This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Spinal cord injury (SCI)	Periostin (POSTN)	<i>In vitro</i> and rat studies suggest POSTN could promote axon regeneration after SCI. In cultured neurons from the dorsal root ganglia or the cerebellar granules of rats, POSTN increased neurite outgrowth compared with no treatment. Transplant of astrocytes differentiated <i>in vitro</i> with bone morphogenetic protein 4 (BMP4) has previously been shown to promote axon growth and motor function; however, in a rat model of SCI, transplant of <i>Postn</i> -deficient astrocytes differentiated with BMP4 did not promote axon growth, indicating that <i>Postn</i> is necessary for axon regeneration. Next steps could include determining whether POSTN is sufficient to promote axon growth <i>in vivo</i> and identifying neural receptors for POSTN.	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Shih, C.-H. <i>et al. J. Neurosci.</i> ; published online Feb. 12, 2014; doi:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.2947-13.2014 Contact: Christoph Pröschel, University of Rochester, Rochester, N.Y. e-mail: chris_proschel@urmc.rochester.edu
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