This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Alzheimer's disease (AD)	Adrenergic receptors	<p>A study in mice suggests that agonizing adrenergic receptors with norepinephrine could help stimulate β-amyloid ($A\beta$) clearance to treat AD. In a mouse model of AD, chemical destruction of norepinephrine-secreting cells in the locus ceruleus caused higher $A\beta$ deposition than that in mock-treated controls. In AD mice lacking norepinephrine, the synthetic norepinephrine precursor Droxidopa increased phagocytosis of $A\beta$ compared with mock control. Next steps include clinical trials of Droxidopa to treat mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a condition that precedes AD. Droxidopa is marketed in Japan by Dainippon Sumitomo Pharma Co. Ltd. to treat neurogenic orthostatic hypotension (NOH). Chelsea Therapeutics International Ltd. has rights to the compound outside of Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan.</p> <p>SciBX 3(13); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.410 Published online April 1, 2010</p>	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Heneka, M.T. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online March 15, 2010; doi:10.1073/pnas.0909586107 Contact: Michael T. Heneka, University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany e-mail: michael.heneka@ukb.uni-bonn.de</p>