This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Endocrine disease				
Obesity	Ghrelin	<p>Mouse studies suggest that modifying ghrelin using a catalytic antibody could help treat obesity. In fasting mice, an anti-ghrelin antibody resulted in greater expenditure of heat energy, greater consumption of oxygen and higher production of carbon dioxide compared with what was seen in mice that received a control antibody. Treated mice also showed less feeding following the fasting period. The antibody modifies ghrelin by removing an octanoyl moiety to produce des-acyl ghrelin. Next steps include additional animal studies and humanizing the antibodies.</p> <p>Elixir Pharmaceuticals Inc.'s EX-1350 ghrelin receptor antagonist is in preclinical testing to treat obesity.</p> <p>SciBX 1(40); doi:10.1038/scibx.2008.972 Published online Nov. 6, 2008</p>	Patent application filed for the catalytic antibody approach; available for licensing	<p>Mayorov, A. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Oct. 27, 2008; doi:10.1073/pnas.0711808105</p> <p>Contact: Kim D. Janda, The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, Calif. e-mail: kdjanda@scripps.edu</p> <p>Contact: Eric P. Zorrilla, same affiliation as above e-mail: ezorrilla@scripps.edu</p> <p>Contact: Michael M. Meijler, same affiliation as above e-mail: meijler@bgu.ac.il</p>