Steroidogenic acute regulatory protein (StAR) manages acute steroidogenesis in the adrenal cortex and gonads by promoting the translocation of cholesterol to the mitochondrial inner membrane where initial steroid biosynthesis is catalyzed. Within StAR are StAR related lipid transfer (START) domains which are 200–210 amino acid motifs that occur in a remarkably wide range of proteins involved in diverse cell functions such as lipid transport and metabolism, signal transduction and transcription regulation. The closest homolog to StAR is MLN64, with 35% sequence identity between their START domains.

The technology embodied in this invention encompasses plasmids expressing START domains of StAR and MLN64. These fragments enable expression of proteins for many biochemical studies and specifically towards cholesterol transfer in acute steroidegenesis. Possible commercial applications include targets for cancer treatment to known over expressed MLN64 in breast carcinoma.

Macromolecular Enzyme Substrates

Glen L. Hortin (CC)
DHHS Reference No. E–233–99/0 filed 31 Jul 2000
Licensing Contact: Dennis Penn; 301/496–7056 ext. 211; e-mail: pennd@od.nih.gov

This invention discloses a new class of reagents used to measure the activity of enzymes. The inventor discovered that connecting a small reagent molecule onto a polymer that serves as a large carrier molecule confers advantages in the measurement of enzyme activity. Advantages of the new class of reagents are: (1) Better modeling of the size of natural targets (substrates) of many biologically important enzymes, (2) improved specificity of measurements, (3) ability to measure the influence of substrates size on enzyme activity (carrier group size can be varied over a wide range), (4) improved substrate solubility, and (5) the potential for easier methods of synthesis and purification of some enzyme substrates. Reagents of this class can be used to measure the activity of components forming and breaking down blood clots, of digestive components, of components of the complement system, and of many other components with essential biological functions.

Efficient Generation of Midbrain Neurons From Mouse Embryonic Stem Cells

Sang-Hun Lee, Nadya Lumelsky, Lorenz Studer and Ronald McKay (NINDS)
DHHS Reference No. E–291–99/0 filed May 1, 2000
Licensing Contact: Norbert Pontzer; 301/496–7735, ext. 284; e-mail: pontzern@od.nih.gov

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder affecting an estimated one million patients in the United States. Parkinson's disease occurs when dopamine producing cells in the central nervous system degenerate. Currently patients receive medications to treat the symptoms, but not cure or stop the progression of the disease. As the disease progresses the medications usually become less effective. One encouraging new form of therapy replaces the lost dopamine producing neurons with transplanted cells. A major obstacle to cell replacement therapy has been obtaining sufficient dopamine producing cells. Therapeutic or ethical problems exit for all presently available sources of cells for transplantation.

This invention provides a method for efficiently generating dopaminergic neurons from embryonic stem cells. Embryonic cells are totipotent cells which can proliferate indefinitely in the undifferentiated state. A method of generating specific differentiated cells from embryonic stem cells thus provides a potentially unlimited source of those cells. A sequence of culturing steps involving exposure to specific neurotrophic factors and other agents produces a high percentage of cultured dopaminergic neurons. An unlimited supply of dopaminergic neurons which may be suitable for transplantation is thus provided. Details of some aspects of this invention can be found in Nature Biotechnology Vol. 18, pages 675–679, June 2000.

Methods for Delivering Biologically Active Molecules Into Cells

Jeffrey L. Miller, Urszula Wojda, Paul K. Goldsmith (NIDDK)
DHHS Reference Nos. E–174–98/0 filed 15 Jan 1999 and E–174–98/1 filed 14 Jan 2000
Licensing Contact: Dennis Penn; 301/496–7056 ext. 211; e-mail: pennd@od.nih.gov

The appropriate gene therapy delivery system depends greatly on the cells being targeted and the means by which delivery is anticipated. Numerous clinical trials are currently ongoing for gene therapy, each typically usually a different mode of delivery. It is still too early to determine which mode will be approved and which will be the most effective. The polyethylenimineDNA (PEI–DNA) complex is known to be an effective system for delivery of DNA. In vitro models of a new delivery system based on the cationic properties of PEI have found that the cellular incorporation is significantly enhanced using an Avidin-PEI–DNA complex. Experiments have shown that there is, at a minimum, a 3x to 10x increase in the cellular uptake of the DNA. It is believed that this gene delivery system can be targeted to any cell of interest. It was demonstrated that the transfection can be targeted to native and biotinylated cells. For cells, with a known surface phenotype, biotinylated monoclonal antibodies can be attached to specific sites and the Avidin-PEI–DNA complex then binds and enters the cell via endocytosis.

Alternatively, cells without a known surface phenotype, biotin can be covalently attached to the cell surface and the Avidin-PEI–DNA complex is then able to bind and carry the DNA into the cells. This system appears to be not only applicable to gene therapy, but to the diagnostic market and to the delivery of other anionic materials into cells. This Avidin-PEI–DNA system may find a niche market or it may become utilitarian, such that it can be effectively utilized in more than one gene therapy treatment. This technology is available for immediate licensing and independent commercialization and/or a Cooperative and Development Research Agreement can be considered.

Dated: February 15, 2001.

Jack Spiegel,

Director, Division of Technology Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer, National Institutes of Health.

