

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Alzheimer's disease (AD)	Acetylcholinesterase (AChE); butyrylcholinesterase (BChE)	<p>An <i>in vitro</i> study characterized bis-(-)-normeptazinol derivatives as cholinesterase inhibitors that could be useful for treating AD. The most potent inhibitors had IC₅₀ values of about 4–17 nM for AChE and BChE—an improvement over mono-(-)-meptazinol and rivastigmine by several orders of magnitude. The compounds also showed moderate inhibition of AChE-induced β-amyloid aggregation. Next steps include testing the compounds in animal models of memory impairment.</p> <p>Shire plc markets the opioid analgesic Meptid meptazinol to treat moderate pain. Novartis AG markets Exelon rivastigmine, a dual inhibitor of both AChE and BChE, to treat mild to moderate AD and Parkinson's disease (PD).</p>	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	<p>Chen, H. <i>et al.</i> <i>J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online March 12, 2008; doi:10.1021/jm070154g</p> <p>Contact: Zhuibai Qiu, Fudan University, Shanghai, China e-mail: zbqiu@shmu.edu.cn</p>