This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Ataxia	Ataxin 2 (ATXN2; SCA2)	<p>Studies in mice suggest that dantrolene could help treat spinocerebellar ataxia type 2, a neurodegenerative disease caused by polyglutamine expansion in the SCA2 protein. Mice expressing the defective protein showed abnormal Ca²⁺ signaling and disease-associated motor deficits. Dantrolene, a ryanodine receptor 1 inhibitor and Ca²⁺ stabilizer, significantly reduced the motor deficits and death of Purkinje neurons compared with buffer control ($p<0.05$ and $p=0.0122$, respectively). Next steps include evaluating dantrolene in ataxia patients. Dantrolene is a generic muscle relaxant.</p> <p>SciBX 2(29); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1158 Published online July 30, 2009</p>	Work unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Liu, J. <i>et al. J. Neurosci.</i>; published online July 22, 2009; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.0660-09.2009 Contact: Ilya Bezprozvanny, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Dallas, Texas e-mail: ilya.bezprozvanny@UTSouthwestern.edu</p>