

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Addiction	Myocyte enhancing factor 2 (MEF2; D-MEF2)	Studies in mice suggest that decreasing MEF2-dependent transcription in the nucleus accumbens (NAc) may be useful for treating or preventing cocaine addiction. In mice, small hairpin RNA knockdown of Mef2 in the NAc significantly lowered sensitivity to repeated cocaine administration compared with what was seen using mutant shRNA control ($p < 0.05$). Knockdown mice also had significantly fewer sensitized behavioral responses to cocaine challenge after a two-week withdrawal than controls ($p < 0.01$). Next steps include identifying and evaluating compounds that inhibit MEF2 in preclinical addiction models.	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	Pulipparacharuvi, S. <i>et al. Neuron</i> ; published online Aug. 27, 2008; doi:10.1016/j.neuron.2008.06.020 Contact: Christopher Cowan, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas e-mail: christopher.cowan@utsouthwestern.edu