

EXACT SCIENCES CORP
Form 424B5
November 03, 2010

Table of Contents

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an offer to sell these securities and we are not soliciting offers to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-168907

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED NOVEMBER 3, 2010

Prospectus Supplement
(to Prospectus dated September 7, 2010)

Shares

Common Stock

We are offering _____ shares of our common stock. Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "EXAS." On November 2, 2010, the last reported sale price of our common stock on The NASDAQ Capital Market was \$6.25 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Please read "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-4 of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

	PER SHARE	TOTAL
Public Offering Price	\$	\$
Underwriting Discount	\$	\$
Proceeds to Exact Sciences Corporation, Before Expenses	\$	\$

Delivery of the shares of common stock is expected to be made on or about November _____, 2010. We have granted the underwriters an option for a period of 30 days to purchase up to an additional _____ shares of our common stock solely to cover over-allotments. If the underwriters exercise the option in full, the total underwriting discount payable by us will be \$ _____, and the total proceeds to us, before expenses, will be \$ _____.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Jefferies & Company

Co-Managers

Baird

Lazard Capital Markets

Rodman & Renshaw, LLC

Prospectus Supplement dated November , 2010.

Table of Contents**Table of Contents****Prospectus Supplement**

<u>About this Prospectus Supplement</u>	S-1
<u>Cautionary Statement About Forward-Looking Information</u>	S-1
<u>Prospectus Summary</u>	S-2
<u>The Offering</u>	S-3
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-4
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-11
<u>Dilution</u>	S-12
<u>Material United States Federal Income and Estate Tax Considerations for Non-U.S. Holders</u>	S-13
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-17
<u>Notice to Investors</u>	S-20
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-23
<u>Experts</u>	S-23
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	S-23
<u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u>	S-23

Prospectus

<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	2
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	3
<u>Prospectus Summary</u>	3
<u>The Company</u>	4
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	4
<u>Risk Factors</u>	4
<u>Description of Debt Securities We May Offer</u>	5
<u>Description of Preferred Stock We May Offer</u>	14
<u>Description of Common Stock We May Offer</u>	16
<u>Description of Warrants We May Offer</u>	17
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	18
<u>Legal Matters</u>	20
<u>Experts</u>	20

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and in any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering. We have not, and the underwriter has not, authorized anyone to provide you with different or inconsistent information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not, and the underwriter is not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and in any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, is accurate only as of the date of those respective documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates. You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, in their entirety before making an investment decision. You should also read and consider the information in the documents to which we have referred you in the sections of this prospectus supplement entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference."

Table of Contents

About this Prospectus Supplement

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus form part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the "SEC," using a "shelf" registration process. This document contains two parts. The first part consists of this prospectus supplement, which provides you with specific information about this offering. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, provides more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer only to the "prospectus," we are referring to both parts combined.

In this prospectus supplement, the "Company," "we," "us," and "our" and similar terms refer to Exact Sciences Corporation. References to our "common stock" refer to the common stock of Exact Sciences Corporation.

All references in this prospectus supplement to our consolidated financial statements include, unless the context indicates otherwise, the related notes.

The industry and market data and other statistical information contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents we incorporate by reference are based on management's own estimates, independent publications, government publications, reports by market research firms or other published independent sources, and, in each case, are believed by management to be reasonable estimates. Although we believe these sources are reliable, we have not independently verified the information. None of the independent industry publications used in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the documents we incorporate by reference were prepared on our or our affiliates' behalf and none of the sources cited by us consented to the inclusion of any data from its reports, nor have we sought their consent.

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, and the information incorporated herein and therein by reference includes trademarks, service marks and trade names owned by us or other companies. All trademarks, service marks and trade names included or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus are the property of their respective owners.

Cautionary Statement About Forward-Looking Information

Certain information set forth in this prospectus supplement, set forth in the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, may contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), that are intended to be covered by the "safe harbor" created by those sections. Forward-looking statements, which are based on certain assumptions and describe our future plans, strategies and expectations, can generally be identified by the use of forward-looking terms such as "believe," "expect," "may," "will," "should," "would," "could," "seek," "intend," "plan," "estimate," "goal," "anticipate," "project" or other comparable terms. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements, as a result of various factors including those risks and uncertainties included in this prospectus supplement under the caption "Risk Factors," and those risks and uncertainties described in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We urge you to consider those risks and uncertainties in evaluating our forward-looking statements. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or to persons acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the applicable cautionary statements. We further caution readers not to place undue reliance upon any such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date made. Except as otherwise required by the federal securities laws, we disclaim any obligation or undertaking to publicly release any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statement contained herein or in the accompanying prospectus (or elsewhere) to reflect any change in our expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statement is based.

Table of Contents

Prospectus Summary

The following summary of our business highlights some of the information contained elsewhere in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Because this is only a summary, however, it does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. You should carefully read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, which are described under "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference" in this prospectus supplement. You should also carefully consider the matters discussed in the section in this prospectus supplement entitled "Risk Factors" and in the accompanying prospectus and in other periodic reports incorporated herein by reference.

Our Company

Exact Sciences Corporation is a molecular diagnostics company focused on the early detection and prevention of colorectal cancer. We have exclusive intellectual property protecting our non-invasive, molecular screening technology for the detection of colorectal pre-cancer and cancer.

Our primary goal is to become the market leader for a patient-friendly diagnostic screening product for the early detection of colorectal pre-cancer and cancer. Our strategic roadmap to achieve this goal includes the following key components:

develop and refine our non-invasive stool-based (sDNA) colorectal pre-cancer and cancer screening test;

advance our product through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, clinical trials;

secure insurance coverage and reimbursement for our product; and

commercialize an FDA-cleared product that detects colorectal pre-cancer and cancer.

