This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Bacterial infection	<i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 antigen	<p>Studies of bacterial cultures suggest that a recombinant bactericidal protein complex could help selectively kill the <i>E. coli</i> strain that is the major cause of food-borne outbreaks of colitis. The bactericidal pyocin complex was engineered to express a bacteriophage protein that binds to O157, an antigen specific to the food-borne <i>E. coli</i> strain. <i>In vitro</i>, the engineered pyocin inhibited the growth of the food-borne pathogen more potently than growth of control strains lacking the antigen. In a raw beef assay of bacterial growth, the engineered pyocin reduced <i>E. coli</i> growth by about 350-fold compared with no treatment. Next steps include testing in animal models of food-borne pathogenesis and formulating pyocin products suitable for use in commercial food production. AvidBiotics Corp. has pyocins in preclinical development to treat a variety of bacterial infections.</p> <p>SciBX 2(27); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1079 Published online July 16, 2009</p>	Patent pending; available for licensing	<p>Scholl, D. <i>et al. Antimicrob. Agents Chemother.</i>; published online April 6, 2009; doi:10.1128/AAC.01660-08</p> <p>Contact: Dean Scholl, AvidBiotics Corp., South San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: dean@avidbiotics.com</p>