This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HBV	B cell lymphoma 2 (BCL-2; BCL2); Bcl-x _L	<p>Worm and cell culture studies suggest inhibiting BCL2-family proteins could help treat HBV infection. In the <i>Caenorhabditis elegans</i> roundworm, the HBV protein HBx was shown to interact with a BCL2 homolog and triggered both necrotic and apoptotic cell death. In human hepatocyte cells, HBx bound to BCL2 and Bcl-x_L and triggered cell death. In hepatocytes, small hairpin RNA against BCL2 or Bcl-x_L led to less HBV DNA replication than control shRNA. Next steps could include evaluating pharmacological inhibitors of BCL2-family proteins in models of HBV infection.</p> <p>At least 13 companies have compounds that target BCL2 family proteins in Phase II testing or earlier to treat various cancers.</p> <p>SciBX 5(43); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.1141 Published online Nov. 1, 2012</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable for findings from both studies	<p>Geng, X. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Oct. 22, 2012; doi:10.1073/pnas.1204668109 Contact: Ding Xue, University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, Colo. e-mail: ding.xue@colorado.edu Contact: Ning-Shao Xia, Xiamen University, Xiamen, China e-mail: nsxia@xmu.edu.cn</p> <p>Geng, X. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Oct. 22, 2012; doi:10.1073/pnas.1204652109 Contact: Ding Xue, University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, Colo. e-mail: ding.xue@colorado.edu</p>