This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Parkinson's disease (PD)	Mitogen-activated protein kinase 14 (MAPK14; p38)	<p>Studies in cell culture and in mice suggest that selective inhibition of p38 in the substantia nigra could help treat PD. In mice, a p38 inhibitor protected dopaminergic neurons from neurotoxin-mediated cell death. Similar results were seen in cultured primary dopaminergic neurons derived from human progenitor cells. Next steps include developing small molecules that cross the blood-brain barrier and are effective inhibitors of p38 at low concentrations. There are at least 12 p38 inhibitors in development stages ranging from preclinical to marketed for various indications, including cardiovascular, cancer, autoimmune and inflammatory diseases.</p> <p>SciBX 1(43); doi:10.1038/scibx.2008.1055 Published online Dec. 4, 2008</p>	Unpatented; unlicensed	<p>Karunakaran, S. <i>et al. J. Neurosci.</i>; published online Nov. 19, 2008; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.4511-08.2008</p> <p>Contact: Vijayalakshmi Ravindranath, National Brain Research Centre, Manesar, India e-mail: vijir@nbrac.ac.in</p>