

cines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and animal health products, which it markets directly and through joint ventures. Operations comprised of three segments: Pharmaceutical, Animal Health, and Alliances. Top-grossing products in 2014: Januvia (diabetes), Zetia

Capital World, 5.9%; Wellington, 5.5%; Vanguard, 5.5%; Off/dirs., less than 1% (4/15 proxy). Chrmn.: Richard T. Clark; CEO: Kenneth Frazier. Inc.: NJ. Addr.: 2000 Galloping Hill Road., Kenilworth, NJ 07033. Tel.: 908-740-4000. Internet: www.merck.com

Current Liab. 18766 17508 ANNUAL RATES Past Past Est'd '12-'14 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. to '18-'20 Sales "Cash Flow" 8.0% 12.5% .5% 2.5% .5% 5.5% 5.0% 2.5% 7.5% 4.0% 2.0% 2.5% Earnings 2.0% 1.5% 8.5% Dividends Book Value

35685

2274 4521

17868

33173

2625 2704

28319

2335 2483

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Cal-	QUARTERLY SALES (\$ mill.)				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012	11731	12311	11488	11738	47267
2013	10671	11010	11032	11320	44033
2014	10264	10934	10557	10482	42237
2015	9425	9785	10100	10390	39700
2016	9500	10000	10500	11000	41000
Cal-	EARNINGS PER SHARE A				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012	.99	1.05	.95	.83	3.82
2013	.85	.84	.92	.88	3.49
2014	.88	.85	.90	.87	3.49
2015	.85	.86	.90	.89	3.50
2016	.90	.90	1.00	1.00	3.80
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID B=				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2011	.38	.38	.38	.38	1.52
2012	.42	.42	.42	.42	1.68
2013	.43	.43	.43	.43	1.72
2014	.44	.44	.44	.44	1.76
2015	.45	.45	.45	.45	
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We have raised our 2015 estimates for Merck & Co. The New Jersey-based drugmaker posted second-quarter adjusted earnings of \$0.86 a share, ahead of our \$0.80 estimate and up from \$0.85 in the comparable year-ago period. The beat was driven by better-than-expected margins and lower operating costs, as revenues were relatively in line with projections. The solid showing resulted in management raising its full-year earnings guidance from \$3.35-\$3.48 a share, to \$3.45-\$3.55.

Top-line comparisons should improve. Merck's revenues have been under significant pressure over the past few years, largely attributable to intense generic competition on several key franchises. These challenges have been compounded more recently by foreign exchange headwinds and last year's sale of the consumer health business to Bayer. However, with the company now through the worst part of its patent cliff, the top line appears well positioned to rebound in 2016 and beyond. In our view, a wide lineup of high-margin drugs and an attractive pipeline of newer products should help to drive positive revenue comparisons over this time.

Key catalysts include *Januvia* and continued development of *Keytruda*. Januvia is currently Merck's top grossing product, accounting for 16% of total revenue. The blockbuster diabetes franchise has performed well of late and should remain the cornerstone of the portfolio for years to come. Keytruda represents the company's most promising oncology asset and has the potential to become a major top-line contributor within the next 3 to 5 years. The drug has already been approved for the treatment of melanoma and was recently granted priority review by the FDA for non-small cell lung cancer, which could significantly enhance its commercial opportunity.

The stock maintains a rank of 3 (Average) for Timeliness. We continue to view Merck as a strong core holding for investors seeking drug exposure. The equity holds our Highest mark for Safety (1) and the dividend yield is well above-average (3.7%). The company's Financial Strength score is also top notch at A++. A recent pull back in price appears to have provided a more favorable entry point.

Michael Ratty Öctober 9, 2015

(A) Diluted shs. Quarters may not sum due to rounding. Excludes nonrecurring gains (losses): '05, (43¢); '06, (13¢); '09, \$2.40; '10, (\$3.16); '11, (\$1.75); '12, (\$1.66); '13, (\$2.02); ment plan available.

'14, .58¢. Next egs. report due late October.

(B) Dividends historically paid in early January, April, July, and October. ■ Dividend reinvest-

(C) In millions.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 95 Price Growth Persistence 60 **Earnings Predictability** 90