This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Direct conversion of fibroblasts into hematopoietic progenitors	<p>A method for directly converting human fibroblasts into hematopoietic progenitor cells could be useful for developing autologous cell-replacement therapies. Previous protocols for converting human fibroblasts into hematopoietic cells required an intermediate step of reverting cells into induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells. In human fibroblasts, forced expression of the transcription factor <i>OCT4</i> generated cells that expressed the pan-leukocyte marker CD45 without requiring an iPS cell state. In the fibroblast-derived cells, a cytokine cocktail supporting hematopoietic progenitor cell development and expansion generated all myeloid cell lineages. Next steps include scaling up the direct conversion process.</p> <p>SciBX 3(44); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.1338 Published online Nov. 11, 2010</p>	Multiple patents filed covering technologies to directly convert fibroblasts into blood progenitor cells; available for licensing	<p>Szabo, E. <i>et al. Nature</i>; published online Nov. 7, 2010; doi:10.1038/nature09591 Contact: Mickie Bhatia, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada e-mail: mbhatia@mcmaster.ca</p>