Our current focus is on the commercial development and seeking FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product. We believe obtaining FDA clearance is critical to building broad demand and successful commercialization for our sDNA colorectal cancer screening technologies. As part of our product development efforts, we are exploring the marker combinations and platform requirements necessary for optimal performance of our technology based on market need. Objectives around performance, throughput and cost are among the elements that will need to be met in the design and development of a commercial product based on our technology.

Recent Developments

We are designing our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product with a goal of detecting both pre-cancers and cancers, at target sensitivities of at least 50 percent and 85 percent, respectively. On October 28, 2010 we announced the results of a validation study involving a total of 1,178 stool samples. In this study, the current version of our sDNA cancer screening test was able to detect both pre-cancers and cancers at or above these target sensitivity rates. However, prior to commercialization of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product, it will be necessary to obtain FDA approval or clearance, which will depend upon our ability to successfully complete a pivotal clinical trial.

Corporate Information

Our executive offices are located at 441 Charmany Drive, Madison, Wisconsin 53719. Our telephone number is 608-284-5700. Our Internet website address is www.exactsciences.com. Our Internet website and the information contained therein or connected thereto are not part of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or any document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference herein.

Table of Contents

The Offering

Common stock offered by us	shares
Common stock to be outstanding immediately after this offering	shares
Over-Allotment Option	

We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to _____ additional shares of our common stock to cover over-allotments, if any. This option is exercisable, in whole or in part, for a period of 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement.

Use of Proceeds

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to fund clinical trials of our product candidate and for working capital and other general corporate purposes, including to fund strategic initiatives that we may undertake from time to time, for product development and in furtherance of our efforts to obtain FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product. See "Use of Proceeds."

Risk Factors

This investment involves a high degree of risk. See the information contained in or incorporated by reference under "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-4 of this prospectus supplement, page 4 of the accompanying prospectus and in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

NASDAQ Capital Market Symbol

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "EXAS."

The number of shares outstanding after the offering is based on 40,480,084 shares outstanding as of September 30, 2010, and includes 156,630 shares of unvested restricted stock issued to employees, directors and consultants. The number of outstanding shares after the offering does not include, in each case as of September 30, 2010:

6,240,756 shares subject to outstanding stock options at a weighted average exercise price of \$1.93 per share;

4,795,566 additional shares of common stock reserved for issuance under our equity incentive plans; or

825,000 shares reserved for issuance upon the exercise of outstanding stock purchase warrants at a weighted average exercise price of \$1.73 per share.

If the underwriters' over-allotment option is exercised in full, we will issue and sell an additional _____ shares of our common stock and will have _____ shares outstanding after the offering.

Except as otherwise noted, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise of the underwriters' over-allotment option.

Table of Contents

Risk Factors

You should carefully consider the risks described below before making an investment decision. We cannot be certain that we will successfully address these risks. If we are unable to address these risks, our business may not grow, our stock price may suffer and/or we may be unable to stay in business. In such case, the trading price of our common stock could decline and you may lose all or part of your investment. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us, which we currently deem immaterial or which are similar to those faced by other companies in our industry or business in general, may also impair our business operations. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, the following:

Although in our validation study the current version of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening test detected both pre-cancers and cancers at our target sensitivity rates of at least 50 percent and 85 percent, respectively, the FDA approval path for our colorectal cancer screening technology will take significant time and require significant research, development and clinical study expenditures and ultimately may not succeed.

We are designing our test with a goal of detecting both pre-cancers and cancers, at target sensitivities of at least 50 percent and 85 percent, respectively. On October 28, 2010 we announced the results of a validation study involving a total of 1,178 stool samples. In this study, the current version of our sDNA cancer screening test detected both pre-cancers and cancers at or above these target sensitivity rates. However, prior to commercialization of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product, it will be necessary to obtain FDA approval or clearance, which will depend upon our ability to successfully complete a pivotal clinical trial. We have only recently received the data from this study and plan to engage in extensive further analysis and review. Also, this was a feasibility study and did not use a final product to test patient samples under real-life, clinical conditions (rather, for example, using previously frozen and stored samples). The results achieved in future clinical trials and other studies may differ materially from our validation study results for a number of reasons. To ensure successful completion of an FDA clinical trial for our screening test we expect to need to continue to refine the product. Additionally, we will need to develop FDA compliant manufacturing and quality control systems. There can be no assurance that we will be successful in these efforts or achieve our initial validation study results in future studies and even if we do the FDA approval path for our colorectal cancer screening technology will take significant time and require significant research, development and clinical study expenditures and ultimately may not succeed.

We may never successfully commercialize any of our technologies or become profitable.

We have incurred losses since we were formed and have had only modest product and royalty fee revenues since the commercial launch of PreGen-Plus in August 2003. From our date of inception on February 10, 1995 through December 31, 2009, we have accumulated a total deficit of approximately \$181.6 million. We expect that our losses will continue for at least the next several years and we will be required to invest significant additional funds toward development of our colorectal cancer screening technology. If our revenue does not grow significantly, we will not be profitable. We cannot be certain that the revenue from the sale of any of our technologies will be sufficient to make us profitable.

Our future revenues will depend on our ability to successfully commercialize an FDA-cleared product for stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening. Our ability to successfully commercialize our technologies may be affected by the following factors:

the scope of and progress made in our research and development activities;

our ability to successfully execute on a clinical trial;

threats posed by competing technologies;

acceptance, endorsement and formal policy approval of stool-based DNA screening reimbursement by Medicare and other third-party payors; and

our ability to commercialize our test through primary care physician awareness and consumer education and outreach.

Table of Contents

Many of these factors are outside our control and, accordingly, we cannot assure you that one or more of the foregoing will occur in the near term, or at all. Failure to achieve one or more of the foregoing events could negatively impact the successful commercialization of stool-based DNA testing services or products utilizing our intellectual property and impair our ability to generate revenues and achieve profitability.

