This week in therapeutics

Indication	Target/marker/ pathway	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Endocrine/metabolic disease				
Obesity	Iroquois homeobox 3 (IRX3)	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest decreasing <i>IRX3</i> expression could help treat obesity. In mice, sequencing and circular chromosome conformation capture studies showed that obesity-associated regions of the <i>fat mass and obesity associated (Fto)</i> gene bound the <i>Irx3</i> promoter and enhanced <i>Irx3</i> expression. In mice, <i>Irx3</i> knockout decreased weight and body fat content compared with no alteration. In human brain tissue samples, SNPs associated with increased body mass index were associated with increased <i>IRX3</i> expression. Next steps could include identifying pharmacological compounds that downregulate <i>IRX3</i> .	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Smemo, S. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online March 12, 2014; doi:10.1038/nature13138 Contact: Marcelo A. Nóbrega, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill. e-mail: nobrega@uchicago.edu
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