

## This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
<b>Gastrointestinal disease</b>				
Diarrhea (infectious)	<i>Clostridium difficile</i> toxin B	<p>Studies in hamsters suggest that targeting the toxin B virulence factor of <i>C. difficile</i> could be useful for treating <i>C. difficile</i>-associated diarrhea (CDAD). Previous studies have shown that purified toxin A induces most of the pathology observed upon infection with <i>C. difficile</i>. In hamsters, challenge with toxin B mutants of a virulent strain of <i>C. difficile</i> led to higher survival than that seen in wild-type and toxin A mutant-infected hamsters, suggesting that toxin B is essential for virulence. Next steps include developing vaccines that protect against <i>C. difficile</i> toxin B.</p> <p>Medarex Inc. is developing MDX-066 and MDX-1388, mAbs against <i>C. difficile</i> toxin A and B, respectively, as a combination treatment that is in Phase II testing to treat CDAD and prevent relapse.</p> <p><b>SciBX 2(10); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.404</b> Published online March 12, 2009</p>	Unpatented; unlicensed	<p>Lyras, D. <i>et al. Nature</i>; published online March 1, 2009; doi:10.1038/nature07822</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Julian Rood, Monash University, Clayton, Australia e-mail: <a href="mailto:julian.rood@med.monash.edu.au">julian.rood@med.monash.edu.au</a></p>