There can be no assurance that we will obtain FDA clearance and approval for our sDNA colorectal cancer screening test.

The Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act requires that medical devices introduced to the U.S. market, unless otherwise exempted, be subject to either a premarket notification clearance, known as a 510(k), or a premarket approval, known as a PMA. Our current focus is on the commercial development and seeking FDA clearance and approval of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product. We believe obtaining FDA clearance is critical to building broad demand and successful commercialization for our sDNA colorectal cancer screening technologies. The 510(k) process means that the FDA will not require a PMA, a generally but not necessarily more time-consuming and costlier process than the 510(k) process, because the FDA finds that either (a) our product is substantially similar to a legally marketed product (a "predicate device") or (b) in the absence of a predicate device that the FDA concludes that our product may use a process known as a de novo classification, which is reserved for low-risk products; however, the 510(k) process still involves substantial costs and time and may have to be repeated for any number of reasons, including but not limited to, the FDA's discretion or if the product is modified during the process. The PMA process, which is necessary when a device cannot be cleared through the 510(k) process, involves providing extensive data to the FDA to allow the FDA to find that the device is safe and effective for its intended use, which may also include providing additional data and updates to the FDA, the convening of expert panels, inspection of manufacturing facilities, and new or supplemented PMAs if the product is modified during the process. Even if granted, a 510(k) or PMA approval may place substantial restrictions on how our device is marketed or sold, and the FDA will continue to place considerable restrictions on our products, including but not limited to registering manufacturing facilities, listing the products with the FDA, complying with labeling, and meeting reporting requirements. We currently expect to seek a PMA for our colorectal cancer screening product. We believe that the studies required in connection with any approval or clearance of our technology, regardless of whether the regulatory pathway is the 510(k) process or a PMA, will be material in cost and time-intensive. There can be no assurance that FDA will ultimately approve any 510(k) request or approve any PMA submitted by us in a timely manner or at all.

We will need additional capital to execute our business plan, and we may be unable to raise additional capital on acceptable terms.

Following the closing of our strategic transaction with Genzyme in January 2009, we have resumed our efforts to develop an FDA-cleared in vitro diagnostic test for stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening. The FDA clearance path for our colorectal cancer screening technology is likely to take significant time and require significant research, development and clinical study expenditures.

Although we believe we have sufficient capital to fund our operations for at least the next twelve months, we do not have sufficient capital, even after giving effect to this offering, to fully fund the commercial development of our stool-based DNA technology and related FDA submission and commercialization efforts. We do not expect that product royalty payments or milestone payments from LabCorp will materially supplement our liquidity position in the next twelve months, if at all. If we are unable to obtain needed financing on acceptable terms, we may not be able to implement our business plan which could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations. If we raise additional funds through the sale of additional equity, convertible debt or other equity-linked securities, our shareholders' percentage ownership in us will be further reduced. In addition, these transactions may dilute the value of our outstanding stock, including shares issued in this offering. We may issue securities that have rights, preferences and privileges senior to our common stock. If we raise additional funds through collaborations or licensing arrangements, we may relinquish rights to certain of our technologies or products, or grant licenses to third parties on terms that are unfavorable to us. Even if we

Table of Contents

successfully raise sufficient funds to continue our operations to fund the development, FDA submission, and commercialization of our technology, including an FDA-cleared in vitro diagnostic test for stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening, we cannot assure you that our business will ever generate sufficient cash flow from operations to become profitable.

If Medicare and other third-party payors, including managed care organizations, do not issue positive policy decisions approving reimbursement for our stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening technology, the commercial success of products utilizing our technologies would be compromised.

Successful commercialization of a stool-based DNA screening product will depend, in large part, on the availability of adequate reimbursement from government insurance plans, managed care organizations and private insurance plans. There is significant uncertainty concerning third-party reimbursement for the use of tests incorporating new technology. Reimbursement of stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening by a third-party payor may depend on a number of factors, including a payor's determination that tests using our technologies are: sensitive for colorectal cancer; not experimental or investigational; approved by the major guidelines organizations; reliable, safe and effective; medically necessary; appropriate for the specific patient; and cost-effective.

If we are unable to obtain positive policy decisions from third-party payors, including managed care organizations, approving reimbursement for stool-based DNA testing services or products at adequate levels, the commercial success of stool-based DNA screening for colorectal cancer would be compromised and our revenues would be significantly limited.

Other companies may develop and market novel or improved methods for detecting colorectal cancer, which may make our technologies less competitive, or even obsolete.

The market for colorectal cancer screening is large, approximating 89 million Americans age 50 and above, of which we believe approximately one-half fail to strictly follow the ACS's screening guidelines for colorectal cancer. As a result, the colorectal cancer screening market has attracted competitors, some of which have significantly greater resources than we have. Currently, we face competition from procedure-based detection technologies such as flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy and virtual colonoscopy, a procedure in which a radiologist views the inside of the colon through a scanner, as well as from existing guaic-based fecal occult blood testing, or FOBT, and improved screening tests such as immunochemical FOBT. In addition, some companies and institutions are developing serum-based tests, or screening tests based on the detection of proteins, nucleic acids or the presence of fragments of mutated genes in the blood that are produced by colon cancer. For example, it is our understanding that Epigenomics AG has completed a large multi-center study to demonstrate the performance of its blood-based screening test for colorectal cancer. This company and other companies may also be working on additional methods of detecting colon cancer that have not yet been announced. We may be unable to compete effectively against these competitors either because their tests are superior or because they may have more expertise, experience, financial resources and stronger business relationships.

Our business would suffer if we are unable to license certain technologies or obtain raw materials and components or if certain of our licenses were terminated.

