

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Autoimmune disease				
Autoimmune disease	G protein-coupled receptor 183 (GPR183; EBI2); cholesterol 25 hydroxylase (CH25H)	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest antagonizing EBI2 could help treat autoimmune disease. Two research groups independently identified 7 α ,25-dihydroxycholesterol as a natural ligand activator of EBI2 through biochemical screening of pig or sheep organ extracts. <i>In vitro</i> , the ligand stimulated the migration of B cells, T cells and dendritic cells compared with vehicle. In immunized mice, deletion of Ch25h, an enzyme required for ligand production, decreased B cell migration and T cell-dependent antibody responses compared with wild-type Ch25h expression. Next steps from Novartis AG include targeting EBI2 or its ligand in models of autoimmune disease. Johnson & Johnson declined to disclose next steps.	For first study, patent application filed by Novartis; licensing status undisclosed Patent and licensing status for second study undisclosed by Johnson & Johnson	Hannendouche, S. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online July 27, 2011; doi:10.1038/nature10280 Contact: Andreas W. Sailer, Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, Basel, Switzerland e-mail: andreas.sailer@novartis.com Liu, C. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online July 27, 2011; doi:10.1038/nature10226 Contact: Changlu Liu, Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Research & Development LLC, San Diego, Calif. e-mail: cliu9@its.jnj.com
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