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THE DISTILLERY

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Imaging			
Contrast agent for MRI-based imaging of atherosclerotic plaques	*In vitro* and mouse studies suggest that an MRI contrast agent consisting of a phosphatidylserine-targeting peptide could help diagnose and monitor atherosclerosis. The presence of phosphatidylserine indicates apoptosis in atherosclerotic plaques and could be useful for identifying plaques prone to thrombosis. In mouse models of liver apoptosis and mouse models of atherosclerosis, the contrast agent bound to phosphatidylserine in apoptotic cells and was detectable using MRI. Next steps could include further validation of the imaging strategy in animals. *SciBX* 2(38); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.1457 Published online Oct. 1, 2009	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Burtea, C. *et al. Mol. Pharm.*; published online Sept. 10, 2009; doi:10.1021/mp900106m **Contact:** Robert N. Muller, University of Mons-Hainaut, Mons, Belgium e-mail: robert.muller@umh.ac.be