

### This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
<b>Neurology</b>				
Anxiety; depression	Ghrelin	<p>A study in mice suggests that ghrelin or ghrelin analogs could be useful for treating anxiety and depression. In wild-type mice undergoing calorie restriction, increased circulating ghrelin levels correlated with significantly increased anxiolytic and antidepressant-like behavior compared with freely feeding animals (<math>p &lt; 0.02</math> for both). Ghrelin levels were significantly higher in mice subjected to social defeat stress than those in control animals not subjected to stress (<math>p &lt; 0.02</math>). Next steps include investigating the brain neurocircuits through which ghrelin acts and the mechanism by which chronic stress increases ghrelin.</p> <p>At least four companies have compounds targeting the ghrelin receptor in preclinical and clinical development for various gastrointestinal, metabolic, neurological and endocrine diseases.</p>	Not patented; licensing status undisclosed	<p>Lutter, M. <i>et al. Nat. Neurosci.</i>; published online June 15, 2008; doi:10.1038/nn.2139</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Jeffrey Zigman, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas</p> <p>e-mail: <a href="mailto:jeffrey.zigman@utsouthwestern.edu">jeffrey.zigman@utsouthwestern.edu</a></p>