This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Disease models			
Mouse model for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) caused by mutations in <i>SH3 and multiple ankyrin repeat domains 2</i> (<i>SHANK2</i>)	<p><i>Shank2</i> knockout mice could help identify potential therapeutic strategies for ASD cases caused by mutations in the gene. The knockout mice had lower hippocampal synaptic activity and greater ASD-like impairments in cognition, behavior and social functioning than wild-type controls.</p> <p>In the model, small molecule NMDAR agonists and metabotropic glutamate receptor subtype 5 (mGluR5; GRM5) agonists decreased ASD-like behaviors compared with vehicle. Next steps include further characterization of behavioral and physiological abnormalities caused by loss of <i>Shank2</i> function.</p> <p>Seaside Therapeutics Inc.'s GABA_B receptor agonist, STX209, and mGluR5 antagonist, STX110, are in Phase II and Phase I testing for ASD, respectively.</p> <p>SciBX 5(29); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.769 Published online July 26, 2012</p>	Patent pending; available for licensing	<p>Won, H. <i>et al. Nature</i>; published online June 13, 2012; doi:10.1038/nature11208 Contact: Eunjoon Kim, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Daejeon, South Korea e-mail: kime@kaist.ac.kr Contact: Min Goo Lee, Yonsei University College of Medicine, Seoul, South Korea e-mail: mlee@yuhs.ac Contact: Bong-Kiun Kaang, Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea e-mail: kaang@snu.ac.kr</p>