This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)	Nuclear factor (erythroid-derived 2)-like 2 (NFE2L2; NRF2)	A study in mice suggests that increasing NRF2 expression in astrocytes may be useful for delaying the progression of ALS. In a murine model of ALS, mice with selective overexpression of Nrf2 in astrocytes had a median survival time of 149 days compared with 128.5 days for ALS controls that did not overexpress Nrf2. Median time to ALS disease onset was 113 days in the Nrf2-overexpressing ALS mice compared with 96 days in ALS controls. Next steps include identifying small molecules that increase NRF2 activity and studying how NRF2 activity influences the course of other diseases.	Patents pending for the use of NRF2-targeting therapeutics in neurodegenerative diseases; licensing status undisclosed	Vargas, M.R. <i>et al. J. Neurosci.</i> ; published online Dec. 10, 2008; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.4099-08.2008 Contact: Jeffrey A. Johnson, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, Wis. e-mail: jajohnson@pharmacy.wisc.edu
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