This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Autoimmune disease				
Multiple sclerosis (MS)	Tumor necrosis factor receptor superfamily member 1A (TNFRSF1A); interferon regulatory factor 8 (IRF8); CD6	<p>A genomewide association study identified three susceptibility loci for MS that could help identify new therapeutic targets. Analysis of 2,634 patients and 7,220 controls identified <i>TNFRSF1A</i>, <i>IRF8</i> and <i>CD6</i> as susceptibility loci for MS ($p=1.59\times 10^{-11}$, $p=3.73\times 10^{-9}$ and $p=3.79\times 10^{-9}$, respectively). Similar results were seen in an independent set of 2,215 patients and 2,116 controls. The susceptibility allele near <i>IRF8</i> was associated with high expression of type I interferon response pathway genes. Next steps include determining the causal effects of the identified variants on immune function to determine potential therapeutic targets for MS. At least five companies market type I interferon receptor agonists to treat MS.</p> <p>SciBX 2(24); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.967 Published online June 18, 2009</p>	Findings unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>De Jager, P. <i>et al. Nat. Genet.</i>; published online June 14, 2009; doi:10.1038/ng.401</p> <p>Contact: Philip De Jager, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard University, Boston, Mass. e-mail: pdejager@rics.bwh.harvard.edu</p>