This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Colon cancer	IL-17	<p>Studies in mice suggest that preventing enterotoxigenic <i>Bacteroides fragilis</i> (ETBF) colonization of the colon could help reduce the risk of developing colon cancer. In mice, ETBF infection increased colonic thickness and inflammation and produced visible tumors with T helper cell type 17 (Th17) infiltrates. In ETBF-challenged mice, antibodies against IL-17, which suppresses Th17 responses, prevented ETBF-induced colitis, colonic hyperplasia and tumor formation. Next steps include developing a diagnostic to detect serum antibodies against the bacteria to identify patients at high risk for the cancer, as well as testing vaccination strategies against the bacteria and inhibiting the Th17 immune response for prevention.</p> <p>SciBX 2(33); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1273 Published online Aug. 27, 2009</p>	Provisional patent application filed; available for licensing for both therapeutic and diagnostic applications	<p>Wu, S. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online Aug. 23, 2009; doi:10.1038/nm.2015</p> <p>Contact: Cynthia Sears, The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Md. e-mail: csears@jhmi.edu</p>