This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Autoimmune disease				
Psoriasis	IL-33 (NF-HEV); VEGF	<p>Studies in patient samples and in cell culture suggest that inhibiting IL-33 could help treat psoriasis and other inflammatory disorders by blocking mast cell activation. In patient skin biopsy samples, expression of the mast cell-specific cytokine IL-33 was higher in psoriatic regions than in control regions ($p < 0.05$). Addition of IL-33 increased VEGF production in mast cells compared with that in untreated mast cells ($p < 0.05$). Angiogenesis is a key component in psoriasis pathogenesis, and VEGF levels are increased in psoriatic plaques. Next steps include evaluating compounds that inhibit mast cell activation in animal models of psoriasis and in humans.</p> <p>SciBX 3(9); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.269 Published online March 4, 2010</p>	<p>Compounds and methods to treat diseases associated with mast cell activation covered by three issued patents; available for licensing from Theoharis C. Theoharides</p> <p>Contact: Theoharis C. Theoharides, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Mass. e-mail: theoharis.theoharides@tufts.edu</p>	<p>Theoharides, T.C. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Feb. 15, 2010; doi:10.1073/pnas.1000803107</p> <p>Contact: Susan Leeman, Boston University Medical School, Boston, Mass. e-mail: sleeman@bu.edu</p> <p>Contact: Theoharis C. Theoharides, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Mass. e-mail: theoharis.theoharides@tufts.edu</p>