



Statement

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Statement Regarding the Publication in *The Lancet*: Cardiovascular Events Associated with VIOXX: Final Analysis of the APPROVe Trial

WHITEHOUSE STATION, N.J., Oct. 13, 2008 – *The Lancet* today reported on an analysis of the final cardiovascular (CV) findings from the long-term follow up of participants in the APPROVe trial, a randomized placebo-controlled trial designed to evaluate the effect of VIOXX® in treating patients with a recent history of adenomatous polyps.

The authors of the paper reported the results of an analysis that included CV events that had occurred during the study and within one year after the closure date for the trial when patients had stopped taking VIOXX. The overall relative risk of VIOXX (on- and off-drug) compared to placebo was consistent with the results of the original APPROVe results of CV events while patients were taking VIOXX. There were numerically more CV events observed during the off-drug period among patients who formerly took VIOXX compared with those who formerly took placebo, but the difference did not reach statistical significance.

The authors also acknowledge several limitations of their analysis, including: not all patients were able to be followed off drug, the analysis was not able to take into account patients' use of medications or risk factors for CV events that may have changed after the patients stopped their study drug, the small numbers of events in the analysis, and the lack of statistical significance for the difference in Antiplatelet Trialists' Collaboration (APTCC) endpoints between patients formerly taking VIOXX and those formerly taking placebo. These limitations led the authors to conclude, "Small numbers [of CV events] prohibit detailed conclusions about when the increased risk begins and ends."

Merck believes that this post-hoc analyses using limited data from a prematurely terminated study needs to be interpreted very cautiously and in the context of the rest of the data from the extensive clinical development program for VIOXX.

Merck voluntarily withdrew VIOXX from the market in September 2004 after the APPROVe study showed, for the first time, an increased relative risk for CV events among patients taking VIOXX compared to patients taking placebo which began to become apparent beginning after approximately 18 months of continuous treatment.

About Merck

Merck & Co., Inc. is a global research-driven pharmaceutical company dedicated to putting patients first. Established in 1891, Merck currently discovers, develops, manufactures and markets vaccines and medicines to address unmet medical needs. The Company devotes extensive efforts to increase access to medicines through far-reaching programs that not only donate Merck medicines but help deliver them to the people who need them. Merck also publishes unbiased health information as a not-for-profit service. For more information, visit www.merck.com.

Forward-Looking Statement

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based on management's current expectations and involve risks and uncertainties, which may cause results to differ materially from those set forth in the statements. The forward-looking statements may include statements regarding product development, product potential or financial performance. No forward-looking statement can be guaranteed and actual results may differ materially from those projected. Merck undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. Forward-looking statements in this press release should be evaluated together with the many uncertainties that affect Merck's business, particularly those mentioned in the risk factors and cautionary statements in Item 1A of Merck's Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2007, and in any risk factors or cautionary statements contained in the Company's periodic reports on Form 10-Q or current reports on Form 8-K, which the Company incorporates by reference.

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