

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Neurology				
Spinal cord injury (SCI); spasm	Serotonin (5-HT _{2C}) receptor (HTR _{2C})	<p>A study in rats and in humans suggests that targeting HTR_{2C} could help reduce post-SCI muscle spasticity. In a rat model of SCI, intrathecal delivery of SB206553, a HTR_{2C} inverse agonist, or oral delivery of small molecule Periactin reduced tail spasms compared with delivery of saline control. In SCI patients, oral Periactin significantly decreased leg muscle spasms compared with vehicle control ($p < 0.01$). Next steps include evaluating serotonin receptor modulators in clinical trials to treat excessive spinal cord activity.</p> <p>Merck & Co. Inc. markets Periactin cyproheptadine to treat allergies and hay fever. The compound is also used as an appetite stimulant in cats.</p> <p>SciBX 3(23); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.711 Published online June 10, 2010</p>	Work unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Murray, K.C. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online May 27, 2010; doi:10.1038/nm.2160</p> <p>Contact: David Bennett, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada e-mail: bennettd@ualberta.ca</p>