This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Endocrine disease				
Obesity	Calcium channel voltage-dependent T-type $\alpha 1G$ subunit (CACNA1G; Cav3.1)	<p>Studies in rodents suggest that antagonizing the T-type calcium channel CACNA1G could help treat obesity and metabolic syndrome. In <i>Cacna1g^{-/-}</i> mice, diet-induced weight gain was significantly lower than in wild-type controls ($p=0.0019$). Compared with wild-type mice, the <i>Cacna1g^{-/-}</i> mice gained significantly less weight per kilocalorie of food intake ($p<0.001$). In wild-type mice and rats, selective T-type calcium channel inhibitors also reduced diet-induced weight gain compared with vehicle treatment. The T-type calcium channel antagonist program at Merck & Co. Inc. is in preclinical development and will continue to evaluate the potential of T-type calcium channel antagonists in neurological indications. Icagen Inc. and Neuromed Pharmaceuticals Ltd. each have T-type calcium channel antagonists in preclinical development for pain.</p> <p>SciBX 2(23); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.941 Published online June 11, 2009</p>	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	<p>Uebele, V.N. <i>et al. J. Clin. Invest.</i>; published online May 18, 2009; doi:10.1172/JCI36954</p> <p>Contact: Victor N. Uebele, Merck Research Laboratories, West Point, Pa. e-mail: victor_uebele@merck.com</p>