This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Squamous cell carcinoma of the head and neck (SCCHN)	Transforming protein [<i>Human papillomavirus type 16</i>] (E6; HpV16gp1); E7 (HpV16gp2)	<p>Studies in human cell culture suggest that targeting two human papillomavirus (HPV) genes could help treat SCCHN. In human oropharyngeal squamous cell cancer lines infected with HPV type 16, small hairpin RNA-mediated knockdown of <i>E6</i> and <i>E7</i> increased the expression of tumor suppressors p53 and retinoblastoma 1 (RB1), resulting in higher levels of apoptosis than those seen in untreated cells. Next steps include ongoing studies to confirm the findings <i>in vivo</i>.</p> <p>Eli Lilly and Co. markets Erbitux cetuximab to treat SCCHN. sanofi-aventis Group's Taxotere docetaxel is also marketed to treat SCCHN.</p> <p>At least two compounds are in Phase II testing to treat SCCHN: zalutumumab from Genmab A/S and Amgen Inc.'s panituzumab.</p> <p>At least 12 other companies have compounds in preclinical to Phase II testing to treat SCCHN.</p> <p>SciBX 2(11); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.447 Published online March 19, 2009</p>	Unpatented; unlicensed	<p>Rampias, T. <i>et al. J. Natl. Cancer Inst.</i>; published online March 10, 2009; doi:10.1093/jnci/djp017</p> <p>Contact: Amanda Psyrrri, Yale School of Medicine, New Haven, Conn. e-mail: dp237@email.med.yale.edu or psyrrri237@yahoo.com</p>