This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Crystal structures of *Staphylococcus aureus* penicillin binding protein 2a (PBP2a)	*In vitro* studies identified an allosteric site on PBP2a that could aid the development of new antibiotics to treat methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA) infection. β-Lactam antibiotics inhibit the transpeptidase activity of PBPs; however, MRSA PBP2a is resistant to this inhibition. *In vitro*, structural studies of PBP2a revealed an allosteric pocket 60 Å away from the transpeptidase active site. Ligand binding to the allosteric site caused a conformational change in PBP2a, exposing the active site for subsequent inhibition by β-lactam antibiotics. Next steps could include looking for compounds that bind to the PBP2a allosteric site. *SciBX* 6(41); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.1172 Published online Oct. 24, 2013	Patent and licensing status undisclosed	Otero, L.H. *et al. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA*; published online Oct. 1, 2013; doi:10.1073/pnas.1300118110 **Contact:** Juan A. Hermoso, Spanish National Research Council, Madrid, Spain e-mail: xjuan@iqfr.csic.es **Contact:** Shahriar Mobashery, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind. e-mail: mobashery@nd.edu