This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Cancer	Polyribonucleotide nucleotidyltransferase 1 (PNPT1; PNPASE)	<i>In vitro</i> studies suggest that upregulating PNPASE could help treat cancer. In human melanoma cells, adenoviruses expressing PNPASE reduced levels of oncogenic microRNA-221 (miR-221) compared with empty vector adenoviruses. Also in the melanoma cells, PNPASE knockdown or miR-221 upregulation failed to block cancer cell growth. Next steps include conducting studies to determine the mechanism by which PNPASE degrades specific oncogenic miRNAs and testing upregulation of PNPASE in animal models of cancer.	PNPASE gene patented by Columbia University; available for licensing discussions for certain applications	Das, S.K. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i> ; published online June 14, 2010; doi:10.1073/pnas.0914143107 Contact: Paul B. Fisher, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Richmond, Va. e-mail: pbfisher@vcu.edu
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