This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Pulmonary disease				
Respiratory distress syndrome (RDS)	Smoothened (SMO)	<p>A study in mice suggests that activating SMO could be useful for preventing side effects of steroid treatment of RDS in newborns. The use of glucocorticoids to prevent RDS in human neonates increases the risk of brain damage compared with that seen in other infants. In a mouse model of steroid-induced brain injury, an activated allele of Smo decreased neurotoxicity caused by glucocorticoids compared with that seen in wild-type controls. Next steps include testing agonists of Sonic hedgehog homolog (SHH), an upstream regulator of SMO, in animal models of chemotherapy- and radiation-induced brain injury.</p> <p>SciBX 2(6); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.244 Published online Feb. 12, 2009</p>	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Heine, V.M. & Rowitch, D.H. <i>J. Clin. Invest.</i>; published online Jan. 26, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI36376</p> <p>Contact: David H. Rowitch, University of California, San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: rowitchd@peds.ucsf.edu</p>