

### This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
<b>Infectious disease</b>				
Prion diseases	HECT domain containing 2 (HECTD2)	<p>Genetic association studies in mice and in humans identified <i>HECTD2</i> as a gene that might be used as a marker to predict susceptibility to and pathogenesis of prion diseases. In mice, a screen showed that the E3 ubiquitin ligase Hectd2 was associated with prion disease incubation time and that <i>Hectd2</i> mRNA was upregulated at the terminal stage of the disease. In human samples from patients with the prion diseases kuru and Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), <i>HECTD2</i> haplotypes were associated with susceptibility to the disease. Next steps could include assessment of the role of the ubiquitin proteasome system in prion pathogenesis.</p> <p>Amorfix Life Sciences Ltd.'s EP-vCJD Blood Screening Assay, a diagnostic assay for CJD, is in the pilot stage of testing.</p> <p><b>SciBX 2(9); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.365</b>  <b>Published online March 5, 2009</b></p>	Patent and licensing status unavailable	<p>Lloyd, S. <i>et al. PLoS Genet.</i>; published online Feb. 13, 2009;            doi:10.1371/journal.pgen.1000383  <b>Contact:</b> John Collinge, University College London Institute of Neurology, London, U.K.            e-mail:  <a href="mailto:j.collinge@prion.ucl.ac.uk">j.collinge@prion.ucl.ac.uk</a></p>