This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Various				
Inflammation; pain	Prostaglandin E ₂ receptor EP4 subtype (prostanoid EP4 receptor) (PTGER4)	A study in rats identified a benzoic acid-based PTGER4 antagonist that could help treat inflammation and pain. In a rat model of arthritis, the antagonist MK-2894 inhibited the pain response with an EC ₅₀ of 250 nM. In rats, the compound showed good gastrointestinal tolerability. Next steps could include evaluating MK2894 in additional animal models of pain and inflammation. Merck & Co. Inc. did not reply to inquiries about the developmental status of MK-2894. BGC20-1531, a PTGER4 antagonist from Asterand plc, is in Phase I testing to treat migraines. SciBX 3(10); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.321 Published online March 11, 2010	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Blouin, M. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i> ; published online Feb. 17, 2010; doi:10.1021/jm901771h Contact: Yongxin Han, Merck Frosst Centre for Therapeutic Research, Merck Frosst Canada Ltd., Kirkland, Quebec, Canada e-mail: yongxin_han@merck.com Contact: Marc Blouin, same affiliation as above e-mail: marc_blouin@merck.com