

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cardiovascular disease				
Atherosclerosis	Peroxisome proliferation activated receptor- δ (PPAR- δ)	<p>Two separate studies in mice suggest that PPAR-δ agonists could be useful for treating atherosclerosis (see following item). <i>ApoE</i> knockout mice on a high-fat diet that received the PPAR-δ agonist GW501516 had fewer aortic lesions and higher levels of circulating high-density lipoprotein (HDL-c) than knockouts that received vehicle. PPAR-δ activation inhibited monocyte transmigration and macrophage inflammatory responses elicited by atherogenic cytokines. Next steps include investigating the mechanisms by which PPAR-δ agonists suppress inflammation and raise HDL cholesterol.</p> <p>In 2004, GlaxoSmithKline plc acquired exclusive global rights to develop GW501516 from Ligand Pharmaceuticals Inc. At that time, the compound was in Phase II testing to treat dyslipidemias. Cerenis Therapeutics S.A. is developing CER-002, a PPAR-δ agonist, to treat atherosclerosis.</p>	Not patented; unlicensed	<p>Barish, G. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i>; published online March 3, 2008; doi:10.1073/pnas.0711875105</p> <p>Contact: Chih-Hao Lee, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, Mass. e-mail: clee@hsph.harvard.edu</p> <p>Contact: Ronald M. Evans, The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, Calif. e-mail: evans@salk.edu</p>