This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug delivery			
β -Galactosidase-responsive prodrugs of chemotherapeutics targeted to cancer surface receptors	<i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest tumor-penetrating, β -galactosidase-responsive prodrugs could help treat cancers. A monomethyl auristatin E (MMAE) prodrug that is activated by the β -galactosidase found inside cells was designed to include a ligand targeting the cancer-specific folate receptor. Cancer cells expressing the folate receptor took up the prodrug and showed cytotoxicity, whereas cells lacking the receptor did not. In mice with folate receptor-expressing tumor xenografts, the MMAE prodrug caused near-complete tumor elimination without weight loss. Next steps include additional preclinical studies of the prodrugs.	Patent application filed; available for licensing	Legigan, T. <i>et al. Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> ; published online Sept. 20, 2012; doi:10.1002/anie.201204935 Contact: Sébastien Papot, University of Poitiers, Poitiers, France e-mail: sebastien.papot@univ-poitiers.fr
	SciBX 5(40); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.1064 Published online Oct. 11, 2012		