

Hoechst Marion Roussel.

Hoechst Marion Roussel is one of the largest pharmaceutical organizations in the world. It was formed in July 1995, when Marion Merrell Dow, one of America's largest pharmaceutical companies, was acquired by the Hoechst-Roussel team (which had joined forces earlier).

All three constituents of this newly formed megacorporation have distinguished histories and share a passion for marketing products of original research.

Hoechst, which began manufacturing pharmaceuticals in 1883, spends more than US\$ 1 billion annually on pharmaceutical research. Its first product was the first truly safe and effective antipyretic, antipyrine. Other early milestones include the development and production of tuberculin in 1892; diphtheria and tetanus antitoxins in 1894 and 1897; Novocain in 1905; and Salvarsan (arsphenamine, the first effective treatment for syphilis) in 1910. In 1923, Hoechst produced the first insulin in Europe in collaboration with its discoverers. It has since been in the vanguard of diabetes research and development, producing crystalline insulin in the 1930s; Orinase (tolbutamide) in the 1950s; Daonil (Glibenclamide) in the 1960s and Amaryl (glimepiride), a new oral hypoglycemic in 1996. Therapeutic areas of concentration today include treatments for disorders of the central nervous system infectious diseases, metabolic disorders, rheumatology and cardiovascular disorders..

In 1920, Dr. Gaston Roussel of France started a company to produce Hemostyl, a hemo-therapeutic drug. Other companies soon followed, with subsidiaries all across Europe and South America. By 1961. Roussel Uclaf was one of the largest groups in the world. In 1968. Roussel Uclaf and Hoechst concluded an agreement under which their research activities would be coordinated or integrated. This cooperation culminated in 1974 in the acquisition by Hoechst of a majority share in Roussel Uclaf. Today Roussel Uclaf is intensively involved in the areas of anti infectives,

hormones and antihormones, and has the reputation of being a specialist in antibiotic therapy. Recent successful market launches include cefotaxime, a third-generation cephalosporin (1981), and roxithromycin, a macrolide antibiotic (1987).

Marion Merrell Dow's roots go back to 1828, when William S. Merrell opened a drugstore in Cincinnati, Ohio. He began to manufacture salicylic acid and other pharmaceutical products. Within 30 years, his company's product list included the largest range of medicines in America. In 1981 the company evolved into Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of The Dow Chemical Company. In 1989 the company merged with Marion Laboratories, one of the world's most dynamic pharmaceutical companies. Today, its major product offerings include the Cardizem (diltiazem) family of cardiovascular products. Telfast (fexofenadine) family of non-sedating allergy treatments; Carafate (sucralfate) anti-ulcer products; Nicoderm (nicotine transdermal system) smoking cessation aids. The company's research activities focus on the central nervous system; cerebrovascular and acute neurological disorders: immunological and metabolic disorders; oncology and infectious diseases.

Simultaneously with the creation of Hoechst Marion Roussel the Hoechst Group restructured itself to concentrate more effectively on its three core competencies - pharmaceuticals, crop protection and industrial chemicals - and to expand these activities so as to become a world leader in each. With the marketing expertise of three global giants, combined with a keenness for research and impeccable reputations, Hoechst Marion Roussel is well on its way to achieving these goals. Research and production facilities worldwide are being rationalized to trim overlaps and optimize on resources. Says Jean-Pierre Godard, Chairman of Roussel Uclaf. "We shall be developing new drugs more quickly and marketing established products even more cost-effectively."

Which is good news for patients the world over.

I am indeed thankful to M/s Hoechst Marion Roussel who readily agreed to sponsor this publication as a souvenir of the 47th Annual conference of the Neurological Society of India.

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