

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Other				
Adjuvant	Mast cells	A study in mice suggests that small molecule mast cell activators could be useful adjuvants for boosting vaccine efficacy. In wild-type mice, subcutaneous or nasal delivery of the mast cell activator c48/80 in combination with <i>Bacillus anthracis</i> antigen led to higher antigen-specific IgG responses than those seen in mast cell-deficient mice. Additionally, mice immunized with c48/80 plus the B5R poxvirus protein had an elevated B5R-specific IgG antibody response, whereas mice immunized with B5R alone had no response. When the mice were challenged with vaccinia virus, 50% of mice in the combination group were protected from infection, whereas all mice receiving B5R alone became infected and lost about 15% of their body weight. Next steps include demonstrating the effectiveness of mast cell activators as adjuvants in a different animal model.	Patent pending; available for licensing	McLachlan, J. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i> ; published online April 20, 2008; doi:10.1038/nm1757 Contact: Soman N. Abraham, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, N.C. e-mail: soman.abraham@duke.edu