This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Neuropathic pain	Leptin (LEP); LEP receptor (LEPR)	<p>Studies in rodents suggest that antagonizing spinal LEP could be useful for treating neuropathic pain. In rats, Lep and Lepr levels were higher within the ipsilateral spinal cord dorsal horn following peripheral nerve injury than that seen in sham-operated rats. In a rat model of chronic constriction sciatic nerve injury, spinal administration of a Lep antagonist prevented and reversed neuropathic pain behavior. Next steps include identifying specific LEPR subtypes that are responsible for the neuronal effect of leptin in pain modulation.</p> <p>BL-5040, a leptin antagonist from BioLineRx Ltd., is in preclinical development to treat inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).</p> <p>Metreleptin, a leptin analog from Amylin Pharmaceuticals Inc., is in Phase II testing to treat obesity.</p> <p>SciBX 2(3); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.110 Published online Jan. 22, 2009</p>	Unpatented; unlicensed	<p>Lim, G. <i>et al. J. Clin. Invest.</i>; published online Jan. 12, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI36785</p> <p>Contact: Jianren Mao, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass. e-mail: jmao@partners.org</p>