

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Cancer	AXL receptor tyrosine kinase (AXL; UFO); epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR)	<p>Mouse and cell culture studies suggest AXL inhibitors could help circumvent resistance to the anti-EGFR mAb Erbitux cetuximab. In mouse xenograft models of Erbitux-resistant head and neck squamous cell carcinoma, compared with mice that had Erbitux-sensitive tumors, AXL expression was increased. In human squamous cell carcinoma cell lines, siRNA against AXL or treatment with an anti-AXL mAb decreased proliferation of Erbitux-resistant cells compared with control siRNA or vehicle treatment. Next steps include investigating AXL-targeting strategies in tumors with acquired or intrinsic resistance to Erbitux.</p> <p>Eli Lilly and Co., Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. and Merck KGaA market Erbitux to treat colorectal and head and neck cancer.</p> <p>Rigel Pharmaceuticals Inc. and BerGenBio A/S have R428, a small molecule AXL inhibitor, in Phase I testing to treat cancer.</p> <p>At least three other companies have AXL inhibitors in preclinical development to treat various cancers.</p> <p>SciBX 7(37); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.1095 Published online Sept. 25, 2014</p>	<p>Patent application filed covering undisclosed indications; available for licensing from VasGene Therapeutics Inc.</p> <p>Contact: Valery Krasnoperov, VasGene Therapeutics Inc., Los Angeles, Calif. e-mail: valery@vasgene.com</p>	<p>Brand, T.M. <i>et al. Cancer Res.</i>; published online Aug. 18, 2014; doi:10.1158/0008-5472.CAN-14-0294</p> <p>Contact: Deric L. Wheeler, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisc. e-mail: dlwheeler@wisc.edu</p>