This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	Occludin (OCLN); CD81	Cell culture studies in humans and in rodents identified OCLN as a viral entry factor that could be targeted to treat HCV. Human hepatocarcinoma cells expressing OCLN were susceptible to HCV infection, whereas OCLN knockdown cells were not. Also, uninfected human renal carcinoma cells became susceptible to infection following transformation with <i>OCLN</i>. Expression of human <i>OCLN</i> and human <i>CD81</i> in mouse and hamster cells also rendered the rodent cells susceptible to HCV infection. Ongoing studies include developing transgenic mice expressing <i>OCLN</i> and <i>CD81</i> and elucidating OCLN's role in cell-to-cell HCV infection. Seven companies have therapies that are marketed or approved to treat HCV infection. Eight companies have therapies in Phase III testing to treat HCV infection. Multiple companies have compounds in preclinical through early clinical testing to treat the indication. <i>SciBX</i> 2(5); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.190 Published online Feb. 5, 2009	Patented; available for licensing	Ploss, A. <i>et al. Nature</i>; published online Jan. 29, 2009; doi:10.1038/nature07684 Contact: Charles Rice, The Rockefeller University, New York, N.Y. e-mail: ricec@rockefeller.edu