This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Immunosuppressive invariant NK T (iNKT) cells	<p>A study in mice and human cells suggests that iNKT cells with immunosuppressive properties could be useful for establishing immunological tolerance to prevent transplant rejection. In a mouse model of experimental autoimmune encephalomyelitis (EAE), the T cell receptor (TCR) agonist α-galactosylceramide led to the appearance of iNKT cells that expressed immunosuppressive markers and conferred protection against EAE compared with no treatment. In cultured human iNKT cells, α-galactosylceramide plus transforming growth factor-β (TGFB; TGFβ) induced the cells to express immunosuppressive markers similar to those in mice. Next steps include demonstrating the immunosuppressive effects of these iNKT cells in mouse models of liver transplantation.</p> <p>Acellera Therapeutics Ltd. is developing this technology as an adjunct to liver transplantation.</p> <p>SciBX 3(33); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.1026 Published online Aug. 26, 2010</p>	Patent pending; licensed to Acellera Therapeutics	<p>Monteiro, M. <i>et al. J. Immunol.</i>; published online July 16, 2010; doi:10.4049/jimmunol.1000359</p> <p>Contact: Luis Graça, Institute of Molecular Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal e-mail: lgraca@fm.ul.pt</p>