

cines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and animal health products, which it markets directly and through joint ventures. Operations comprised of four segments: Pharmaceutical, Animal Health, Alliances and Healthcare Services. Top-grossing drugs in 2015:

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

Past ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '13-'15 5 Yrs. to '19-'21 of change (per sh) 2.5% 3.5% Sales "Cash Flow" 3.5% 6.0% 4.5% 5.5% Earnings 2.5% 5% 6.0% 3.0% 2.0% 2.0% 1.0% **Book Value** 8.0%

35685

2274 4521

17868

33173

2625 2704

18766

29764

2533 2585

14085

19203

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Cal-	QUARTERLY SALES (\$ mill.)				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2013	10671	11010	11032	11320	44033
2014	10264	10934	10557	10482	42237
2015	9425	9785	10073	10215	39498
2016	9400	9600	10100	10400	39500
2017	9500	9600	10100	10300	39500
Cal-	EARNINGS PER SHARE A				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2013	.85	.84	.92	.88	3.49
2014	.88	.85	.90	.87	3.49
2015	.85	.86	.96	.93	3.59
2016	.86	.89	1.00	.95	3.70
2017	.88	.92	1.02	.98	3.80
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID B.				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
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	1.80
2016	.46				
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We have trimmed our 2016 estimates for Merck & Co. On the fourth-quarter conference call, management guided for adjusted 2016 earnings of \$3.60-\$3.75 a share (includes a 4% negative impact from foreign exchange) on sales of \$38.7 billion-\$40.2 billion (3% negative impact from FX). While December-period earnings were better than anticipated, largely due to continued cost cutting, these year-ahead ranges came in below our expectations of \$3.80 and \$41.0 billion. Accordingly, we have reduced our 2016 share-net call by \$0.10, to \$3.70 and our sales target by \$1.5 billion, to \$39.5 billion.

Sales have declined in four consecutive years. Top-line comps have been negative dating back to the third quarter of 2012, hampered by generic competition, foreign exchange pressure, and sluggish growth in the company's top-selling Januvia/Janumet franchise (sales declined 12% in fourth quarter). Although management attributed the double-digit fallout to the timing of purchases, growth in the diabetes medication has been stagnant for a few years now, and Merck could face even tougher competition if Eli Lilly is al-

lowed to bring its rival version to market. The company will be relying heavily on its new product cycle to reverse the trend. While we are currently project-ing relatively flat sales growth in 2016 and 2017, largely due to anticipated declines in Januvia/Janumet, Merck has some exciting new prospects that, with further development, could help to turn the tide further down the road. Keytruda, the company's cancer treatment and part of the hot new class of immuno-oncology drugs, saw its sales quadruple in the fourth quarter to \$214 million. It is widely viewed as Merck's promising new asset and should become a more-meaningful top-line contributor in the coming years. Zepatier will be another newcomer expected to step up. Although the Hep-C treatment just gained U.S. approval in January, the long-term opportunity is significant. Current estimates suggest *Zepatier* could pull in more than \$2 billion in peak sales by 2020. The stock is ranked 2 (Above Average) for Timeliness. We continue to view Merck as a strong core holding for investors seeking pharmaceutical exposure. Michael Ratty April 8, 2016

(A) Diluted earnings (adjusted). 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); '14, .58¢; '15, (\$2.03). Next egs. report due May 5th. **(B)** Dividends historically paid in early January, April, July, and October. Dividend reinvest-

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