[FR Doc. 01–4617 Filed 2–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Prospective Grant of Co-Exclusive License: Homogeneous Tests for Sequentially Determining Lipoprotein Fractions

AGENCY: National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service, DHHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is notice, in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 209(c)(1) and 37 CFR 404.7(a)(1)(i), that the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Health and Human Services, is contemplating the grant of a co-exclusive worldwide to practice the inventions embodied in US Patent Application Serial Number (60/136,709 (PCT/US00/14827) entitled ''Homogeneous Tests for Sequentially Determining Lipoprotein Fractions'', provisionally filed May 28, 1999 and PCT filed May 26, 2000, to Genzyme Diagnostics, having a place of business

in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and J&S Medical Associates, having a place of business in Framingham, Massachusetts. The United States of America is an assignee to the patent rights of this invention.

The contemplated co-exclusive license may be limited to the development of homogeneous sequential tests for determination of lipoprotein subfractions in biological fluids, with applications to clinical chemistry analyzers. The license may not include the use for Patient-Initiated Diagnostics (PID) in conjunction with the SerSite™ remote-site mailable device or its equivalents, all covered by claims of US Patent Number 6,036,659.

DATES: Only written comments and/or applications for a license which are received by he NIH Office of Technology Transfer on or before April 27, 2001 will be considered.

ADDRESSES: Requests for a copy of the patent application, inquiries, comments and other materials relating to the contemplated license should be directed to: Uri Reichman, Ph.D., Technology Licensing Specialist, Office of Technology Transfer, National Institutes of Health, 6011 Executive Boulevard, Suite 325, Rockville, MD 20852–3804; Telephone: (301) 496–7056, ext. 240; Facsimile: (301) 402–0220; E-mail: reichman@od.nih.gov. A signed Confidential Disclosure Agreement will be required to receive copies of the patent application.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The measurement of the cholesterol content of the lipoproteins subfraction in blood has become the gold standard in the clinical assessment of the risk of coronary artery disease. Current commercial tests involve two or three separate determinations and some of them are rather cumbersome. The subject invention provides a new, homogeneous assay for the sequential determination of the HDL–C and of total cholesterol present in blood. The test can be performed in a single tube and can readily lend itself to automation. The method comprises complexing of the non-HDL–C fraction, performing a first measurement of the cholesterol content of the unbound fraction, disrupting the complex and performing a second measurement of total cholesterol. Subtraction of the first reading from the second provides the value of the cholesterol in the non-HDL subfractions. Optionally, a triglyceride assay can then also be performed on the sample in the same tube.

The prospective co-exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective co-exclusive license may be granted unless, within 60 days from the date of this published Notice, NIH receives written evidence and argument that establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Properly filed competing applications for a license filed in response to this notice will be treated as objections to the contemplated license. Comments and objections submitted in response to this notice will not be made available for public inspection, and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Dated: February 15, 2001.

Jack Spiegel,

Director, Division of Technology, Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer.

[FR Doc. 01–4618 Filed 2–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary

Invitation for Proposals

AGENCY: Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary.

ACTION: Invitation for proposals.

SUMMARY: The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council is asking the public, private organizations, and government agencies to submit proposals for restoration of resources and services injured by the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The Invitation to Submit Restoration Proposals for Federal Fiscal Year 2002, a booklet explaining the process, is available from the Trustee Council office.

DATES: Proposals are due April 13, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, 645 ''G'' Street, Suite 401, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Restoration Office, (907) 278–8012 or toll free at (800) 478–7745 (in Alaska) or (800) 283–7745 (outside Alaska) or via e-mail at restoration@oilspill.state.ak.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Following the Exxon Valdez oil spill in March 1989, a Trustee Council of three state and three federal trustees, including the Secretary of the Interior, was formed. The Trustee Council prepared a restoration plan for the injured resources and services within the oil spill area. The restoration plan calls for annual work plans identifying projects to accomplish restoration. Each year proposals for restoration projects are solicited from a variety of organizations, including the public.

Dated: February 20, 2001.

Willie R. Taylor,

Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance.

[FR Doc. 01–4632 Filed 2–23–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–R6–M

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. I), this notice announces a meeting of the Klamath Fishery Management Council, established under the authority of the Klamath River Basin Fishery Resources Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 460ss *et seq.*). The Klamath Fishery Management Council makes recommendations to agencies that regulate harvest of anadromous fish in the Klamath River Basin. The objectives of this meeting are to hear technical reports, to discuss and develop Klamath fall chinook salmon harvest management options for the 2001 season, and to make recommendations to the Pacific Fishery Management Council and other agencies. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The Klamath Fishery Management Council will meet from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, 2001.

PLACE: The meeting will be held at the Columbia River Doubletree Hotel, 1401 N. Hayden Island Drive, Portland, Oregon.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Phil Detrich, Project Leader, Fish and Wildlife Service, 1829 South Oregon Street, Yreka, California 96097, telephone (530) 842–5763.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At the March 4, 2001, meeting, the Klamath Fishery Management Council may schedule short follow-up meetings to be held between March 5, 2001, and March 8, 2001, at the Columbia River Doubletree Hotel, 1401 N. Hayden Island Drive, Portland, Oregon, where the Pacific Fishery Management Council will be meeting. For background information on the Klamath Council, please refer to the notice of their initial meeting that appeared in the **Federal Register** on July 8, 1987 (52 FR 25639).