This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
West Nile virus	T _{regs}	<p>A study in mice and in humans suggests that increasing T_{reg} levels could be useful for preventing West Nile fever. In infected symptomatic patients, T_{reg} levels were 41% lower than those in infected asymptomatic patients. Infected mice depleted of T_{regs} had significantly more severe disease symptoms and higher mortality than infected mice expressing T_{regs} ($p < 0.01$ and $p = 0.026$, respectively). Next steps include developing strategies to modulate T_{reg} levels in animal models of viral infection.</p> <p>Alferon N interferon alfa-n3, an injectable formulation of natural interferon-α (IFNA; IFN-α) from Hemispherx BioPharma Inc., is in Phase II/III testing to treat West Nile virus infection.</p> <p>At least five other companies have compounds in Phase II or earlier to treat or prevent West Nile virus infection.</p> <p>SciBX 2(41); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1535 Published online Oct. 22, 2009</p>	Work unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Lanteri, M.C. <i>et al.</i> <i>J. Clin. Invest.</i>; published online Oct. 12, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI39387</p> <p>Contact: Philip J. Norris, Blood Systems Research Institute, San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: pnorris@bloodsystems.org</p>