This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Alzheimer's disease (AD)	β -Amyloid ($A\beta$)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and <i>Drosophila</i> studies suggest that peptides designed to bind monomeric forms of $A\beta$ could help treat AD. The Z_{Aβ3} Affibody molecule, a dimer consisting of 2 covalently linked 58-amino-acid peptides, was engineered to bind the hydrophobic region of soluble toxic $A\beta$ monomers. In a transgenic fly model of AD, expression of the Affibody reduced $A\beta$ aggregation and neurotoxicity and increased $A\beta$ clearance compared with expression of a nontargeted Affibody. Next steps include testing the Affibody in mouse models of AD.</p> <p>At least 16 companies have therapeutics targeting $A\beta$ in clinical and preclinical testing to treat AD.</p> <p>SciBX 3(12); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.383 Published online March 25, 2010</p>	Affibody patented by Affibody AB; licensing status undisclosed	<p>Luheshi, L. <i>et al. PLoS Biol.</i>; published online March 15, 2010; doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1000334</p> <p>Contact: Torleif Hård, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden e-mail: torleif.hard@molbio.slu.se</p> <p>Contact: Christopher M. Dobson, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, U.K. e-mail: cmd44@cam.ac.uk</p>