This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Colorectal cancer	NDRG family member 4 (NDRG4)	<p>Studies in human tissues and in cell lines suggest that the tumor suppressor <i>NDRG4</i> could be a marker for colorectal cancer. Methylation of the promoter region of <i>NDRG4</i> was higher and expression of the NDRG4 protein lower in primary human colorectal cancer tissue samples than in healthy human colorectal tissue samples ($p < 0.001$). Overexpression of NDRG4 in two human colorectal cancer cell lines decreased cell proliferation and invasiveness, confirming <i>NDRG4</i> as a tumor suppressor. A screen of <i>NDRG4</i> promoter methylation in human fecal samples identified those with colorectal cancer with >50% sensitivity and >90% specificity. Ongoing work is seeking to validate <i>NDRG4</i> as a marker in large screening studies and is investigating the gene's tumor-suppressing functions.</p> <p>SciBX 2(25); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1003 Published online June 25, 2009</p>	<p>Patented; licensing status undisclosed Contact: Herman Spolders, OncoMethylome Sciences S.A., Liege, Belgium e-mail: herman.spolders@oncomethylome.com</p>	<p>Melotte, V. <i>et al. J. Natl. Cancer Inst.</i>; published online June 17, 2009; doi:10.1093/jnci/djp131 Contact: Manon van Engeland, Maastricht University Medical Center, Maastricht, the Netherlands e-mail: manon.van.engeland@mumc.nl</p>