This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Metabolic disease				
Hypercholesterolemia	Proprotein convertase subtilisin kexin type 9 (PCSK9)	<p>Studies in mice and nonhuman primates suggest that antibodies targeting PCSK9 could be useful for treating hypercholesterolemia. PCSK9 is a protease that regulates serum low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels. In cynomolgus monkeys, a PCSK9-neutralizing mAb significantly lowered circulating LDL cholesterol levels by up to 80% compared with a control antibody ($p=0.0002$). In mice expressing human PCSK9, the same antibody caused a dose-dependent decrease in serum cholesterol compared with the control antibody. Amgen Inc. did not disclose next steps. Amgen is developing compounds targeting PCSK9. Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Inc. has the small interfering RNA-based therapeutic ALN-PCSK01 in preclinical development to treat hypercholesterolemia. Isis Pharmaceuticals Inc. and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. are jointly developing antisense compounds targeting PCSK9 compounds for cardiovascular indications.</p> <p>SciBX 2(21); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.882 Published online May 28, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	<p>Chan, J.C.Y. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online May 11, 2009; doi:10.1073/pnas.0903849106</p> <p>Contact: Simon M. Jackson, Amgen Inc., South San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: simon.jackson@amgen.com</p>