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THE DISTILLERY

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
HCV	Protein kinase B (PKB; PKBA; AKT; AKT1); phosphoinositide 3-kinase (PI3K)	*In vitro* studies suggest inhibiting the PI3K and AKT pathway could help prevent HCV infection. In human hepatocytes, infection with a highly virulent strain of HCV led to AKT phosphorylation as early as 15 minutes after infection and peaked at 30 minutes. In the cells, AKT or PI3K inhibitors or small interfering RNA targeting AKT decreased HCV core protein levels compared with vehicle or control siRNA. Next steps could include testing the effects of AKT inhibition in animal models. At least 17 companies have PI3K inhibitors and at least 13 companies have AKT inhibitors in preclinical and clinical development to treat various cancers. *SciBX* 5(44); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.1161 Published online Nov. 8, 2012	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Liu, Z. *et al. J. Biol. Chem.*; published online Oct. 24, 2012; doi:10.1074/jbc.M112.414789 **Contact:** Jing-hsiung James Ou, University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine, Los Angeles, Calif. e-mail: jamesou@hsc.usc.edu