This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Endocrine/metabolic disease				
Endocrine/metabolic disease	Branched chain ketoacid dehydrogenase kinase (BCKDK; BDK)	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies identified a BDK inhibitor that could help treat diseases associated with accumulation of branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs), including the genetic disorder branched-chain ketoaciduria, obesity and diabetes. Crystal structures of BDK in complex with known inhibitors led to the rational design of (S)- α -chloro-phenylpropionic acid, which inhibits the kinase at an allosteric site. In wild-type mice, injection of the compound decreased both plasma BCAA levels and BDK activity in multiple tissue types compared with vehicle injection. Next steps could include testing the compound in disease models.	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Tso, S.-C. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i> ; published online May 28, 2013; doi:10.1073/pnas.1303220110 Contact: David T. Chuang, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas e-mail: david.chuang@utsouthwestern.edu Contact: Uttam K. Tambar, same affiliation as above e-mail: uttam.tambar@utsouthwestern.edu
SciBX 6(24); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.603				
Published online June 20, 2013				