

## **Almirall announces a US\$ 15 M equity investment in Ironwood Pharmaceuticals for linaclotide**

- **Linaclotide is a novel option for the treatment of irritable bowel syndrome with constipation as well as for chronic constipation**
- **Almirall holds European rights for this first-in-class compound**

**Barcelona, 10 November 2009.** Almirall, the international pharmaceutical company based in Spain, reports a US\$ 15M equity investment in Ironwood Pharmaceuticals, proprietary of linaclotide, following the announcement of positive results of this compound from two pivotal phase III trials in patients with chronic constipation (CC).

This investment is part of the exclusive licensing-in agreement for linaclotide announced last May by which Almirall will be responsible for the commercialization of this compound in all country members of the European Union, plus Russia, CIS, Switzerland, Norway and Turkey, as well as other countries of the former Yugoslavia. Almirall will also be responsible for the activities relating to obtaining regulatory approvals in the mentioned territories.

The positive phase III trials, that were consistent with the phase II results, are part of a larger phase III program investigating the effect of linaclotide in CC and irritable bowel syndrome with associated constipation (IBS-C). Almirall's priority in Europe will be on the IBS-C indication for which very limited treatment options are available for patients.

There are currently ongoing two Phase III trials to assess the safety and efficacy of linaclotide in patients with IBS-C. Results are expected in the second half of 2010.

"We are very pleased with this investment which reflects the good progression of linaclotide, a very significant asset in our pipeline" said Eduardo Sanchiz, Chief Executive for Corporate Development and Finance.

### **About linaclotide**

Linaclotide is a first-in-class compound in a confirmatory Phase III program for the treatment of IBS-C and chronic constipation in the USA. In a Phase 2b study in 419 patients with IBS-C, linaclotide significantly reduced abdominal pain and bloating and improved bowel function throughout the 12-week treatment period. The most common adverse event was diarrhea. Linaclotide is a once daily, orally delivered peptide that acts locally in the gut with no detectable systemic exposure at therapeutic doses. Linaclotide is an agonist of guanylate cyclase type-C, a receptor found on the lining of the intestine.

An issued composition of matter patent for linaclotide provides protection in Europe beyond 2024.

### **About Irritable Bowel Syndrome with Constipation**

Irritable bowel syndrome with constipation (IBS-C) is a chronic functional gastrointestinal disorder characterized by abdominal pain and discomfort associated with altered bowel habits. There are currently few available therapies to treat this disorder. An estimated nine million patients in Europe suffer from IBS-C. Patients can be affected physically, psychologically, socially, and economically.

**About Almirall**

Almirall is an international pharmaceutical company based on innovation and committed to health. Headquartered in Barcelona, Spain, Almirall researches, develops, manufactures and commercialises its own R&D and licensed drugs with the aim of improving people's health and wellbeing.

The therapeutic areas on which Almirall focuses its research resources are related to the treatment of asthma, COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis and dermatology. The company is also aiming to expand its development pipeline through licensing-in in the areas mentioned plus some others including gastrointestinal and neurology.

Almirall is currently present in over 70 countries with direct presence in Europe and Latin America through 11 affiliates (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the UK-Ireland).

For further information please visit the website at: [www.almirall.com](http://www.almirall.com)

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