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THE DISTILLERY

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Engineered lipocalins with antibody-like characteristics	Lipocalins engineered to have antigen-binding sites could be useful for immunotherapeutic applications. The compounds, dubbed anticalins, are structurally simple molecules with affinities comparable to those of antibodies. *In vitro*, a cytotoxic T lymphocyte–associated protein 4 (CTLA4; CTLA-4; CD152)-specific anticalin induced biological effects comparable to those of CTLA4-specific antibodies. In a mouse model of *Leishmania donovani*, the same anticalin significantly lowered parasite burden compared with that seen in control mice ($p<0.001$). Next steps include testing the anticalins in a variety of disease models. PRS-010, a CTLA4 antagonist from Pieris AG, is in the discovery stage for cancer. Ipilimumab (MDX-010), a human mAb against CTLA4 receptor from Medarex Inc. and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co., is in Phase III testing to treat melanoma. Tremelimumab (CP-675,206), a CTLA4 receptor antagonist from Pfizer Inc., is in Phase II testing to treat various cancers. ***SciBX*** **2(17); doi:10.1038/scibx.2009.728** **Published online April 30, 2009**	International patent application filed for CTLA4-binding anticalins; available for worldwide licensing	Schonfeld, D. *et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*; published online April 27, 2009; doi:10.1073/pnas.0813399106 **Contact:** A. Skerra, Technical University Munich, Freising-Weihenstephan, Germany e-mail: skerra@wzw.tum.de