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THE DISTILLERY

## This week in therapeutics

| Indication | Target/marker/pathway | Summary | Licensing status | Publication and contact information |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Infectious disease** | | | | |
| HCV | HCV NS4B protein; HCV NS5B polymerase | *In vitro* and *in vivo* studies identified NS4B-binding compounds that could help treat HCV infection. In a chimeric, humanized mouse model for HCV infection, a phosphate prodrug of an imidazopyridine that bound NS4B decreased viral load with higher potency than a positive control NS5B inhibitor. In various animal models, a modified version of the imidazopyridine showed low-to-moderate clearance, high bioavailability and high plasma drug exposure, which could eliminate the need to use a prodrug. Next steps could include testing the new compound in animal models of HCV infection.<br>Eiger Biopharmaceuticals Inc.'s NS4B inhibitor clemizole hydrochloride is in Phase I testing to treat HCV infection.<br>Inovio Pharmaceuticals Inc.'s INO-8000, a synthetic, multiantigen DNA vaccine that targets NS4B and the HCV NS3/4A protease complex, is in preclinical development.<br><br>*SciBX* 6(15); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.364<br>Published online April 18, 2013 | Patent and licensing status unavailable | Miller, J.F. *et al. J. Med. Chem.*; published online April 1, 2013; doi:10.1021/jm400125h<br>**Contact:** Andrew J. Peat, GlaxoSmithKline Research & Development, Research Triangle Park, N.C.<br>e-mail: andy.j.peat@gsk.com |