This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Sepsis	Purinergic receptor P2X, ligand-gated ion channel (P2RX)	<p>Studies in cell culture suggest that antagonizing P2RX could be useful for treating sepsis caused by hemolytic bacteria. In human, murine and equine erythrocytes, P2RX activation led to hemolysis caused by α-hemolysin pore formation in the erythrocyte membrane. α-hemolysin is a virulence factor produced by invasive strains of <i>Escherichia coli</i>. In all three species of erythrocytes, P2RX antagonists produced dose-dependent inhibition of α-hemolysin-induced hemolysis. Next steps include preclinical testing to determine whether inhibition of P2RX decreases the cytotoxic effects of α-hemolytic <i>E. coli</i> <i>in vivo</i>.</p> <p>SciBX 2(7); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.285 Published online Feb. 19, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Skals, M. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Feb. 9, 2009; doi:10.1073/pnas.0807044106 Contact: Helle A. Praetorius, Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark e-mail: hp@fi.au.dk</p>