

This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Cancer				
Cancer	Cannabinoid CB ₂ receptor (CNR2)	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest a CNR2-specific ligand-based photosensitizer could be useful for photodynamic cancer therapy. In mouse astrocytoma cells engineered to express CNR2, light-irradiated IR700DX-mbc94, a near-infrared phthalocyanine dye coupled to a CNR2-specific ligand, caused markedly more cell death than the nonirradiated dye. In mice with subcutaneous tumors generated from <i>Cnr2</i> ⁺ mouse astrocytoma cells, IR700DX-mbc94 plus irradiation decreased tumor growth compared with no treatment. Next steps include reproducing the results with human cancer cells that overexpress CNR2 and improving affinity of the photosensitizer.	Invention disclosure filed with the University of Pittsburgh; licensed to an undisclosed entity	Zhang, S. <i>et al. Chem. Bio.</i> ; published online Feb. 27, 2014; doi:10.1016/j.chembiol.2014.01.009 Contact: Mingfeng Bai, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa. e-mail: baim@upmc.edu
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