

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MERCK FROSST RESPONDS TO MACLEAN'S

MONTREAL, Quebec – August 20, 2007 – A response based on scientific facts to the article on the front page of the August 27 issue of Maclean's was published, Friday August 17, on the Merck Frosst Web site. To view the complete response, please visit: www.merckfrosst.ca.

“We are greatly troubled by the apparently biased journalism of Maclean's. To gamble with the health of millions of Canadian women by raising unfounded fears and exaggerating safety concerns about one of the most extensively tested vaccines is, in my mind, irresponsible,” said Dawn Graham, President of Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. “There is no question that HPV affects many Canadian lives and the tolerability profile of Gardasil® is excellent.”

Impact of HPV in Canada

Three in four (75 per cent) sexually active Canadians will have at least one HPV infection episode in their lifetime.¹ HPV infections annually lead to approximately 400,000 abnormal Pap smear results², 85,000 consultations due to genital warts and 36,000 new cases of genital warts³, as well as 1,400 cervical cancer diagnoses and 400 cervical cancer deaths.⁴

HPV is also linked to other cancers in both men and women, such as cancer of the penis, anus, vagina and vulva, as well as loss of female fertility and premature ovarian failure.⁵ According to the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, the incidence of cervical cancer is on the rise in Canada.⁶

Comprehensive clinical research program

Gardasil® [Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus (Types 6, 11, 16, 18) Recombinant Vaccine] clinical data is supported by one of the most extensive research programs for a vaccine in terms of number of subjects studied and length of evaluation. The vaccine has been studied for over five years in clinical trials involving close to 25,000 people in 33 different countries. So far 80 countries, including Canada, have approved Gardasil® on the merits of the scientific data.

In clinical trials the vaccine was shown to be 96 to 100 per cent effective at preventing infections from the HPV types that cause the most clinical diseases: HPV 6, 11, 16 and 18. These HPV types account for more than 90 per cent of genital warts, approximately 70 per cent of cervical and anogenital cancers and high-grade pre-cancers, 35 to 50 per cent of low-grade cervical, vaginal and vulvar lesions, and all four types cause abnormal Pap test results.⁷

The clinical trials found no increased number of serious adverse events in vaccinated subjects compared to placebo. Given that over ten million doses of Gardasil® have been distributed in the US, many of the reported adverse events in that country likely occurred coincidentally following vaccination. In particular, the often mentioned Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS) is a naturally occurring event which can lead to paralysis and occurs in approximately 3 of every 100,000 people each year in the US.⁸ To date, the rate of GBS reported among people who received the vaccine is consistent with what you would expect to see in the population.

Approved, recommended and endorsed

Gardasil® has been approved by Health Canada and recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, a Canadian committee of recognized experts in the fields of pediatrics, infectious diseases, immunology, medical microbiology, internal medicine and public health. The vaccine has also been endorsed by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists of Canada and the Society of Canadian Colposcopists.

Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. David Butler-Jones, recently acknowledged that "...unfortunately, we tend to only have this debate when we are considering prevention measures, despite the fact that history has repeatedly demonstrated that public health efforts designed to prevent illness and death are consistently safer, more effective and less costly than treatment."⁹

About Merck Frosst

At Merck Frosst, patients come first. Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. is a research-driven pharmaceutical company. Merck Frosst discovers, develops and markets a broad range of innovative medicines to improve human health. Merck Frosst is one of the top 20 R&D investors in Canada, with an investment of \$114 million in 2006. The Company is committed to fostering partnerships to deliver the most valuable health outcomes for Canadian patients. More information about Merck Frosst is available at <http://www.merckfrosst.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 cautionary statements in Item 1 of Merck's Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2006, and in its periodic reports on Form 10-Q and Form 8-K, which the Company incorporates by reference.

- 30 -

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Sheila Murphy, Manager, Public Affairs
Merck Frosst Canada Ltd.
514-428-2748

Daniel Brennan
NATIONAL PharmaCom
514-843-2325

¹ Health Canada, *It's Your Health HPV* Web site.

(Accessed at http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hpv-vph_e.html).

² Statement by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) on CMAJ Commentary, "Human papillomavirus, vaccines and women's health: questions and cautions". (Accessed on August 14, 2007 at: http://www.sogc.org/media/guidelines-hpv-commentary_e.asp)

³ Brisson, M et al. The health and economic burden of HPV infection, genital warts, cervical dysplasia and cervical cancer in Canada. Presented at the 7th Canadian Immunization Conference (CIC) on December 3, 2006 in Winnipeg.

⁴ Public Health Agency of Canada, Cervical Cancer Screening in Canada: 1998 Surveillance Report, Executive Summary. (Accessed at http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccsic-dccuac/exec_e.html).

⁵ Statement by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) on CMAJ Commentary, "Human papillomavirus, vaccines and women's health: questions and cautions". (Accessed on August 14, 2007 at: http://www.sogc.org/media/guidelines-hpv-commentary_e.asp)

⁶ Statement by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) on CMAJ Commentary, "Human papillomavirus, vaccines and women's health: questions and cautions". (Accessed on August 14, 2007 at: http://www.sogc.org/media/guidelines-hpv-commentary_e.asp)

⁷ Efficacy of a Prophylactic Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus (HPV) (Types 6, 11, 16, 18) L1 Virus-Like Particle (VLP) Vaccine for Prevention of Cervical Dysplasia and External Genital Lesions (EGL). Presented by C. Sattler at the 45th Annual Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy (ICAAC) in Washington, DC.

⁸ J Infect Dis., Prevots DR, et al, " Assessment of Guillain-Barre syndrome mortality and morbidity in the United States: implications for acute flaccid paralysis surveillance." 1997 Feb;175 Suppl 1:S151-5

⁹ Canada's Chief Public Health Officer refutes Maclean's article on HPV vaccine. Public Health Agency of Canada. (Accessed on August 19, 2007 at: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/cpho-acsp/hpv-vaccine070817_e.html)