Any future commercialization of our stool-based DNA screening technology may require that we license certain third-party intellectual property. There can be no assurance that we can obtain these licenses on acceptable terms, if at all. Furthermore, there can be no assurance that any current contractual arrangements between us and third parties or between our strategic partners and other third parties, will be continued, or not breached or terminated early, or that we will be able to enter into any future relationships necessary to the continued commercial sale of any stool-based DNA testing services or products utilizing our technologies, or necessary to our realization of material revenues. For example, we have an exclusive license from Case Western Reserve University, or Case Western, for the use of the Vimentin gene in the field of colorectal cancer testing, pursuant to which we are permitted to sublicense such rights to others. If Case Western were to terminate this agreement as a result of a breach by us or otherwise, we would lose our ability to offer any test or testing service based on the Vimentin

Table of Contents

gene, including the right to develop an FDA-cleared colorectal cancer screening product using the Vimentin gene, which would materially harm our business. Any failure to obtain necessary technologies or raw materials could require any stool-based DNA testing services or products utilizing our technologies to be re-configured which could halt such service or product entirely, negatively impact its commercial sale and increase the associated costs, any one of which could materially harm our business and adversely affect our future revenues.

If our clinical studies do not prove the reliability, effectiveness and superiority of stool-based DNA testing, we may experience reluctance or refusal on the part of physicians to order, and third-party payors to pay for, tests based on our technologies.

If the results of our research and clinical studies and our sales and marketing activities relating to communication of these results, do not convince thought-leading gastroenterologists, guidelines organizations, primary care physicians, third-party payors and patients that tests using our technologies are reliable, effective and superior to existing screening methods, including Hemoccult II, Hemoccult Sensa and immunochemical FOBT, we may experience reluctance or refusal on the part of physicians to order, and third-party payors to pay for tests using our technologies, which could prevent us from successfully commercializing our technologies.

We expect to rely on third parties to conduct any future studies of our technologies that may be required by the FDA, and those third parties may not perform satisfactorily.

We do not have the ability to independently conduct clinical or other studies that may be required to obtain clearance for our DNA-based colorectal screening technology with the FDA. Accordingly, we expect to rely on third parties such as contract research organizations, medical institutions and clinical investigators to conduct any such studies. Our reliance on these third parties for clinical development activities will reduce our control over these activities. Accordingly, these third-party contractors may not complete activities on schedule, or may not conduct studies in accordance with regulatory requirements or our study design. Our reliance on third parties that we do not control does not relieve us of our requirement to prepare, and ensure our compliance with, various procedures required under good clinical practices, even though third-party contract research organizations have prepared and are complying with their own, comparable procedures. If these third parties do not successfully carry out their contractual duties or regulatory obligations or meet expected deadlines, if the third parties need to be replaced or if the quality or accuracy of the data they obtain is compromised due to the failure to adhere to our clinical protocols or regulatory requirements or for other reasons, our studies may be extended, delayed, suspended or terminated, and we may not be able to obtain regulatory approval for our technologies.

We may experience limits on our revenue if only a small number of people decide to be screened for colorectal cancer using our technologies.

Even if our technologies are superior to other colorectal cancer screening options, adequate third-party reimbursement is obtained and we convince medical practitioners to order tests using our technologies, only a small number of people may decide to be screened for colorectal cancer. Despite the availability of current colorectal cancer screening methods as well as the recommendations of the ACS that all Americans age 50 and above be screened for colorectal cancer, a majority of these individuals do not complete a colorectal cancer screening test. Use of a stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening will require people to collect a stool sample, which some people may be reluctant to do. If only a small portion of the recommended population is regularly screened for colorectal cancer or decides to utilize colorectal cancer screening tests using our technologies, we will, despite our efforts, experience limits on our revenue and our business would be materially harmed.

We may be subject to substantial costs and liability or be prevented from licensing our technologies for cancer detection as a result of litigation or other proceedings relating to patent rights.

Third parties may assert infringement or other intellectual property claims against our licensors, our licensees, our suppliers, our strategic partners, or us. We pursue a patent strategy that we believe provides us with a competitive advantage in the non-invasive early detection of colorectal cancer and is designed to maximize our patent

Table of Contents

protection against third parties in the U.S. and, potentially, in certain foreign countries. We have filed patent applications that we believe cover methods we have designed to help detect colorectal cancer and other cancers. In order to protect or enforce our patent rights, we may have to initiate actions against third parties. Any actions regarding patents could be costly and time-consuming, and divert our management and key personnel from our business. Additionally, such actions could result in challenges to the validity or applicability of our patents. Because the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office maintains patent applications in secrecy until a patent application publishes or the patent is issued, others may have filed patent applications covering technology used by us or our partners. Additionally, there may be third-party patents, patent applications and other intellectual property relevant to our technologies that may block or compete with our technologies. Even if third-party claims are without merit, defending a lawsuit may result in substantial expense to us and may divert the attention of management and key personnel. In addition, we cannot provide assurance that we would prevail in any such suits or that the damages or other remedies, if any, awarded against us would not be substantial. Claims of intellectual property infringement may require that we, or our strategic partners, enter into royalty or license agreements with third parties that may not be available on acceptable terms, if at all. These claims may also result in injunctions against the further development and commercial sale of services or products containing our technologies, which would have a material adverse affect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

Also, patents and applications owned by us may become the subject of interference proceedings in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to determine priority of invention, which could result in substantial cost to us, as well as a possible adverse decision as to the priority of invention of the patent or patent application involved. An adverse decision in an interference proceeding may result in the loss of rights under a patent or patent application subject to such a proceeding.

If we are unable to protect our intellectual property effectively, we may be unable to prevent third parties from using our intellectual property, which would impair our competitive advantage.

We rely on patent protection as well as a combination of trademark, copyright and trade secret protection, and other contractual restrictions to protect our proprietary technologies, all of which provide limited protection and may not adequately protect our rights or permit us to gain or keep any competitive advantage. If we fail to protect our intellectual property, we will be unable to prevent third parties from using our technologies and they will be able to compete more effectively against us.

