

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Hepatitis B virus (HBV)	Unknown	<p>A study in mice suggests that acylated peptides derived from HBV surface proteins could be used to block HBV infection. In immunodeficient mice transplanted with human or primate hepatocytes, injection of lipopeptides derived from the HBV L protein pre-S1 domain decreased viral infection compared with animals that received saline. Future steps include examining whether HBV lipopeptides can restrict existing infections and identifying the host receptor for HBV entry that is targeted by the peptides.</p>	<p>Patent applications filed for use of HBV lipopeptides as diagnostics and therapeutics; licensed to Vision7 GmbH</p>	<p>Petersen, J. <i>et al. Nat. Biotechnol.</i>; published online Feb. 24, 2008; doi:10.1038/nbt1389</p> <p>Contact: Stephan Urban, Department of Molecular Virology, University of Heidelberg, Otto-Meyerhof-Zentrum (OMZ), Heidelberg, Germany e-mail: Stephan.Urban@med.uni-heidelberg.de</p>