This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Neurology	Serotonin (5-HT ₃) receptor	<p>Studies in mice suggest 5-HT₃ receptor antagonists could help treat anorexia. In mice, pharmacological destruction of the agouti-related protein (AGRP)-expressing neurons of the hypothalamus led to anorexia, weight loss and death by starvation. In the anorexia model, blocking serotonin biosynthesis with the generic 5-HT₃ antagonist ondansetron prevented anorexia and weight loss, whereas vehicle did not. Next steps include studying the serotonergic control of appetite in other anorexia models.</p> <p>Zofran ondansetron is marketed by GlaxoSmithKline plc to treat chemotherapy-associated nausea emesis. At least 18 other companies have 5-HT₃ antagonists on the market and in various stages of development for a range of gastrointestinal, neurological and autoimmune indications.</p> <p>SciBX 5(15); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.396 Published online April 12, 2012</p>	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Wu, Q. <i>et al. Nature</i>; published online March 14, 2012; doi:10.1038/nature10899 Contact: Richard D. Palmiter, University of Washington, Seattle, Wash. e-mail: palmiter@uw.edu</p>