This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Fully organized and functional thymus from reprogrammed fibroblasts	<p>Cell culture and mouse studies suggest fibroblasts could be reprogrammed and transplanted to produce a fully organized and functional thymus. Neonatal thymus transplantation is limited because of donor supply and patient histocompatibility. In primary mouse embryo fibroblasts (MEFs), forkhead box N1 (FoxN1) expression converted the MEFs into thymic epithelial-like cells that could support T cell development when cocultured with early T cell progenitors. In adult mice, grafts of thymic epithelial-like cells under the kidney capsule aggregated with immature thymocytes and fetal thymic mesenchyme and led to generation of an organ with thymic architecture that supported normal T cell development. Next steps include testing the protocol with primary human fibroblasts.</p> <p>SciBX 7(36); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.1082 Published online Sept. 18, 2014</p>	Unpatented; licensing status not applicable	<p>Brendenkamp, N. <i>et al. Nat. Cell Biol.</i>; published online Aug. 24, 2014; doi:10.1038/ncb3023</p> <p>Contact: Catherine C. Blackburn, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, U.K. e-mail: c.blackburn@ed.ac.uk</p>