This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	HCV NS5B polymerase	<p><i>In vitro</i> and animal studies identified indole-based NS5B polymerase inhibitors that could treat HCV infection. Chemical synthesis, <i>in vitro</i> testing and SAR studies identified a lead indole-based compound that inhibited HCV NS5B polymerase and HCV replication with low nanomolar IC₅₀ and EC₅₀ values, respectively. Future work could include testing the compound <i>in vivo</i>.</p> <p>Pharmasset Inc.'s PSI-7977 HCV NS5B polymerase inhibitor is in Phase III testing to treat HCV infection.</p> <p>Pharmasset and Roche have mericitabine (RG7128), a prodrug of Pharmasset's PSI-6130 cytidine nucleoside analog NS5B polymerase inhibitor, in Phase II testing to treat HCV.</p> <p>At least 10 other companies have inhibitors of HCV NS5B polymerase in Phase II or earlier to treat HCV.</p> <p>SciBX 5(2); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.45 Published online Jan. 12, 2012</p>	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	<p>Chen, K.X. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online Dec. 13, 2011; doi:10.1021/jm201258k</p> <p>Contact: Kevin X. Chen, Merck Research Laboratories, Kenilworth, N.J. e-mail: kxcn@yahoo.com</p>