This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug delivery			
Rationally designed cationic lipids for therapeutic small interfering RNA delivery	Studies in rodents and in monkeys identified a 1,2-dilinoleyloxy-3-dimethylaminopropane-derived cationic lipid that could improve the efficiency of therapeutic siRNA delivery. In rats, stable nucleic acid lipid particles (SNALPs) containing the cationic lipid, dubbed KC2, and carrying siRNA against <i>Factor VII</i> accumulated in the liver, were well tolerated and were effective at blocking protein expression. In cynomolgus monkeys, a SNALP formulation containing siRNA against the hepatic <i>transthyretin</i> (<i>TTR</i>) gene decreased liver TTR levels in a dose-dependent manner. Next steps include clinical testing of the SNALP formulations. SciBX 3(7); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.229 Published online Feb. 18, 2010	Patent applications filed for SNALP platform and KC2; KC2 licensed by Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Inc.; IP covering SNALP platform licensed to Alnylam, Roche and Merck & Co. Inc.	Semple, S. <i>et al. Nat. Biotechnol.</i>; published online Jan. 17, 2010; doi:10.1038/nbt.1602 Contact: Akin Akinc, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Inc., Cambridge, Mass. e-mail: aakinc@alnylam.com Contact: Sean C. Semple, Tekmira Pharmaceuticals Corp., Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada e-mail: ssemples@tekmirapharm.com