This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Breast cancer	Hepatocyte growth factor (hepapoietin A; scatter factor) (HGF; HGF/SF); poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP)	<p>Studies in human cell lines and in tissue samples suggest that HGF could be a biomarker for breast cancer. In human breast cancer cell lines, mutations in the promoter region of <i>HGF</i> led to modified chromatin structure and recruitment of a transcriptional activator—PARP—that upregulates HGF. In breast tumors, <i>HGF</i> promoter mutations were identified in 51% of African-American women and in 15% of European-descent women and were associated with cancer incidence and aberrant <i>HGF</i> expression. Ongoing work is investigating whether <i>HGF</i> promoter mutations are associated with colon, endometrial and prostate cancers.</p> <p>Amgen Inc.'s AMG 102, an antibody targeting HGF, is in Phase II testing to treat gastric cancer, glioblastoma multiforme (GBM), metastatic colorectal cancer, prostate cancer, renal cell carcinoma (RCC) and small cell lung cancer (SCLC).</p> <p>Abbott Laboratories, AstraZeneca plc and BiPar Sciences Inc. have compounds targeting PARP in preclinical to early-stage clinical testing to treat breast, ovarian and other cancers.</p> <p>SciBX 2(6); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.219 Published online Feb. 12, 2009</p>	Unpatented; licensing status undisclosed	<p>Ma, J. <i>et al. J. Clin. Invest.</i>; published online Feb. 2, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI36640</p> <p>Contact: Reza Zarnegar, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa. e-mail: rezazarar@pitt.edu</p>