

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Glioblastoma multiforme (GBM)	Epidermal growth factor receptor variant III (EGFRvIII)	<p>Studies in human glioma cells and in mice suggest that microvesicles containing the oncoprotein EGFRvIII could be biomarkers for GBM. EGFRvIII is a truncated form of EGFR that is expressed in the majority of gliomas, including GBM. Mice injected with EGFRvIII-expressing cultured human glioma cells developed more tumors and displayed more blood-borne EGFRvIII-expressing microvesicles than did mock-treated control mice. Next steps include increasing the sensitivity of EGFRvIII microvesicle detection and testing for the presence of these structures in the blood of GBM patients.</p> <p>Celldex Therapeutics Inc.'s CDX-110 EGFRvIII vaccine is in Phase IIa testing to treat GBM. Multiple companies are developing or marketing compounds that target EGFR to treat non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and other cancers.</p>	<p>Patents pending for diagnostic applications; available for licensing through McGill University's Office of Technology Transfer</p>	<p>Nedawi, K. <i>et al. Nat. Cell Biol.</i>; published online April 20, 2008; doi:10.1038/ncb1725</p> <p>Contact: Janusz Rak, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada e-mail: janusz.rak@mcgill.ca</p>