preparations, since they may contain antigenic epitopes that may play a role in inducing protection from infection or disease.

The subject invention provides chimeric nucleic acids comprising a retroviral gag sequence, a target nucleic acid sequence derived from a nucleic acid encoding a fusion partner, and a frame shift site. Expression of the chimeric gene cassette results in packaging the fusion partner into the Gag pseudovirion. Suitable fusion partners can be derived from any protein of interest which has a biological activity or which elicits a cellular or humoral immune response.

Method For Measuring Mechanical Properties of the Collagen Network in Cartilage

PJ Basser, A Maroudas (NICHD)

Serial No. 60/038,005 filed 14 Feb 97; PCT/US98/02727 filed 17 Mar 98

Licensing Contact: John Fahner-Vihtelic, 301/496–7735 ext. 270

The present application describes a methodology for assessing the mechanical integrity of extracellular matrices such as cartilage. Specifically, the invention teaches how to characterize the mechanical integrity of the collagen network as well as the swelling properties of the proteoglycans trapped within it. This is done by performing an osmotic stress titration experiment on a tissue specimen, and interpreting the results using a simple mathematical model. This invention provides the necessary experimental and theoretical tools to understand functional consequences of: (1) endogenous changes in cartilage structure that occur normally due to growth or aging; (2) exogenous changes in cartilage structure due to the addition of biochemical agents or caused by genetic manipulations; and (3) inherent differences between cartilage specimens that are obtained from different joints within the same subject or from different subjects. These methods can also be applied to characterize the mechanical integrity of tissue cultured or ''tissue engineered'' cartilage.

Vectors for Delivering Viral and Oncogenic Inhibitors

SM Rybak, A Cara, GL Gusella, DL Newton (NCI)

Serial No. 60/022,052 filed 22 Jul 96; PCT/US97/12637 filed 17 Jul 97

Licensing Contact: Carol Salata, 301/496–7735, ext. 232

The invention concerns cell transduction vectors which are capable of inhibiting viral replication in cells transduced with these vectors, and which also are capable of inhibiting the growth of cancer cells. Specifically, these expressions vectors produce protective genes which interfere with viral replication. These genes are tightly regulated by HIV–1 Tat and Rev proteins, which if produced after infection can induce expression of the protective genes. The vectors contain either a single gene (delta-gag), or a combination of two different genes (delta-gag and RNAse) which interfere with HIV–1 replication at different stages of the HIV–1 life cycle. Following transduction of target cells, the mRNA for the protective genes is incorporated into the newly budding virion along with the viral genomic mRNA. Following infection of neighboring cells, the mRNA for the protective gene can be reverse transcribed and integrated into these cells, thereby increasing the proportion of cells containing the protective gene.

In providing protection against viral replication, the vectors embodied in this invention could be used in gene therapy against HIV and against other viral diseases. In addition, the vectors could be used for introducing specific genes into neoplastic cells and thereby be effective in treating cancer and other diseases.

Anti-Viral Pharmaceutical Compositions Containing 1,2–Dithiane Compounds and Methods of Using Thereof

WG Rice, R Schultz, D Baker, LE Henderson (NCI)

Serial No. 60/021,665 filed 05 July 96; PCT/US97/10870 filed 03 Jul 97

Licensing Contact: J. Peter Kim, 301/496–7056 ext. 264

Certain highly conserved structures, known as retroviral-type CCHC zinc fingers, are found in the nucleocapsid proteins of all retroviruses, including HIV–1 and HIV–2. It is known that these zinc finger structures perform essential functions in viral infection and replication.

The subject invention provides for pharmaceutical compositions comprising dithiane dioxide compounds which are useful as antiviral agents and are particularly effective at inhibiting the replication of retroviruses and for treating retroviral pathologies. The 1,2–dithiane compounds target the zinc fingers of the nucleocapsid protein. These compositions represent potential agents for prevention and treatment of HIV and of other retroviral diseases. The subject invention also embodies methods for the administration of these compositions, a kit containing these compositions, and methods for the inactivation of contaminating retrovirus in samples of potentially infected body fluids.

Dated: September 3, 1998.

Jack Spiegel,

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

[FR Doc. 98–24368 Filed 9–10–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke; Notice of Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

The meeting will be open to the public as indicated below, with attendance limited to space available. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations, should notify the Contact Person listed below in advance of the meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public as indicated below in accordance with the provisions set forth in section 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended for the review, discussion, and evaluation of individual intramural programs and projects conducted by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, including consideration of personnel qualifications and performance, and the competence of individual investigators, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke October 4–6, 1998.

Date: October 4–6, 1998.

