

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC)	Nitric oxide (NO)	An SAR study identified a series of furoxan-based NO-releasing derivatives of oleanolic acid that could be useful for treating HCC. <i>In vitro</i> , six of the compounds produced high levels of NO and were selectively cytotoxic against HCC cells compared with what was seen in noncancer and nonliver cell lines. In a mouse model of HCC, two of the compounds significantly lowered mean size and weight of HCC tumors compared with that of tumors treated with control diluent or oleanolic acid. Next steps include additional preclinical testing with the derivatives.	Not patented; researchers to file patent application soon; unlicensed	Chen, L. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i> ; published online July 4, 2008; doi:10.1021/jm800167u Contact: Jide Tian, University of California, Los Angeles, Calif. e-mail: jtian@mednet.ucla.edu Contact: Yihua Zhang, China Pharmaceutical University, Nanjing, China e-mail: zyhtgd@hotmail.com