This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Viral infection	IL-21; IL-21 receptor (IL-21R)	A study in mice suggests that increasing IL-21 levels could help treat chronic viral infection. In IL-21 knockout mice, chronic infection with lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus (LCMV) led to lower long-term CD8⁺ T cell response and higher viral titers than were seen in wild-type mice. In mice lacking IL-21-secreting CD4⁺ T cells, administration of IL-21 led to better antiviral CD8⁺ T cell response and viral clearance compared with those of untreated mice. Next steps include testing recombinant IL-21 in primate models of HCV and HIV infection. ZymoGenetics Inc. has recombinant IL-21 in Phase II trials for metastatic melanoma and renal cell carcinoma. SciBX 2(21); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.880 Published online May 28, 2009	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	Yi, J. <i>et al. Science</i>; published online May 14, 2009; doi:10.1126/science.1175194 Contact: Allan J. Zajac, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Ala. e-mail: azajac@uab.edu