This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cardiovascular disease				
Cardiomyopathy; heart failure	MAP kinase 1 (MAPK1; ERK-2)	<p>Rodent studies suggest inhibiting ERK-2 phosphorylation at threonine 188 could help prevent pathological cardiac hypertrophy. In rat cardiomyocytes, overexpression of a dominant-negative mutant ERK-2 that blocks ERK phosphorylation at threonine 188 decreased drug-induced hypertrophy compared with overexpression of wild-type ERK-2 and did not trigger apoptosis. In mice subjected to transverse aortic constriction, the dominant-negative ERK-2 prevented pathological cardiac hypertrophy and remodeling without causing adverse effects on cardiac function and cardiomyocyte survival. Next steps include developing strategies to specifically inhibit ERK phosphorylation at threonine 188.</p> <p>Phenylephrine is a generic over-the-counter decongestant.</p>	Patent pending; available for licensing	<p>Ruppert, C. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online April 15, 2013; doi:10.1073/pnas.1221999110</p> <p>Contact: Kristina Lorenz, University of Wuerzburg, Wuerzburg, Germany e-mail: lorenz@toxi.uni-wuerzburg.de</p> <p>Contact: Martin J. Lohse, same affiliation as above e-mail: lohse@toxi.uni-wuerzburg.de</p>
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