disrupting ndrial autop ung fil robasts and increasing the number of damaged mitocho and small airway epithelial cells. Additionally, Co rith the g the movement of Parkin to mitochondr ation of cytoplasmic p53, which then interacts with rkin [<u>3</u>6].

Research has demonstrated nts specific to mitochondria ca llular se indings suggest a close relation iction and cellular and increased levels of Reactive Oxygen senescence oxidative Species are important molecular markers in the m damage to mitochondrial of CH DNA (mtD ROS [37]. High levels of ROS action cause oxidation of cardiac lipids and and mitochond my yte damage and potentially leading proteins, exacerbat ocyte damage, in turn, leads to further to late-stage CHF. This mtDNA damage, acceler telomere shortening, and accelerated cellular senescence. Stud s have also shown that arterial collagen accumulation, elastin fracture, vessel wall thickening, and other risk factors for inducing CHF also occur in aged mice. The RNA-binding protein LARP7 plays a protective role in heart muscle function and can prevent the onset of CHF by regulating mitochondrial biosynthesis and energy metabolism [38]. Therefore, mitochondrial dysfunction is an important factor contributing to cellular senescence and is closely related to CHF (Figure 2).

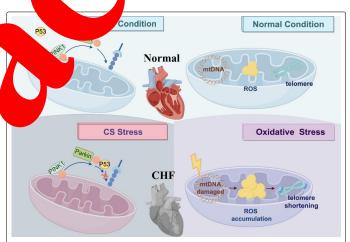
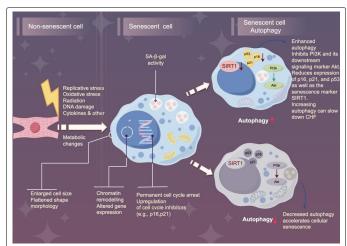


Figure 2: CS induces cellular senescence by inducing p<sup>53</sup> interaction with Parkin. Cardiac oxidative stress leads to mtDNA damage and elevated Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS), ultimately leading to Congestive Heart Failure (CHF). Thus, mitochondrial dysfunction is an important factor contributing to cellular senescence, which is closely related to CHF.

## Autophagy and CHF in senescent cells

Autophagy is the process by which cells degrade their cytoplasmic proteins and damaged organelles *via* lysosomes, regulated by autophagy-related genes [39]. Studies have shown that autophagy is closely related to aging and has a protective effect on the failing heart. Jun et al., research conducted on aged mice indicated that autophagy can prevent pathological changes caused by cardiac aging by inhibiting Phosphatidylinositol 3-Kinase (PI3K) and its downstream signaling target Protein kinase B (Akt). Additionally, it significantly reduces the expression levels of p<sup>16</sup>, p<sup>21</sup>, and p<sup>53</sup>, as well as the senescence marker Sirtuin 1 (SIRT1) [40]. Reduced autophagy impairs the accumulation of intracellular components, including protein aggregates, and ultimately accelerates cellular senescence. Increasing autophagy can slow down ventricular remodeling, contraction defects, and CHF. Chen et al., found that activating selective autophagy in aging cardiomyocytes

by promoting the binding of *Bmi-1-RING1B* to *GATA4* and the ubiquitination of *GATA4* can prevent CHF [41]. SIRT6 deficiency leads to autophagy impairment, and senescent SIRT6 KO mice exacerbate the development of CHF [42]. Taken together, these experiments suggest that activating the autophagic capacity of senescent cells may be a potential therapeutic approach for CHF (Figure 3).



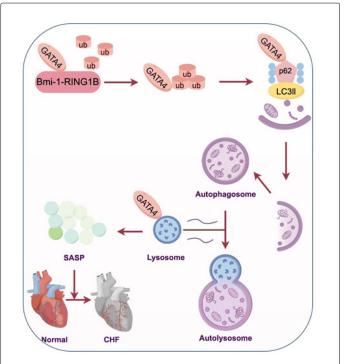
**Figure 3:** In senescent cells, autophagy prevents pathological changes induced by cardiac senescence by inhibiting phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (Pl3K) and its downstream signaling target protein kinase B (Akt). In addition, autophagy significantly reduced the expression levels of p<sup>16</sup>, p<sup>21</sup>, and p<sup>53</sup>, as well as the senescence marker SIRT1. Therefore, autophagy is closely related to aging and has a protective effect on CHF.

#### SASP and CHF

Cellular senescence is a process that leads to the release of bioactive molecules, such as pro-inflammatory cytokines, chemokines, growth factors, and proteases, known as Senescence-Associated Secretory Phenotype (SASP) [43]. SASP-based therapeutic approaches are emerging as alternatives to traditional treatments for aging-related diseases. Several studies have shown that the metabolic state of cells and tissues greatly affects senescence and SASP, which in turn results in phenotypes associated with metabolic dysfunction, a condition closely linked to CHF. Cellular senescence is a process where cells release SASP, which triggers an inflammatory signaling loop that involves pathways such as NF-κB, TGF-β, IL-1α, and IL-6 [44]. This response to senescence affects other cells with paracrine effects, induces inflammation, promotes atherosclerosis, causes cardiac circulatory disturbances, and increases risk factors for CHF [45]. Therefore, inhibiting pro-inflammatory molecular mechanisms or addressing associated inflammatory development promptly can slow down the process of aging and age-related diseases, such as CHF.