We cannot assure you that any of our currently pending or future patent applications will result in issued patents, and we cannot predict how long it will take for such patents to be issued. Further, we cannot assure you that other parties will not challenge any patents issued to us, or that courts or regulatory agencies will hold our patents to be valid or enforceable. We have in the past been the subject of opposition proceedings relating to our patents. We cannot guarantee you that we will be successful in defending challenges made in connection with our patents and patent applications. Any successful third-party challenge to our patents could result in co-ownership of such patents with a third party or the unenforceability or invalidity of such patents. Furthermore, in the life sciences field, courts frequently render opinions that may affect the patentability of certain inventions or discoveries, including opinions that may affect the patentability of isolated DNA and/or methods for analyzing or comparing DNA. Such decisions might adversely impact our ability to obtain new patents and facilitate third-party challenges to our existing patents that result in determinations that our existing patents are unenforceable or invalid.

Table of Contents

In addition to our patents, we rely on contractual restrictions to protect our proprietary technology. We require our employees and third parties to sign confidentiality agreements and employees to sign agreements assigning to us all intellectual property arising from their work for us. Nevertheless, we cannot guarantee that these measures will be effective in protecting our intellectual property rights.

We cannot guarantee that the patents issued to us will be broad enough to provide any meaningful protection nor can we assure you that one of our competitors may not develop more effective technologies, designs or methods to test for colorectal cancer or any other common cancer without infringing our intellectual property rights or that one of our competitors might not design around our proprietary technologies.

If we or our partners fail to comply with regulatory requirements, we may be subject to stringent penalties and our business may be materially adversely affected.

The marketing and sale of stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening services or products containing our technologies are subject to various state, federal and foreign regulations. We cannot assure you that we or our strategic partners will be able to comply with applicable regulations and regulatory guidelines. If we or our partners fail to comply with any such applicable regulations and guidelines, we could incur significant liability and/or our partners could be forced to cease offering such services or products in certain jurisdictions.

Moreover, healthcare policy has been a subject of extensive discussion in the executive and legislative branches of the federal and many state governments. Development of the existing commercialization strategy for stool-based DNA colorectal cancer screening has been based on existing healthcare policies. We cannot predict what additional changes, if any, will be proposed or adopted or the effect that such proposals or adoption may have on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

The success of our business and business strategy will be substantially dependent upon the efforts of our senior management team.

Our success will depend largely on the skills, experience and performance of key members of our senior management team. Effective April 2, 2009, Kevin T. Conroy was appointed as our new President and Chief Executive Officer. Similarly, effective April 2, 2009, Maneesh Arora was appointed as our new Chief Financial Officer. On August 1, 2009, Dr. Graham Lidgard was hired as Chief Science Officer. Messrs. Conroy, Arora, and Dr. Lidgard are critical to directing and managing our growth and development in the future. Our success will be substantially dependent upon our senior management team's ability to gain proficiency in leading our company, implement or adapt our corporate strategies and initiatives, and develop key professional relationships, including relationships with our key collaborators and business partners. The efforts of each of these persons will be critical to us as we continue to develop our technologies and work towards the commercialization of an FDA-cleared product. If we were to lose any of these key employees, we may experience difficulties in competing effectively, developing our technologies and implementing our business strategies.

If we lose the support of our key scientific collaborators, it may be difficult to establish tests using our technologies as a standard of care for colorectal cancer screening, which may limit our revenue growth and profitability.

We have established relationships with leading scientists at important research and academic institutions, such as Mayo Clinic, Case Western Reserve University, and The John Hopkins University, that we believe are key to establishing tests using our technologies as a standard of care for colorectal cancer screening. If our collaborators determine that colorectal cancer screening tests using our technologies are not appropriate options for colorectal cancer screening, or superior to available colorectal cancer screening tests, or that alternative technologies would be more effective in the early detection of colorectal cancer, we would encounter significant difficulty establishing tests using our technologies as a standard of care for colorectal cancer screening, which would limit our revenue growth and profitability.

Table of Contents

Product liability suits against us could result in expensive and time-consuming litigation, payment of substantial damages and increases in our insurance rates.

The sale and use of products or services based on our technologies, or activities related to our research and clinical studies, could lead to the filing of product liability claims if someone were to allege that one of our products contained a design or manufacturing defect which resulted in the failure to detect the disease for which it was designed. A product liability claim could result in substantial damages and be costly and time consuming to defend, either of which could materially harm our business or financial condition. We cannot assure you that our product liability insurance would protect our assets from the financial impact of defending a product liability claim. Any product liability claim brought against us, with or without merit, could increase our product liability insurance rates or prevent us from securing insurance coverage in the future.

Certain provisions of our charter, by-laws and Delaware law may make it difficult for you to change our management and may also make a takeover difficult.

Our corporate documents and Delaware law contain provisions that limit the ability of stockholders to change our management and may also enable our management to resist a takeover. These provisions include a staggered board of directors, limitations on persons authorized to call a special meeting of stockholders and advance notice procedures required for stockholders to make nominations of candidates for election as directors or to bring matters before an annual meeting of stockholders. These provisions might discourage, delay or prevent a change of control in our management. These provisions could also discourage proxy contests and make it more difficult for you and other stockholders to elect directors and cause us to take other corporate actions. In addition, the existence of these provisions, together with Delaware law, might hinder or delay an attempted takeover other than through negotiations with our board of directors.

Our stock price may be volatile.

The market price of our common stock has fluctuated widely. Consequently, the current market price of our common stock may not be indicative of future market prices and we may be unable to sustain or increase the value of an investment in our common stock.

Factors that may affect our stock price include the various risks identified in this "Risk Factors" section.

Because we are a company with no significant operating revenue, any one of these factors may be deemed material. Sharp drops in the market price of our common stock expose us to securities class-action litigation. Such litigation could result in substantial expenses and a diversion of management's attention and resources, which would seriously harm our business, financial condition, and results of operations.

