This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Disease models			
<i>Xenopus</i> eyes as a functional model of eye repair	Functional eyes generated from pluripotent <i>Xenopus laevis</i> cells could guide the development of strategies to treat blindness. Pluripotent <i>Xenopus</i> cells isolated during the blastula stage were reprogrammed to express several eye-related transcription factors. Transplantation of the reprogrammed cells into <i>Xenopus</i> embryos led to the formation of retinal cells and eye-like structures. In <i>Xenopus</i> embryos lacking normal eye-field function, grafts of the reprogrammed cells formed functional and morphologically normal eyes. Next steps include developing ways to maintain the induced retinal cell cultures in a proliferative, multipotent state and to induce these cells to differentiate into retinal cell classes that can repair damaged or degenerating mature retinas. <i>SciBX</i> 2(35); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1358 Published online Sept. 10, 2009	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Viczian, A.S. <i>et al.</i> <i>PLoS Biol.</i> ; published online Aug. 18, 2009; doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1000174 Contact: Michael E. Zuber, SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, N.Y. e-mail: zuber@upstate.edu