

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Chronic myeloid leukemia (CML)	MEK; BCR-ABL tyrosine kinase	<p>Cell culture and mouse studies suggest combining Tasigna nilotinib with MEK inhibitors could help treat drug-resistant CML. In cultured leukemia cells, the BCR-ABL inhibitors Tasigna, Gleevec imatinib or Sprycel dasatinib induced MEK pathway activation compared with vehicle control. In a mouse model of drug-resistant CML, Tasigna plus a MEK inhibitor lowered tumor volume compared with either inhibitor alone. Next steps include testing the combination in a clinical trial and identifying the mechanisms behind the effect.</p> <p>Novartis AG markets Gleevec and Tasigna for CML. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. and Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. market Sprycel for CML.</p> <p>At least 10 companies have small molecule MEK inhibitors in Phase III or earlier for cancer.</p> <p>SciBX 5(1); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.12 Published online Jan. 5, 2012</p>	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Packer, L.M. <i>et al. Cancer Cell</i>; published online Dec. 6, 2011; doi:10.1016/j.ccr.2011.11.004</p> <p>Contact: Richard Marais, The Institute of Cancer Research, London, U.K. e-mail: richard.marais@icr.ac.uk</p>