This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Parkinson's disease (PD)	Beclin 1 (BECN1)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest that BECN1 could help treat PD and other diseases characterized by Lewy body formation. In a neuronal cell line overexpressing α-synuclein (SNCA), overexpression of BECN1 led to activation of autophagy and decreased SNCA accumulation, a hallmark of Lewy body diseases. In transgenic mice overexpressing SNCA, lentiviral delivery of BECN1 to the brain resulted in lower accumulation of SNCA and reduced brain pathology compared to what were found in mice given control lentivirus. Next steps include developing technology for delivering BECN1 into the brain without requiring intracerebral injection.</p> <p>SciBX 2(43); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1610 Published online Nov. 5, 2009</p>	Patent pending covering the findings; available for licensing through the University of California, San Diego	<p>Spencer, B. <i>et al. J. Neurosci.</i>; published online Oct. 28, 2009; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.4390-09.2009</p> <p>Contact: Eliezer Masliah, University of California, San Diego, La Jolla, Calif. e-mail: emasliah@ucsd.edu</p>