Additionally, research has found that SASP can induce organismal weakness, and frailty is an independent risk factor for CHF in the elderly [46]. Adriamycin (Doxorubicin, DOX) is a known cause of delayed-onset severe CHF due to its cardiotoxic effects. DOX induces the cellular secretion of the acute proinflammatory factor IL-6 *via* ROS-mediated activation of p53. This results in increased expression of SASP, which is a contributing factor to CHF [47]. Alternatively, downregulation of the *GATA4* protein reduces SASP production, as noted by Chen. In a recent study, it was found that ubiquitination could promote the binding of *GATA4* to *Bmi-1-RING1B*, which could help to form autophagosomes and degrade them, preventing CHF. Additionally, the analysis of SASP using Artificial Intelligence Electrocardiography (AIECG) showed that SASP expression was closely related to telomerase activity, severity of inflammation, and CHF [48].

These results suggest a mechanism linking SASP and CHF. There is a certain level of understanding of senescence factors and CHF, and the development of targeted therapeutic agents has become possible. However, researchers still face great challenges, such as a lack of relevant *in vivo* experiments required for signaling pathway studies, an incomplete understanding of the secretion mechanism of senescence factors, and difficulty in identifying precise targets. Exploring and investigating new targets for CHF prevention and treatment based on cellular senescence is significant in ameliorating diseases related to cellular senescence and providing new directions for the treatment of CHF (Figure 4).



**Figure 4:** *GATA4* is ubiquitinated upon binding *to Bmi-1-RING1B*, then recognized by p62, translocated to autophagosomes to form autophagic lysosomes, and degraded. Downregulation of *GATA4* alleviates CHF by reducing *GATA4*-dependent hypertrophy and SASP-related molecules.

# Discussion

# New targets for CHF control based on cellular senescence

Lee et al., discovered that anthocyanins can inhibit oxidative stress and redox pathways during cellular senescence by treating aged rats with anthocyanin-rich mulberry extracts. A recent study found that anthocyanin intake is negatively correlated with the development of CHF [49]. Therefore, anthocyanins have significant potential for clinical application in CHF treatment, although further research is needed to investigate the correlation between the two. A Toll-like Receptor (TLR4), belonging to the immunoglobulin superfamily, is involved in several aspects of CHF. According to Ping et al., TLR4, including the promotion of the release of inflammatory mediators such as TNF- $\alpha$ , IL-1 $\beta$ , and IL-6, and the affecting of mitochondrial function as well as the endoplasmic reticulum stress pathway [50].

Therefore, studying TLR4's biological function and mechanism of action is of great significance for finding effective therapeutic approaches for CHF. Resveratrol may have an anti-cellular senescence effect by regulating the Akt/Bad/Bcl-2 pathway, which can improve the pathological changes associated with CHF [51]. Knockout of IL-

17 improved cardiac function and attenuated hypertrophic growth of the failing heart, suggesting that IL-17 is a promising therapeutic target for treating CHF. Navitoclax, a Bcl-2 family inhibitor, can eliminate senescent cells by inducing apoptosis, improving the contractile function of the left ventricle in senescent mice, and reducing cardiac fibrosis, hypertrophy, and inflammation in CHF mice [52,53]. Pharmacologic removal of senescent cells may be a potential treatment for CHF with reduced ejection fraction.

### Conclusion

The following are some of the new targets that have been identified for CHF therapy based on cellular senescence. Ongoing research on the mechanism of cellular senescence in CHF will continue to explore key molecules related to cellular senescence. This will help accelerate the process of drug discovery and development in CHF, providing more therapeutic choices for CHF patients. Cellular senescence plays a crucial role in several pathophysiological processes in CHF, and CHF itself accelerates the process of cellular senescence. This interconnectedness is particularly evident in mitochondrial dysfunction, autophagy, and SASP. However, it is worth noting that normal cellular senescence has positive implications for the human body, such as contributing to wound healing, tissue repair, and regeneration when present at sites of tissue injury. Currently, the contribution of cellular senescence to the development of CHF has not been fully recognized due to inadequate research. Both cellular senescence and CHF are complex physiological processes, requiring further research to develop effective strategies for preventing and treating CHF by targeting cellular senescence.

# **Author contributions**

Shuqing Zhao wrote the first draft of the manuscript. That contributed to the revision of the manuscript. Ying Zhao Miao Lu contributed to the writing and revision of the manuscript. All authorous contributed to the manuscript revision, and read approved the submitted version.

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## Declaration ting interest

The authors described that we have no competing financial interests or personal relation hips that could be perceived to have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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