

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Assays & screens			
Mass spectrometry (MS)-based enzymatic assay	The Nimzyme MS-based assay could offer a high-sensitivity and high-throughput alternative to conventional MS for measuring multiple enzymatic activities in cell lysates and other complex biological mixtures. The assay could also potentially be used to screen inhibitor libraries. The method consists of immobilizing tagged molecules from biological samples or libraries via noncovalent binding to a solid fluoruous-phase surface. Following analyte adsorption, the surface is washed to remove other cellular materials. Laser irradiation then frees any bound analytes for subsequent MS. In proof-of-concept studies, the assay detected β -galactosidase activity in crude <i>Escherichia coli</i> cell lysates and in thermophilic microbial community lysates. Researchers said that next steps include adapting the assay to a printed microarray before commercialization.	U.S. patent application filed covering the Nanostructure-initiator MS (NIMS) technology; available for licensing	Northern, T. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i> ; published online March 2, 2008; doi:10.1073/pnas.0712332105 Contact: Gary Siuzdak, The Skaggs Institute for Chemical Biology, The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, Calif. e-mail: siuzdak@scripps.edu Contact: Chi-Huey Wong, same affiliation as above e-mail: wong@scripps.edu