

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Pancreatic cancer	Branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs)	<p>Studies in human samples and mice suggest monitoring circulating BCAA levels could enable early diagnosis of pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC). In four prospective cohorts of patients and controls, those found to have elevated levels of circulating BCAAs were associated with an over twofold higher risk of pancreatic cancer two to five years later than subjects with normal BCAA levels. In a genetic mouse model of PDAC, BCAA levels were higher at subclinical PDAC stages than those in littermate controls. Next steps include identifying additional markers for early PDAC diagnosis.</p> <p><i>SciBX</i> 7(40); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.1176 Published online Oct. 16, 2014</p>	<p>Patent application filed; available for licensing from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Contact: Peter Hodges, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass. e-mail: peter_hodges@dfci.harvard.edu</p>	<p>Mayers, J.R. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online Sept. 28, 2014; doi:10.1038/nm.3686 Contact: Brian M. Wolpin, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass. e-mail: bwolpin@partners.org Contact: Matthew G. Vander Heiden, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. e-mail: mvh@mit.edu</p>