This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Melanoma	c-Mer proto-oncogene tyrosine kinase (MERTK)	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest MERTK inhibitors could help treat melanoma. In about 50% of primary human melanoma cells, MERTK expression correlated with disease progression and was greater than that in normal melanocytes. In human melanoma cell lines, small hairpin RNA against <i>MERTK</i> or a MERTK inhibitor increased apoptosis and decreased proliferation and invasion compared with vehicle. In a mouse xenograft model for human melanoma, small hairpin RNA-mediated knockdown of <i>MERTK</i> led to decreased tumor growth compared with no knockdown. Ongoing work includes testing a MERTK inhibitor in mouse models for melanoma.	Patented by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; available for licensing or partnering	Schlegel, J. <i>et al. J. Clin. Invest.</i> ; published online April 15, 2013; doi:10.1172/JCI67816 Contact: Douglas K. Graham, University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine, Aurora, Colo. e-mail: doug.graham@ucdenver.edu
<i>SciBX</i> 6(16); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.386 Published online April 25, 2013				