

FDA Approves ZIOPTAN™ (tafluprost ophthalmic solution), Merck's Once-Daily, Preservative-Free Ophthalmic Medication

February 14, 2012, Osaka, Japan--Santen Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd announced that Merck & Co., Inc (Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, U.S) received the approval of ZIOPTAN™ (tafluprost ophthalmic solution) 0.0015%, the first preservative-free prostaglandin analog ophthalmic solution from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on February 13, 2012. ZIOPTAN (pronounced zye-OP-tan) is approved for reducing elevated intraocular pressure (IOP) in patients with open-angle glaucoma* or ocular hypertension. ZIOPTAN was shown to have powerful IOP-lowering effects in clinical studies.

Santen expects to contribute to improve QOL (quality of life) of patients worldwide by providing tafluprost as a new treatment option to medical professionals.

* It is one of the major forms of glaucoma, and causes damage to the optic nerve, resulting in major visual defects, such as blindness or visual loss.

About tafluprost

Tafluprost is a prostaglandin analogue co-developed with Asahi Glass Co., Ltd. (Headquarters: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) for reduction of IOP in open angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. Tafluprost has currently being marketed in 36 countries mainly European and Asian countries.

License agreement for tafluprost

On April 15, 2009, Santen and Merck entered into a worldwide licensing agreement granting Merck the exclusive commercial rights to tafluprost in Western Europe (excluding Germany), North America, South America, Africa and others. Tafluprost is currently marketed under the trademark of TAPROS or TAFLOTAN by Santen, and SAFLUTAN® by Merck.

About Merck

Today's Merck is a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and consumer care and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to healthcare through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information, visit www.merck.com and connect with us on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.