This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Malaria	<i>Plasmodium falciparum</i> sirtuin 2 (PF13_0152; Sir2); <i>P. falciparum</i> erythrocyte membrane protein 1 (VAR; PfEMP1)	Studies in cell culture suggest that inhibiting Sir2 could be useful for treating malaria. <i>P. falciparum</i> lacking either the Sir2A or Sir2B histone deacetylase showed less switching in expression of the parasite's 60 variants of PfEMP1 than wild-type <i>P. falciparum</i> . PfEMP1 is a protein responsible for cyto-adherence of infected cells, and switching between variants is a key mechanism of immune evasion by <i>P. falciparum</i> . Next steps include high throughput screening to identify Sir2-specific inhibitors.	Unpatented; unlicensed	Tonkin, C. <i>et al. PLoS Biol.</i> ; published online April 14, 2009; doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1000084 Contact: Alan F. Cowman, The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Melbourne, Australia e-mail: cowman@wehi.edu.au
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