This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug delivery			
Generating of insulin-producing β -cells from human embryonic stem cells using a small molecule	High throughput screening identified a small molecule inducer of pancreatic progenitor cells that could be useful for generating insulin-producing β -cells to treat diabetes. A screen of a library of 5,000 compounds identified indolactam V as a small molecule that could generate a population of differentiated human embryonic stem cells (ESCs) in which >45% of the cells were pancreatic progenitor cells that expressed pancreatic and duodenal homeobox 1 (PDX1). Next steps include identifying other small molecules that can induce cells at each step of the ESC differentiation pathway.	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Chen, S. <i>et al. Nat. Chem. Biol.</i> ; published online March 15, 2009; doi:10.1038/nchembio.154 Contact: Douglas Melton, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. e-mail: dmelton@harvard.edu
	SciBX 2(12); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.514 Published online March 26, 2009		