This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	HCV non- structural protein 5B (NS5B)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> studies identified 2'-C-methylcytidine prodrugs of a polymerase inhibitor that could help treat HCV. In cell-based assays, the prodrugs inhibited HCV NS5B polymerase with 10- to 200-fold better potency than the parent compound. In hamsters and rats, subcutaneous administration of the prodrug led to accumulation of the active compound in the liver without the generation of toxic metabolites. Next steps could include testing the prodrugs in animal models of HCV infection.</p> <p>At least five companies have compounds inhibiting NS5B in clinical and preclinical testing to treat HCV.</p> <p>SciBX 2(35); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1348 Published online Sept. 10, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Gardelli, C. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online Aug. 6, 2009; doi:10.1021/jm900447q</p> <p>Contact: Cristina Gardelli, Merck & Co. Inc., Whitehouse Station, N.J. e-mail: cristina_gardelli@merck.com</p>