This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	Niemann-Pick C1-like protein (NPC1L1)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest NPC1L1 inhibitors could help prevent HCV infection. In human hepatocyte cell culture, small interfering RNA against NPC1L1 or antibodies against NPC1L1 prevented the entry of multiple HCV genotypes compared with scrambled siRNA or control IgG, respectively. In mice with chimeric human livers, daily Zetia ezetimibe for 1 or 2 weeks prior to HCV challenge prevented infection in up to 71% of animals compared with vehicle but had no effect in chimeric mice with established HCV infection. Ongoing work includes a Phase II trial of ezetimibe plus standard of care to treat HCV. Merck & Co. Inc. markets Zetia, a cholesterol uptake inhibitor that blocks NPC1L1, to treat coronary artery disease (CAD), hypercholesterolemia and hyperlipidemia.</p> <p>SciBX 5(3); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.76 Published online Jan. 19, 2012</p>	Patented by the University of Illinois; available for licensing or partnering	<p>Sainz Jr., B. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online Jan. 8, 2012; doi:10.1038/nm.2581</p> <p>Contact: Susan L. Uprichard, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Ill. e-mail: sluprich@uic.edu</p>