This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Autism	Not applicable	<p>Mouse studies suggest correcting GI barrier defects could help treat autism spectrum disorders. In a mouse model of autism that also displays GI barrier abnormalities, treatment with the commensal human bacteria <i>Bacteroides fragilis</i> decreased gut permeability compared with saline and improved communication and behavioral deficits and restored normal serum metabolite levels. In mice, 4-ethylphenylsulfate potassium salt, a serum metabolite upregulated in the autism model and downregulated by <i>B. fragilis</i>, induced behavioral abnormalities consistent with autism. Next steps could include testing the effects of commensal bacteria in other autism models.</p> <p>SciBX 7(3); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.95 Published online Jan. 23, 2014</p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Hsiao, E.Y. <i>et al. Cell</i>; published online Dec. 5, 2013; doi:10.1016/j.cell.2013.11.024 Contact: Sarkis K. Mazmanian, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif. e-mail: sarkis@caltech.edu Contact: Paul H. Patterson, same affiliation as above e-mail: php@caltech.edu Contact: Elaine Y. Hsiao, same affiliation as above e-mail: ehsiao@caltech.edu</p>