This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	HCV non-structural protein 5B (NS5B)	<p>Studies in cell culture identified azaribonucleoside-based inhibitors that could be useful for treating HCV infection. In an HCV replicon assay, two of the compounds had IC_{50} values of 0.35 and 18 nM compared with IC_{50} values of 8–10 nM for interferon. Next steps include confirming the mechanism of action and evaluating the safety and efficacy of the compounds in animal models.</p> <p>R7128, a prodrug of PSI-6130, a cytidine nucleoside analog NS5B polymerase inhibitor from Pharmasset Inc. and Roche, is in Phase III testing to treat HCV infection.</p> <p>At least six other companies have compounds inhibiting NS5B polymerase inhibitors in Phase II or earlier for the same indication.</p> <p>SciBX 2(21); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.878 Published online May 28, 2009</p>	Compounds unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Chiacchio, U. <i>et al. J. Med. Chem.</i>; published online May 6, 2009; doi:10.1021/jm900197j</p> <p>Contact: Giovanni Romeo, University of Messina, Messina, Italy e-mail: gromeo@unime.it</p> <p>Contact: Ugo Chiacchio, University of Catania, Catania, Italy e-mail: uchiacchio@unict.it</p>