This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Various				
Cancer; inflammation	p38 Mitogen-activated protein kinase (p38 MAPK; MAPK14)	*In vitro* and mouse studies identified a compound that could help guide the development of selective p38 MAPK–targeted therapeutics for cancer and inflammatory diseases. In cell-free and whole-blood assays, a dibenzosuberone-based compound, skepinone-L, selectively bound to and inhibited p38 MAPK with a nanomolar IC_{50} value and did not show significant binding in a panel of 400 other kinases. In mice, skepinone-L inhibited inflammation-induced tumor necrosis factor-α (TNF-α) release compared with vehicle control. Next steps include testing the compound in disease models. At least seven companies have p38 MAPK inhibitors in clinical testing for various indications. *SciBX* 5(3); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.84 Published online Jan. 19, 2012	Patent application filed covering skepinone-L and analogues by cair biosciences GmbH; available for licensing	Koeberle, S.C. *et al. Nat. Chem. Biol.*; published online Dec. 25, 2011; doi:10.1038/nchembio.761 **Contact:** Stefan A. Laufer, University of Tuebingen, Tuebingen, Germany e-mail: thilo.stehle@uni-tuebingen.de **Contact:** Thilo Stehle, same affiliation as above e-mail: stefan.laufer@uni-tuebingen.de