

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Ischemia	Asparagine endopeptidase (AEP)	<i>In vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> studies suggest that inhibiting AEP could be useful for treating neurodegeneration triggered by stroke or ischemia. Under acidic conditions typical of cerebral ischemia, AEP deactivated an inhibitor of DNase, which triggered DNA damage that led to neuronal cell death. In mice, phosphoinositide 3-kinase enhancer-L (PIKE-L) bound to and protected the DNase inhibitor from degradation by AEP. That, in turn, lowered neuronal cell death. Next steps could include identifying inhibitors of AEP.	Not patented; unlicensed	Liu, Z. <i>et al. Mol. Cell</i> ; published online March 27, 2008; doi:10.1016/j.molcel.2008.02.017 Contact: Keqiang Ye, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Ga. e-mail: kye@emory.edu