This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Assays & screens			
Orexin (hypocretin; HCRT)-based immunoassays to diagnose narcolepsy	<p>Immunoassays to determine T cell reactivity to two HCRT epitopes could be used to diagnose narcolepsy. Narcolepsy has been associated with human leukocyte antigen (HLA) DQ0602, but no molecular diagnostics for the condition exist. In coculture with an HLA DQ0602-specific T-B fusion cell line treated with HCRT₅₆₋₆₈ or HCRT₈₇₋₉₉, T cells obtained from narcoleptic individuals showed strong HCRT peptide-specific CD4⁺ T cell reactivity. Statistical analysis of the assay identified 19 of 23 patients with narcolepsy and 24 of 24 unaffected individuals. Next steps could include using the assay on larger patient cohorts and evaluating association of T cell reactivity with HCRT levels in patient spinal fluid.</p> <p>SciBX 7(3); doi:10.1038/scibx.2014.99 Published online Jan. 23, 2014</p>	Patent application filed by Stanford University for HCRT epitopes for narcolepsy diagnosis; licensing status unavailable	<p>De la Herrán-Arita, A.K. <i>et al. Sci. Transl. Med.</i>; published online Dec. 18, 2013; doi:10.1126/scitranslmed.3007762</p> <p>Contact: Emmanuel Mignot, Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, Calif. e-mail: mignot@stanford.edu</p> <p>Contact: Elizabeth D. Mellins, same affiliation as above e-mail: mellins@stanford.edu</p>