

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Various				
Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD); diabetic retinopathy; acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS)	Roundabout homolog 4 (Robo4); slit homolog 2 (Slit2)	Studies in cell culture and mice suggest that targeting Robo4 could be useful for treating AMD, retinopathies and other diseases characterized by leaky vasculature. In endothelial cell culture, Robo4 activation was required for Slit2-dependent inhibition of VEGF-induced endothelial cell migration, tube formation and hyperpermeability. In mouse models of retinal and choroidal vascular disease, loss of Robo4 enhanced pathological angiogenesis and vascular leak. Next steps include preclinical studies of Robo4 agonists for ophthalmic and pulmonary indications.	Patents owned by the University of Utah are pending worldwide; the IP is exclusively licensed to Navigen Inc.	Jones, C. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i> ; published online March 16, 2008; doi:10.1038/nm1742 Contact: Dean Y. Li, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah e-mail: dean.Li@hmbg.utah.edu