

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Imaging			
MRI of metastases using superparamagnetic iron oxide (SPIO) nanoparticles and hyperpolarized helium	A study in mice suggests that SPIO nanoparticles and hyperpolarized helium could be used to detect tumor metastases by MRI. Mice with metastatic tumors were injected with SPIO nanoparticles and ventilated with a mixture of oxygen and hyperpolarized helium. MRI subsequently showed that nanoparticles accumulated in metastatic tumor sites, causing a lack of helium signal in areas with metastases, in contrast with the diffuse signal throughout the rest of the lung without metastases. Next steps include optimizing the nanoparticle formulation.	Patent pending; available for licensing	Branca, R.T. <i>et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA</i> ; published online Feb. 8, 2010; doi:10.1073/pnas.1000386107 Contact: Rosa T. Branca, Duke University, Durham, N.C. e-mail: tamara.branca@duke.edu
	<i>SciBX</i> 3(9); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.294 Published online March 4, 2010		