This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Melanoma	SRY (sex determining region T)-box 9 (SOX9); preferentially expressed antigen in melanoma (PRAME)	<i>In vitro</i> studies suggest that inducing SOX9 expression could help treat melanoma. In melanoma cell lines, transfection with SOX9 lowered proliferation, inhibited expression of the melanoma factor PRAME and made cells susceptible to treatment with retinoic acid compared with what was seen in nontransformed cells. Also in melanoma cell lines, prostaglandin D ₂ (PGD ₂), a known enhancer of SOX9 expression, or PGD ₂ plus retinoic acid decreased proliferation by 50% and 75%, respectively, compared with what was seen using no treatment. Similar results were seen in a human melanoma reconstructed skin model and in a mouse model of melanoma. Next steps include determining the optimal doses and concentrations to establish a protocol for testing the combination therapy in clinical trials. SciBX 2(11); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.443 Published online March 19, 2009	International patent application filed; available for licensing	Passeron, T. <i>et al. J. Clin. Invest.</i> ; published online March 9, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI34015 Contact: Vincent J. Hearing, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Md. e-mail: hearingv@nih.gov