Closed: October 4, 1998, 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate personal qualifications and performance, and competence of individual investigators.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, Conference Room 6C9, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Open: October 5, 1998, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Agenda: To discuss program planning and program accomplishments.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, Conference Room 6C9, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Closed: October 5, 1998, 4:30 PM to 5:45 PM.

Agenda: To review and evaluate personal qualifications and performance, and competence of individual investigators.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, Conference Room 6C9, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Closed: October 6, 1998, 8:30 AM to adjournment.

Agenda: To review and evaluate personal qualifications and performance, and competence of individual investigators.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, Conference Room 6C9, 31 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Contact Person: Story C. Landis, Phd, Director, Division of Intramural Activities, NINDS, National Institutes of Health, Building 36, Room 5A05, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301–435–2232.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.853, Clinical Research Related to Neurological Disorders; 93.854, Biological Basis Research in the Neurosciences, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: September 3, 1998.

Anna Snouffer,

Acting Committee Management Officer, NIH.

[FR Doc. 98–24365 Filed 9–10–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Working Group on Public Participation in NIH Activities; Notice of Meeting

The Office of the Director (OD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), announces a meeting on public participation in NIH activities. The meeting is scheduled for September 23, 1998, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Conference Room 10, Building 31C, Sixth Floor, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland. At the meeting, individual public participants invited by the NIH will discuss future activities and responsibilities of the proposed NIH Director's Council of Public Representatives, and the NIH Offices of Public Liaison. The NIH is the lead Federal agency that provides major support for medical research leading to the improvement of the nation's health. The NIH Director's Council of Public Representatives will serve as a forum for discussing issues and concerns and exchanging viewpoints that are important to NIH policies, programs, and research priorities. The NIH Offices of Public Liaison are expected to strengthen collaboration between the NIH and the public.

Establishment of the Director's Council of Public Representatives and the Offices of Public Liaison were recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine's report—*Scientific Opportunities and Public Needs: Improving Priority Setting and Public Input at the National Institutes of Health*. The full text of the report is available on-line at the following site of the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences: *http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/nih/*. Future activities will follow from the NIH's Office of Public Liaison and the Director's Council of Public Representatives.

The entire meeting is open to the public; however, seating is limited and will be on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be an overflow room available to listen to and view the proceedings of the meeting. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations, should notify the contact person listed below in advance of the meeting.

Individual public participants invited by the NIH will be asked to express their views on matters related to the following:

Director's Council of Public Representatives

- What should be the responsibilities and activities of the Director's Council of Public Representatives?
- What is the role of this Director's Council of Public Representatives as compared to the role of other NIH Advisory Councils?
- Describe some activities that could be undertaken by the Director's Council of Public Representatives to encourage and improve public participation in NIH programs.
- What processes, mechanisms, and criteria should be used for identifying appropriate candidates to serve on the Director's Council of Public Representatives?

The NIH Offices of Public Liaison

- What should be the responsibilities and activities of the NIH Offices of Public Liaison?
- Should all of the Institute-level Offices of Public Liaison perform the same activities?
- How should the activities of the OD Office of Public Liaison differ from those of the Institute-level Offices of Public Liaison?
- How should NIH make the existence of the Offices of Public Liaison known and to whom?
- How should the Offices of Public Liaison reach out to draw the public into NIH activities?
- What programs and activities should the Offices of Public Liaison consider that have been particularly successful in providing public viewpoints to the NIH?

Additional Questions

- What should be the relationship between the Offices of Public Liaison and the Director's Council of Public Representatives?
- What programs from other research agencies or organizations could serve as models for either the Director's Council of Public Representatives or the Offices of Public Liaison in involving the public more effectively in NIH activities?
- What do various segments of the public need and want to know about the NIH's activities, research, and operations that could be imparted through the Director's Council of Public Representatives or the Offices of Public Liaison?
- How can the Director's Council of Public Representatives and/or the Offices of Public Liaison help in conveying this information to those segments of the public?
- Identify activities to disseminate information about and from the Offices of Public Liaison and the Director's Council of Public Representatives to the appropriate public audiences.

Discussion of these questions will help NIH in identifying people to serve on the Director's Council of Representatives and will be used by the Director's Council of Public Representatives and the Offices of Public Liaison to identify activities and frame the issues for discussion at future public meetings.

Public comments and requests for additional information should be mailed to Ms. Anne Thomas, Associate Director for Communications, National Institutes of Health, Building 1, Room 344, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Dated: September 2, 1998.

Anne Thomas,

Associate Director for Communications, NIH.

[FR Doc. 98–24463 Filed 9–10–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Center for Scientific Review; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as