This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Ophthalmic disease				
Age-related macular degeneration (AMD); blindness	Alu RNA; dicer 1 ribonuclease type III (DICER1)	Studies in patient samples and in mice suggest that decreasing Alu RNA levels in the eye could help treat geographic atrophy, an advanced form of dry AMD that causes blindness. In geographic atrophy patients, the number of Alu RNA sequences in the macular retinal pigment epithelium was greater than that in control eyes. In mice with damaged retinal tissue, an antisense oligonucleotide against Alu RNA resulted in less retinal degeneration than a nontargeting control oligonucleotide. Next steps include optimizing oligonucleotide compounds that target Alu RNA in the eye.	Findings covered by multiple University of Kentucky patent applications; available for licensing	Kaneko, H. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online Feb. 6, 2011; doi:10.1038/nature09830 Contact: Jayakrishna Ambati, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky. e-mail: jamba2@email.uky.edu
SciBX 4(7); doi:10.1038/scibx.2011.201 Published online Feb. 17, 2011				