

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Cancer	Heat shock protein 90 (Hsp90)	<p>SAR and mouse studies identified analogs of the Hsp90 inhibitor macbecin, a member of the ansamycin group of antibiotics that could be useful for treating cancer. The analogs were biosynthesized by genetically modified cultured <i>Actinosynnema pretiosum</i>. In healthy mice, the compounds had less off-target toxicity than the Hsp90 inhibitor 17-AAG. In mice with human mammary carcinoma xenografts, intraperitoneal administration of one of the compounds had antitumor activity that was comparable to 17-AAG. Next steps include identifying and evaluating additional, less toxic biosynthetic Hsp90 inhibitors in preclinical cancer models.</p> <p>17-AAG (Tanespimycin), an Hsp90 inhibitor from Kosan Biosciences Inc., is in Phase III testing to treat multiple myeloma (MM).</p> <p>At least 12 other companies have Hsp90 inhibitors in Phase II or earlier to treat cancer.</p>	<p>Patent applications filed for nonquinone ansamycin compounds in multiple indications; available for licensing from Biotica Technology Ltd.</p>	<p>Zhang, M.-Q. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online Aug. 23, 2008; doi:10.1021/jm8006068</p> <p>Contact: Christine J. Martin, Biotica Technology Ltd., Chesterford Research Park, Essex, U.K. e-mail: christine.martin@biotica.com</p>