This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Generation of functional hepatocyte-like cells for liver regeneration	<i>In vitro</i> studies suggest hepatocyte-like cells generated from fibroblasts could be useful for liver regeneration. Mouse tail-tip fibroblasts transduced with hepatic transcription factors were converted into induced hepatocyte-like (iHep) cells that expressed hepatic genes and performed hepatic cellular functions. In a mouse model of liver failure, 5 of 12 animals receiving iHep cell transplants survived and showed improved liver function, whereas none of the nontransplant control mice survived. Next steps include determining whether human fibroblasts and other cell types could be converted to functional iHep cells.	Unpatented; available for licensing	Huang, P. <i>et al. Nature</i> ; published online May 11, 2011; doi:10.1038/nature10116 Contact: Lijian Hui, Shanghai Institute for Biological Sciences, Shanghai, China e-mail: ljhui@sibs.ac.cn
SciBX 4(22); doi:10.1038/scibx.2011.641 Published online June 2, 2011			