This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Pain	Cannabinoid CB ₁ receptor (CNR1)	<p>Studies in mice and in humans suggest that antagonizing CNR1 could help treat pain. In healthy volunteers subjected to intracutaneous electrical stimulation, CNR1 antagonist Acomplia rimonabant decreased the size of hyperalgesic and allodynic skin areas compared with placebo. Next steps could include evaluating CNR1 antagonists or inverse agonists in additional animal pain models.</p> <p>Acomplia, a CNR1 blocker from sanofi-aventis Group, was marketed in multiple countries outside the U.S. to treat obesity before being withdrawn last year following a recommendation by the EMEA's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use because of serious CNS side effects.</p> <p>Sativex, a sublingual cannabis extract spray containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD) from GW Pharmaceuticals plc, Bayer AG and Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd., is marketed to treat pain.</p> <p>SciBX 2(33); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1284 Published online Aug. 27, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Pernía-Andrade, A.J. <i>et al. Science</i>; published online Aug. 6, 2009; doi:10.1126/science.1171870</p> <p>Contact: Hanns Ulrich Zeilhofer, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland e-mail: zeilhofer@pharma.uzh.ch</p>