This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Markers			
Noninvasive diagnostic for Down syndrome	<p>A study in humans suggests that screening fetal DNA in the blood of pregnant women could help diagnose Down syndrome. In a quantitative PCR assay, fetal DNA isolated from the blood of 80 women carrying fetuses with Down syndrome had higher levels of methylation compared with DNA from healthy control fetuses. Next steps include testing the predictive power of the technique in a larger population sample and developing related methods to detect other fetal chromosomal abnormalities.</p> <p>SciBX 4(12); doi:10.1038/scibx.2011.356 Published online March 24, 2011</p>	Patent pending; licensed to NIPD Genetics Ltd.	<p>Papageorgiou, E.A. <i>et al. Nat. Med.</i>; published online March 6, 2011; doi:10.1038/nm.2312</p> <p>Contact: Philippos C. Patsalis, The Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, Nicosia, Cyprus e-mail: patsalis@cing.ac.cy</p>