This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Assays & screens			
<i>In vitro</i> screen for small molecules to promote myelin repair in multiple sclerosis (MS)	<p><i>In vitro</i> and mouse studies suggest multiwell assays with vertical axon-mimicking, silica-based nanofibers could be useful for high throughput screening of small molecules that promote myelin regeneration. In the multiwell assay, oligodendrocyte precursor cells differentiated into oligodendrocytes and deposited myelin around the axon-mimicking nanofibers. The assay identified clemastine and benztropine as two top hits from a screen for molecules that enhance myelin growth on about 1,000 FDA-approved compounds. In a mouse model of chemical-induced demyelination, clemastine increased recovery of myelin compared with vehicle. Next steps include scaling up the screening platform and using it to identify new compounds that promote remyelination.</p> <p>Inception 5 Inc. and Roche are also using the screening platform to discover compounds that promote remyelination.</p> <p>The University of California, San Francisco is evaluating clemastine in an investigator-led Phase II trial in MS.</p> <p>Clemastine is an OTC antihistamine.</p> <p>Benztrapine is a generic drug marketed to treat Parkinson's disease (PD).</p> <p>SciBX 7(30); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.904 Published online Aug. 7, 2014</p>	Patent pending; licensed to Inception 5	<p>Mei, F. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online July 6, 2014; doi:10.1038/nm.3618</p> <p>Contact: Jonah R. Chan, University of California, San Francisco, Calif. e-mail: jonah.chan@ucsf.edu</p>