



NEWS RELEASE

Merck to Discontinue Development of MK-7110 for COVID-19

4/15/2021

KENILWORTH, N.J.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, today announced the discontinuation of development of MK-7110 (formerly known as CD24Fc) for the treatment of hospitalized patients with COVID-19.

Merck acquired MK-7110 in December 2020 through its acquisition of Oncolmmune, a privately-held clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company. As previously reported, Merck subsequently received feedback from the US Food and Drug Administration that additional data, beyond the study conducted by Oncolmmune, would be needed to support a potential Emergency Use Authorization application. Based on the additional research that would be required – new clinical trials as well as research related to manufacturing at scale – MK-7110 would not be expected to become available until the first half of 2022. Given this timeline and these technical, clinical and regulatory uncertainties, the availability of a number of medicines for patients hospitalized with COVID-19, and the need to concentrate Merck’s resources on accelerating the development and manufacture of the most viable therapeutics and vaccines, Merck has determined to discontinue development of MK-7110 for COVID-19 and to focus its pandemic efforts on advancing molnupiravir and on producing Johnson & Johnson’s COVID-19 vaccine.

“Merck’s commitment from the outset of the pandemic has been to deploy our expertise and capabilities where they can have the most impact,” said Dr. Roy Baynes, senior vice president and head of global clinical development, chief medical officer, Merck Research Laboratories. “Merck is now focusing its efforts on advancing molnupiravir, which, as an oral medicine for outpatient use, represents a promising potential new approach, and on accelerating production of Johnson & Johnson’s COVID-19 vaccine.”

About Merck

For 130 years, Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals – including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases – as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on **Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube** and **LinkedIn**.

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the “company”) includes “forward-looking statements” within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. There can be no guarantees with respect to pipeline products that the products will receive the necessary regulatory approvals or that they will prove to be commercially successful. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of the global outbreak of novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19); the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2020 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

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