This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	<i>IL-28B</i>	<p>Two genomewide association studies suggest that <i>IL-28B</i> variants could help predict patient response to anti-HCV therapy. Standard therapy for HCV—pegylated interferon-α (PEG-INF-α) and ribavirin—works in less than 50% of patients and can produce serious side effects. One study identified a variant in the <i>IL-28B</i> region of chromosome 19 that was associated with sustained response to the combination therapy. In the other study, seven variants in the same genetic region were linked to a positive response to the combination. Next steps include ongoing efforts to develop a detection kit for these <i>IL-28B</i> variants and further mapping of the <i>IL-28B</i> region to identify the best SNP for diagnostic use.</p> <p>Rebetol ribavirin, Intron A interferon α-2b and PegIntron/Rebetol combination therapy are marketed by Schering-Plough Corp. to treat HCV.</p> <p>SciBX 2(36); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1383 Published online Sept. 17, 2009</p>	For both papers: patent applications filed; available for licensing	<p>Suppiah, V. <i>et al. Nat. Genet.</i>; published online Sept. 13, 2009; doi:10.1038/ng.447 Contact: Jacob George, Westmead Millennium Institute, Westmead, Australia e-mail: jacob_george@wmi.usyd.edu.au</p> <p>Tanaka, Y. <i>et al. Nat. Genet.</i>; published online Sept. 13, 2009; doi:10.1038/ng.449 Contact: Masashi Mizokami, International Medical Center of Japan, Tokyo, Japan e-mail: mmizokami@imcjk2.hosp.go.jp</p>