



News Release

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**Meta-analysis of interferon alfa studies cited as “Notable Advance” in
BEST OF 2010 REPORT BY AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CLINICAL ONCOLOGY**

Improved survival in patients with deadliest form of skin cancer

KIRKLAND (Quebec) – January 31, 2011 – The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), the world’s leading professional organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer, cited an interferon alfa meta-analysis as a "Notable Advance" in *Clinical Cancer Advances 2010: ASCO’s Annual Report on Progress Against Cancer*. The report published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* identifies studies that significantly altered the way cancer is understood or had the greatest impact on patient care.¹

Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer and the incidence of melanoma has climbed faster than any other type of cancer in the last three decades, according to the ASCO report.² In Canada, an estimated 5,300 cases of melanoma were diagnosed in 2010. While the incidence increases with age, it is also one of the most common cancers among adolescents and young adults. In Canada, melanoma is the third most common cancer in females aged 15-29 and the fourth most common cancer in males aged 15-29.³

The cited meta-analysis⁴ of 14 clinical trials involving 8,122 patients with high-risk melanoma showed that adding interferon alfa after surgery improves overall survival in patients with melanoma.⁵

“The ASCO report covers the most significant cancer advances and mentions that many recent studies have focused on approaches that activate the immune system against melanoma, such as interferon alfa,” said Dr. Joël Claveau, dermatologist. “As melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer, the results of this meta-analysis represent important resources for physicians dealing with this growing public health problem in Canada.”

Clinical Cancer Advances 2010: ASCO’s Annual Report on Progress Against Cancer was developed under the guidance of a 14-person editorial board made up of leading oncologists, including specialty editors for each of the disease- and issue-specific sections. Editors reviewed studies in peer-reviewed scientific journals and the results of

research presented at major scientific meetings from October 2009 through September 2010. Only studies that significantly altered the way a cancer is understood or had an important impact on patient care were selected for the report.⁶

About Merck

Today's Merck is working to help the world be well. Merck is a global health care leader with a diversified portfolio of prescription medicines, vaccines, consumer and animal health products. In Canada, Merck markets over 530 pharmaceutical, consumer and animal health products and is a leader in a broad range of areas such as cardiology, immunology, infectious diseases, respiratory, vaccines, women's health and sun care, and is focused on expanding offerings in other areas, including virology, oncology and diabetes.

Merck is one of the top 25 R&D investors in Canada, with an investment of \$95.4 million in 2009. Merck also has a large manufacturing facility in Quebec dedicated to the annual production of some 35 million units including the Claritin and Aleris brands. Based in Montréal, Quebec, Merck employs over 1600 people across Canada. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit www.merck.ca.

Forward-Looking Statement

This information includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such statements may include, but are not limited to, statements about the benefits of the proposed merger between Merck and Schering-Plough, including future financial and operating results, the combined company's plans, objectives, expectations and intentions and other statements that are not historical facts. Such statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of Merck's and Schering-Plough's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. Actual results may differ from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

The following factors, among others, could cause actual results to differ from those set forth in the forward-looking statements: the possibility that the expected synergies from the merger of Merck and Schering-Plough will not be realized, or will not be realized within the expected time period, due to, among other things, the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and pending legislation that could affect the pharmaceutical industry; the risk that the businesses will not be integrated successfully; disruption from the merger making it more difficult to maintain business and operational relationships; Merck's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; dependence on the effectiveness of Merck's patents and other protections for innovative products; the risk of new and changing regulation and health policies in the U.S. and internationally and the exposure to litigation and/or regulatory actions.

Merck 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 Merck's 2008 Annual Report on Form 10-K, Schering-Plough's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended Sept. 30, 2009, the proxy statement filed by Merck on June 25, 2009 and each company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

¹ Kris MG et al. Clinical Cancer Advances 2010: Annual Report on Progress Against Cancer From the American Society of Clinical Oncology. Published ahead of print on November 15, 2010 as 10.1200/JCO.2010.33.2742. P. 14.

² Kris MG et al. Clinical Cancer Advances 2010: Annual Report on Progress Against Cancer From the American Society of Clinical Oncology. Published ahead of print on November 15, 2010 as 10.1200/JCO.2010.33.2742. P. 14.

³ Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, *Working to halt the increase of skin cancer in Canada* [Online] (Updated July 30, 2010). Available at: <http://www.partnershipagainstcancer.ca/2010/07/30/working-to-halt-the-increase-of-skin-cancer-in-canada/> [Accessed 29 November 2010].

⁴ Mocellin S et al. Interferon alpha adjuvant therapy in patients with high-risk melanoma: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *JNCI* 2010; 102 (7): 493-501.

⁵ Kris MG et al. Clinical Cancer Advances 2010: Annual Report on Progress Against Cancer From the American Society of Clinical Oncology. Published ahead of print on November 15, 2010 as 10.1200/JCO.2010.33.2742. P. 14.

⁶ Asco Connection, *ASCO Releases 2010 Clinical Cancer Advances Report*. Available at: <http://connection.asco.org/Forums/ASCOConnectionForums/tabid/79/afv/topic/aff/2/aft/346/Default.aspx>