Management will have broad discretion as to the use of the proceeds from this offering, and we may not use the proceeds effectively.

Our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds from this offering and could spend the proceeds in ways that do not improve our results of operations or enhance the value of our common stock. Our failure to apply these funds effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business, delay commercial development and seeking FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product and cause the price of our common stock to decline.

You will experience immediate and substantial dilution in the net tangible book value per share of the common stock you purchase.

Since the price per share of our common stock being offered is substantially higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock, you will suffer substantial dilution in the net tangible book value of the common stock you purchase in this offering. Based on the public offering price of \$ per share, if you purchase shares of common stock in this offering, you will suffer immediate and substantial dilution of \$ per share in the net tangible book value of the common stock. See the section entitled "Dilution" below for a more detailed discussion of the dilution you will incur if you purchase common stock in this offering.

Table of Contents

Use of Proceeds

We estimate that our net proceeds from the sale of our common stock in this offering will be approximately \$ million, after deducting the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses payable by us. If the underwriters exercise in full their option to purchase additional shares to cover over-allotments, we estimate that our net proceeds from the sale of our common stock in this offering will be approximately \$ million, after deducting the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses payable by us.

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to fund clinical trials of our product candidate and for working capital and other general corporate purposes, including to fund strategic initiatives that we may undertake from time to time, for product development and in furtherance of our efforts to obtain FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product.

The amounts and timing of our use of proceeds will vary depending on a number of factors, including the amount of cash generated or used by our operations, and the rate of growth, if any, of our business. As a result, we will retain broad discretion in the allocation of the net proceeds of this offering.

Until we use the net proceeds of this offering, we intend to invest the funds in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing securities.

S-11

Table of Contents**Dilution**

Our net tangible book value as of September 30, 2010, was \$17.8 million or \$0.44 per share of common stock. Net tangible book value per share represents total tangible assets less total liabilities, divided by the number of shares of common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2010. After giving effect to our sale of _____ shares of common stock in this offering at the public offering price of \$ _____ per share and after deduction of the underwriting discount and estimated offering expenses payable by us, our as adjusted net tangible book value as of September 30, 2010, would have been approximately \$ _____ million, or \$ _____ per share. This represents an immediate increase in net tangible book value of \$ _____ per share to existing stockholders and an immediate dilution of \$ _____ per share to purchasers of common stock in this offering at the public offering price. The following table illustrates this calculation.

Public offering price per share of common stock	\$
Net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2010	\$ 0.44
Increase per share attributable to this offering	\$

As adjusted tangible book value per share after this offering \$

Dilution per share to new investors in this offering \$

If the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, our as adjusted net tangible book value per share at September 30, 2010, after giving affect to this offering, would have been \$ _____ per share, and the dilution to purchasers in this offering would have been \$ _____ per share.

The number of shares of common stock outstanding used in the above calculations is based on 40,480,084 shares outstanding as of September 30, 2010, and includes 156,630 shares of unvested restricted stock issued to employees, directors and consultants. The number of outstanding shares after the offering does not include, in each case as of September 30, 2010:

6,240,756 shares subject to outstanding stock options at a weighted average exercise price of \$1.93 per share;

4,795,566 additional shares of common stock reserved for issuance under our equity incentive plans; or

825,000 shares reserved for issuance upon the exercise of outstanding stock purchase warrants at a weighted average exercise price of \$1.73 per share.

Table of Contents

**Material United States Federal Income and Estate Tax Considerations for
Non-U.S. Holders**

The following discussion summarizes the material U.S. federal income and estate tax considerations relating to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock purchased in this offering by a non-U.S. holder (as defined below). This discussion is based on the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, final, temporary and proposed U.S. Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder and current administrative rulings and judicial decisions, all as in effect as of the date hereof. All of these authorities may be subject to differing interpretations or repealed, revoked or modified, possibly with retroactive effect, which could materially alter the tax consequences to non-U.S. holders described in this prospectus.

There can be no assurance that the IRS will not take a contrary position to the tax consequences described herein or that such position will not be sustained by a court. No ruling from the IRS has been obtained with respect to the U.S. federal income or estate tax consequences to a non-U.S. holder of the purchase, ownership or disposition of our common stock.

This discussion is for general information only and is not tax advice. All prospective non-U.S. holders of our common stock should consult their own tax advisors with respect to the U.S. federal, state, local and non-U.S. tax consequences of the purchase, ownership and disposition of our common stock.

As used in this discussion, the term "non-U.S. holder" means a beneficial owner of our common stock that is not any of the following for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

an individual who is a citizen or a resident of the United States;

a corporation or other entity taxable as a corporation that was created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia;

an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source;

a trust (a) if a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all of the trust's substantial decisions or (b) that has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person; or

an entity that is disregarded as separate from its owner for U.S. federal income tax purposes if all of its interests are owned by a single person described above.

An individual may be treated, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, as a resident of the United States in any calendar year by being present in the United States on at least 31 days in that calendar year and for an aggregate of at least 183 days during a three-year period ending in the current calendar year. The 183-day test is determined by counting all of the days the individual is treated as being present in the current year, one-third of such days in the immediately preceding year and one-sixth of such days in the second preceding year. Residents are subject to U.S. federal income tax as if they were U.S. citizens.

This discussion assumes that a prospective non-U.S. holder will hold shares of our common stock as a capital asset (generally, property held for investment). This discussion does not address all aspects of U.S. federal income and estate taxation that may be relevant to a particular non-U.S. holder in light of that non-U.S. holder's individual circumstances. In addition, this discussion does not address any aspect of U.S. federal alternative minimum, U.S. state or U.S. local or non-U.S. taxes, or the special tax rules applicable to particular non-U.S. holders, such as:

insurance companies and financial institutions;

tax-exempt organizations;

partnerships or other pass-through entities;

regulated investment companies or real estate investment trusts;

S-13

Table of Contents

pension plans;

persons who received our common stock as compensation;

brokers and dealers in securities;

owners that hold our common stock as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction, synthetic security or other integrated investment; and

former citizens or residents of the United States subject to tax as expatriates.

