This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Human embryonic stem cell (hESC)-derived thymic epithelial cells capable of supporting T cell production	<p>A protocol to generate thymic epithelial cells from hESCs could help restore thymus function and induce immune tolerance. hESCs were exposed to a series of cocktails containing multiple growth factors, including modulators of signaling by wingless-type MMTV integration site (WNT) and bone morphogenetic protein (BMP), which converted the cells into thymic epithelial progenitors. In athymic immunodeficient mice, transplanted progenitor cells differentiated into thymic epithelial cells that could produce functional T cells. Next steps include exploring the therapeutic uses of the derived thymic epithelial cells in mouse models.</p> <p>Corresponding authors Matthias Hebrok and Mark Anderson have cofounded ThyGen to commercialize the approach.</p> <p>SciBX 6(23); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.586 Published online June 13, 2013</p>	Patent application filed; exclusively licensed to ThyGen	<p>Parent, A.V. <i>et al. Cell Stem Cell</i>; published online May 16, 2013; doi:10.1016/j.stem.2013.04.004</p> <p>Contact: Matthias Hebrok, University of California, San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: mhebrok@diabetes.ucsf.edu</p> <p>Contact: Mark S. Anderson, same affiliation as above e-mail: manderson@diabetes.ucsf.edu</p>