This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Photoreceptor replacement therapy for degenerative retinal disease	Embryonic stem cell (ESC)-derived photoreceptors could help treat degenerative retinal diseases. In an adapted 3D culture system, mouse ESCs differentiated into photoreceptor-expressing rod precursor cells. In three mouse models of retinal degeneration, subretinal injection of 200,000 rod precursors resulted in the integration of approximately 25,000 morphologically normal rod photoreceptors that responded to metabotropic glutamate receptor subtype 8 (mGluR8; GRM8) agonists and antagonists in a manner comparable to that of wild-type photoreceptors. This number of integrated photoreceptors was insufficient to yield electroretinographic responses. Next steps could include improving the efficiency of integration. SciBX 6(33); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.912 Published online Aug. 29, 2013	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Gonzalez-Cordero, A. <i>et al. Nat. Biotechnol.</i>; published online July 21, 2013; doi:10.1038/nbt.2643 Contact: Robin R. Ali, Institute of Ophthalmology, University College London, London, U.K. e-mail: r.ali@ucl.ac.uk