

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Infectious disease				
Malaria	Endothelial protein C receptor (EPCR)	<i>In vitro</i> and cell culture studies suggest disrupting the interaction between <i>Plasmodium falciparum</i> erythrocyte membrane protein 1 (PfEMP1) and EPCR could help prevent severe malaria. In an <i>in vitro</i> screen, EPCR was found to interact with a form of PfEMP1 containing a domain cassette 8 (DC8) variant, which is associated with severe malaria. <i>In vitro</i> , parasites expressing DC8-PfEMP1 bound EPCR with higher affinity than wild-type parasites. In coculture, an antibody that blocked interaction with EPCR or a soluble isoform of EPCR prevented parasite binding to epithelial cells. Next steps include better defining the PfEMP1-EPCR interaction to inform vaccine development.	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	Turner, L. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online June 5, 2013; doi:10.1038/nature12216 Contact: Thomas Lavstsen, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark e-mail: thomasl@sund.ku.dk Contact: Louise Turner, same affiliation as above e-mail: lturner@sund.ku.dk
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