This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Musculoskeletal disease				
Muscular atrophy	Not applicable	<p>Studies in mice suggest that sialic acid metabolites could help treat a form of muscular atrophy called distal myopathy with rimmed vacuoles (DMRV)-hereditary inclusion body myopathy (hIBM). Mice that received water containing <i>N</i>-acetylmannosamine, a source of sialic acid once converted <i>in vivo</i>, showed higher body weight and muscle mass, lower myopathy pathology and better motor performance than mice that received normal drinking water. However, mice receiving the treated water did not show greater overall survival compared with controls. Next steps include safety and pharmacokinetic studies of the metabolites.</p> <p>SciBX 2(20); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.833 Published online May 21, 2009</p>	Patent application filed for sialic acid metabolites in Japan to treat DMRV-hIBM patients; licensing status unknown	<p>Malicdan, M. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online May 17, 2009; doi:10.1038/nm.1956</p> <p>Contact: Ichizo Nishino, National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry, Tokyo, Japan e-mail: noguchi@ncnp.go.jp</p>