If a partnership or other entity treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes is an owner of our common stock, the treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. We urge any owner of our common stock that is a partnership and partners in that partnership to consult their tax advisors regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of acquiring, owning and disposing of our common stock.

Distributions on Our Common Stock

Any distribution on our common stock paid to a non-U.S. holder will generally constitute a dividend for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will generally constitute a return of capital to the extent of the non-U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in our common stock, and will be applied against and reduce the non-U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis. Any remaining excess will be treated as capital gain, subject to the tax treatment described below under the caption "Gain on Sale, Exchange or Other Disposition of Our Common Stock."

Dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder that are not treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States generally will be subject to withholding of U.S. federal income tax at a rate of 30% on the gross amount paid, unless the non-U.S. holder is entitled to an exemption from or reduced rate of withholding under an applicable income tax treaty. In order to claim the benefit of a tax treaty, a non-U.S. holder must provide a properly executed IRS Form W-8BEN (or successor form) prior to the payment of dividends. A non-U.S. holder eligible for a reduced rate of withholding pursuant to an income tax treaty may be eligible to obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for a refund with the IRS.

Dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder that are treated as effectively connected with a trade or business conducted by the non-U.S. holder within the United States (and, if an applicable income tax treaty so provides, are also attributable to a permanent establishment or a fixed base maintained within the United States by the non-U.S. holder) are generally exempt from the 30% withholding tax if the non-U.S. holder satisfies applicable certification and disclosure requirements. To obtain the exemption, a non-U.S. holder must provide us with a properly executed IRS Form W-8ECI (or successor form) prior to the payment of the dividend. Dividends received by a non-U.S. holder that are treated as effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business generally are subject to U.S. federal income tax at rates applicable to U.S. persons, and if such non-U.S. holder is a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, such dividends may, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional "branch profits tax" imposed at a rate of 30%, or such lower rate as specified by an applicable income tax treaty between the United States and such holder's country of residence.

A non-U.S. holder who provides us with an IRS Form W-8BEN, Form W-8ECI or other form must update the form or submit a new form, as applicable, if there is a change in circumstances that makes any information on such form incorrect.

Table of Contents

Gain On Sale, Exchange or Other Disposition of Our Common Stock

In general, a non-U.S. holder will not be subject to any U.S. federal income tax or withholding thereof on any gain realized from the non-U.S. holder's sale, exchange or other disposition of shares of our common stock unless:

the gain is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business (and, if an applicable income tax treaty so provides, is also attributable to a permanent establishment or a fixed base maintained within the United States by the non-U.S. holder), in which case the gain will be taxed on a net income basis generally in the same manner as if the non-U.S. holder were a U.S. person, and, if the non-U.S. holder is a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, the additional branch profits tax described above in "Distributions on Our Common Stock" may also apply;

the non-U.S. holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of the disposition and certain other conditions are met, in which case the non-U.S. holder will be subject to a 30% tax on the gain derived from the disposition, which may be offset by any U.S.-source capital losses of the non-U.S. holder recognized in the same taxable year; or

we are, or have been at any time during the five-year period preceding such disposition (or the non-U.S. holder's holding period, if shorter), a "United States real property holding corporation."

Generally, we will be a "United States real property holding corporation" if the fair market value of our U.S. real property interests equals or exceeds 50% of the sum of the fair market values of our worldwide real property interests and other assets used or held for use in a trade or business, all as determined under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations. We believe that we have not been and are not currently, and do not anticipate becoming in the future, a "United States real property holding corporation" for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. holder the amount of distributions paid to such holder and the amount of tax withheld, if any. Copies of the information returns filed with the IRS to report the distributions and withholding may also be made available to the tax authorities in a country in which the non-U.S. holder is a resident under the provisions of an applicable income tax treaty or agreement.

In certain circumstances, the United States imposes a backup withholding tax on the gross amount of dividends and certain other types of payments. Dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder will not be subject to backup withholding if proper certification of foreign status (usually on IRS Form W-8BEN) is provided, and we do not have actual knowledge or reason to know that the non-U.S. holder is a U.S. person. In addition, no backup withholding or information reporting will be required regarding the proceeds of a disposition of our common stock made by a non-U.S. holder within the United States or conducted through certain U.S. financial intermediaries if the payor receives the certification of foreign status described in the preceding sentence and the payor does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that such non-U.S. holder is a U.S. person or the non-U.S. holder otherwise establishes an exemption. Non-U.S. holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of the information reporting and backup withholding rules to them.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules from a payment to a non-U.S. holder can be refunded or credited against the non-U.S. holder's U.S. federal income tax liability, if any, provided that certain required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

Recently-Enacted Legislation Relating to Foreign Accounts

Recently enacted legislation generally will impose a U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on dividends and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid after December 31, 2012 to a foreign financial institution unless such institution enters into an agreement with the U.S. government to withhold on certain payments and to collect and provide to the U.S. tax authorities substantial information regarding U.S. account holders of such institution (which includes certain equity and debt holders of such institution, as well as certain account holders that are foreign entities with U.S. owners). The legislation also will generally impose a

Table of Contents

U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on dividends and the gross proceeds of a disposition of our common stock paid after December 31, 2012 to a non-financial foreign entity unless such entity provides the withholding agent with either a certification that it does not have any substantial direct or indirect U.S. owners or provides information regarding direct and indirect U.S. owners of the entity. Under certain circumstances, a non-U.S. holder might be eligible for refunds or credits of such taxes. Non-U.S. holders are encouraged to consult with their own tax advisors regarding the possible implications of the legislation on their investment in our common stock.

