

6/31/2018

Hello!

It's hard to believe that we have been at this for 1 year! We have accomplished a lot and have definitely taken major steps towards achieving our goal of converting other cell types, like muscle cells, into beta cells while they remain in the body.

Over the past year, we have optimized our protocol for specifically collecting reprogrammed cells from an animal model and we have also dramatically increased the efficiency of reprogramming by using modified factors. With this work, we have positioned ourselves to utilize cutting edge technology to thoroughly investigate the molecular changes that are occurring after we deliver our reprogramming factors into muscle cells in vivo. Armed with this information, we will be able to determine what other factors or chemicals we can add to further coax muscle into a beta like cell.

From your front row seat over the last year, I hope you have come to appreciate how hard this type of work is and how important it is to be able to overcome road blocks. In research, things rarely go as planned. We had many problems trying to collect enough reprogrammed muscle cells for in depth molecular analysis. But we found ways to solve that problem and by doing so we have actually gotten better at reprogramming muscle cells in vivo.

I think it is fair to ask what you have gotten for your donation. And I can say that your support was instrumental for the publication of our work. This might seem less than satisfying, but remember, once this work is seen by other researchers, many will repeat the work and try to further improve it. So, in a very real sense you have amplified the number of people working on this approach and helped to inspire other really smart scientists to try and make it work. Moreover, by publishing this work, new funding opportunities should be available to for us which will allow us to dedicate more time and effort ourselves! This is a really great outcome and we should all be proud of what we have accomplished in this short amount of time.

This has been a great learning experience for all of us and I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your support through the DRC. Without your support, this type of risky work would not have been possible and we would still be at the starting line wondering if this approach is even possible.

As we move closer to publication, I would like to keep you informed of the review and publication process. Sometimes, this review and publication process can be quite lengthy. This is because, while we know how important this work is, we are trying to convince other experts in this area of biology of its potential and that our experiments were performed properly and the data we obtained is repeatable. This is how the review process works and is in place to prevent people from publishing work that is either not real or unrepeatable.

So please keep looking for my updates as we obtain our new data and put together our scientific manuscript for publication. And remember, as I mentioned last month as well, publishing this work is a significant step as it legitimizes the work we have produced.

So thank you again for all your support and your support of the DRC. And hang on for my updates as we move this work towards publication!