

This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Assays & screens			
Class A β -lactamase (blaC)-specific detection of <i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i>	Fluorescent probes specific for <i>M. tuberculosis</i> blaC could be useful for detecting <i>M. tuberculosis</i> in clinical samples. Chemically modified cephalosporins that release a fluorophore when bound to blaC were synthesized. <i>In vitro</i> , the probes emitted a fluorescence signal and showed 1,000-fold greater selectivity for blaC over a closely related class A β -lactamase produced by other bacterial strains. In unprocessed patient sputum samples, the lead probe detected <i>M. tuberculosis</i> within 10 minutes even when fewer than 10 colony-forming units of bacilli were present. Global BioDiagnostics Corp. is conducting a proof-of-concept study on the probes and has begun development of a diagnostic to detect <i>M. tuberculosis</i> . SciBX 5(36); doi:10.1038/scibx.2012.962 Published online Sept. 13, 2012	Multiple patents pending; licensed to Global BioDiagnostics	Xie, H. <i>et al. Nat. Chem.</i> ; published online Sept. 2, 2012; doi:10.1038/nchem.1435 Contact: Jianguo Rao, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif. e-mail: jrao@stanford.edu