This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cardiovascular disease				
Atherosclerosis	Cholesteryl ester transfer protein (CETP)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> studies identified a CETP inhibitor that could help treat atherosclerosis. Chemical modifications to a CETP inhibitor from Pharmacia Corp. (now part of Pfizer Inc.) led to a compound with an IC_{50} of 39 nM <i>in vitro</i>, an IC_{50} of 0.2 μM in an assay using human plasma, and good pharmacokinetics in rats, dogs and cynomolgus monkeys. In high fat-fed hamsters, human CETP transgenic mice and male cynomolgus monkeys, the inhibitor caused dose-dependent increases in high-density lipoprotein cholesterol that were comparable to those seen using torcetrapib, a discontinued CETP inhibitor from Pfizer. Next steps could include testing the inhibitor in animal models of atherosclerosis.</p> <p>At least five companies have CETP inhibitors in clinical and preclinical testing to treat dyslipidemia, hyperlipidemia or atherosclerosis.</p> <p>SciBX 2(10); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.401 Published online March 12, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Kuo, G. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online Feb. 24, 2009; doi:10.1021/jm801319d</p> <p>Contact: Margery A. Connelly, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Research and Development, Cranbury, N.J. e-mail: mconnell@its.jnj.com</p> <p>Contact: Gee-Hong Kuo, same affiliation as above e-mail: gkuo@its.jnj.com</p>