

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)	AXL receptor tyrosine kinase (AXL; UFO)	<i>In vitro</i> , patient sample and mouse studies suggest inhibiting AXL could help treat epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) inhibitor-resistant NSCLC. In a human NSCLC cell line with acquired resistance to the EGFR inhibitor Tarceva erlotinib, AXL expression was greater than that in Tarceva-sensitive cells. In tumor samples from patients with acquired resistance to Tarceva, AXL expression was greater than that in the patient samples prior to treatment. In mice with human Tarceva-resistant AXL-overexpressing NSCLC xenografts, AXL-targeting small hairpin RNA or pharmacological AXL inhibition restored sensitivity to Tarceva. Next steps include identifying potent and selective AXL inhibitors. BerGenBio A/S has the AXL inhibitor BGB324 in preclinical testing to treat cancer. Astellas Pharma Inc., Roche and Chugai Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. market Tarceva to treat NSCLC and pancreatic cancer.	Findings unpatented; unavailable for licensing	Zhang, Z. <i>et al. Nat. Genet.</i> ; published online July 1, 2012; doi:10.1038/ng.2330 Contact: Trever G. Bivona, University of California, San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: tbivona@medicine.ucsf.edu
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