This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Malaria; toxoplasmosis	Calpain 1 (CAPN1)	<p>Studies in cell culture suggest that inhibiting host calpain activity could be useful for treating malaria and toxoplasmosis. In cultured human erythrocytes, inhibition of CAPN1 prevented <i>Plasmodium falciparum</i> parasites from escaping infected cells, thus preventing the parasites from proliferating. Similarly, small interfering RNA-mediated suppression or genetic deletion of calpain activity blocked escape of <i>Toxoplasma gondii</i> parasites in infected mammalian fibroblasts. Next steps include studies in mice to verify that parasitic escape is mediated by host calpains.</p> <p>SciBX 2(15); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.630 Published online April 16, 2009</p>	Unpatented; unlicensed	<p>Chandramohanadas, R. <i>et al. Science</i>; published online April 2, 2009; doi:10.1126/science.1171085</p> <p>Contact: Doron C. Greenbaum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. e-mail: dorong@upenn.edu</p>