This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Ophthalmic disease				
Retinitis	Neurotrophic tyrosine kinase receptor 2 (NTRK2; TrkB)	<p>Mouse studies identified an <i>N</i>-acetyl serotonin (NAS) derivative that could help treat retinal degeneration. In a mouse model of light-induced retinal degeneration, injection of the NAS derivative <i>N</i>-[2-(5-hydroxy-1H-indol-3-yl)ethyl]-2-oxopiperidine-3-carboxamide (HIOC) decreased loss of visual function and photoreceptors by activating TrkB compared with injection of vehicle control. In mouse serum and liver microsomes, HIOC had greater stability and a better half-life than NAS. Next steps include optimizing the compound's activity and increasing its <i>in vivo</i> half-life.</p> <p>SciBX 5(8); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.210 Published online Feb. 23, 2012</p>	Patent application filed for neuroprotective indications including retinal degradation; available for licensing	<p>Shen, J. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online Feb. 13, 2012; doi:10.1073/pnas.1119201109</p> <p>Contact: Keqiang Ye, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Ga. e-mail: kye@emory.edu</p> <p>Contact: Xuebing Cao, same affiliation as above e-mail: caoxuebing@126.com</p>