U.S. Federal Estate Tax

An individual non-U.S. holder who is treated as the owner, or who has made certain lifetime transfers, of an interest in our common stock will be required to include the value of the common stock in his or her gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes and may be subject to U.S. federal estate tax, unless an applicable estate tax treaty provides otherwise or no U.S. federal estate tax is in effect. Although the U.S. federal estate tax has been repealed for 2010, it is thereafter set to be reinstated using the exclusion limit and rates that were in effect in 2001 absent further legislation

Table of Contents**Underwriting**

Under the terms and subject to the conditions contained in an underwriting agreement dated November , 2010, by and among us and the underwriters named below, the underwriters have agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell _____ shares of our common stock. Jefferies & Company, Inc. and Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated are acting as joint book-running managers in this offering. Each underwriter has severally agreed to purchase the number of shares of common stock indicated in the table below:

	Number of Shares
Underwriters	
Jefferies & Company, Inc.	
Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated	
Lazard Capital Markets LLC	
Rodman & Renshaw, LLC	
 Total	

The underwriters are offering the common stock subject to their acceptance of the shares from us and subject to prior sale. The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to pay for and accept delivery of the common stock offered by this prospectus supplement are subject to the approval of certain legal matters by their counsel and to certain other conditions. The underwriting agreement provides that the underwriters are obligated to take and pay for all of the common stock if any such shares are purchased, other than those shares covered by the overallotment option described below.

Commissions and Expenses

The underwriters have advised us that they propose to offer the shares to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to certain dealers at that price less a concession not in excess of \$ _____ per share. After the offering, the public offering price and concession to dealers may be reduced by the underwriters. No such reduction shall change the amount of proceeds to be received by us as set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. The shares are offered by the underwriters as stated herein, subject to receipt and acceptance by them and subject to their right to reject any order in whole or in part.

The following table shows the public offering price, the underwriting discounts and commissions payable to the underwriters by us and the proceeds, before expenses, to us.

	Per Share	Total
Public offering price	\$	\$
Underwriting discounts and commissions payable by us	\$	\$
Proceeds to us, before expenses	\$	\$

We estimate expenses payable by us in connection with the offering of common stock, other than the underwriting discounts and commissions referred to above, will be approximately \$200,000.

Table of Contents

Option to Purchase Additional Shares

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to an aggregate of _____ additional shares at the same price they are paying for the shares shown in the table above. The underwriters may exercise this option at any time and from time to time, in whole or in part, within 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement. If the underwriters exercise the option in full, the total underwriting discounts and commissions payable by us will be \$ _____, or \$ _____ per share, and the total proceeds to us, before expenses, will be \$ _____.

Indemnification

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act. We have also agreed to contribute to payments that the underwriters may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

Lock-up Agreements

Our executive officers and directors have agreed, subject to specified exceptions, not to directly or indirectly sell, offer, contract or grant any option to sell (including without limitation any short sale), pledge, transfer, establish an open "put equivalent position" within the meaning of Rule 16a-1(h) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or otherwise dispose of any shares, options or warrants to acquire shares of our common stock, or securities exchangeable or exercisable for or convertible into shares of our common stock currently or hereafter owned either of record or beneficially (as defined in Rule 13d-3 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended) by such person, or publicly announce an intention to do any of the foregoing, in any case during the 90-day period described below. We have also agreed, subject to specified exceptions and during the same 90-day period, not to directly or indirectly, sell (including, without limitation, any short sale), offer, contract or grant any option to sell, pledge, transfer or establish an open "put equivalent position" within the meaning of Rule 16a-1(h) under the Exchange Act, or otherwise dispose of or transfer, or announce the offering of, or file any registration statement under the Securities Act in respect of, any shares of our common stock, options, rights or warrants to acquire shares of our common stock or securities exchangeable or exercisable for or convertible into shares of our common stock, or publicly announce the intention to do any of the foregoing.

These restrictions terminate after the close of trading of the shares on and including the 90th day after the date of this prospectus supplement. Jefferies & Company, Inc. may, in its sole discretion and at any time or from time to time before the termination of the 90-day period, without notice, release all or any portion of the securities subject to lock-up agreements. However, subject to specified exceptions, if (i) during the last 17 days of the 90-day period, we issue an earnings release or material news or a material event relating to us occurs or (ii) prior to the expiration of the 90-day period, we announce that we will release earnings results during the 16-day period beginning on the last day of the 90-day period, then in each case the 90-day period will be extended until the expiration of the 18-day period beginning on the date of the issuance of the earnings release or the occurrence of the material news or material event, as applicable, unless Jefferies & Company, Inc. waives, in writing, such extension.

Electronic Distribution

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format may be made available on websites or through other online services maintained by the underwriters of the offering, or by their affiliates. Other than the prospectus in electronic format, the information on the underwriters' websites and any information contained in any other website maintained by the underwriters is not part of the prospectus or the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part, has not been approved and/or endorsed by us or the underwriters in their capacity as underwriters and should not be relied upon by investors.

Table of Contents

Price Stabilization, Short Positions and Penalty Bids

Until the distribution of the shares of common stock is completed, SEC rules may limit the underwriters from bidding for and purchasing shares of our common stock.

In connection with this offering, the underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or make short sales of our common stock and may purchase our common stock on the open market to cover positions created by short sales. Short sales involve the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in this offering. The underwriters may close out any short position by purchasing shares in the open market or by exercising their overallotment option.

A short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering. A "stabilizing bid" is a bid for or the purchase of common stock on behalf of the underwriters in the open market prior to the completion of this offering for the purpose of fixing or maintaining the price of the shares of common stock. A "syndicate covering transaction" is the bid for or purchase of common stock on behalf of the underwriters to reduce a short position incurred by the underwriters in connection with the offering.

Similar to other purchase transactions, the underwriters' purchases to cover the syndicate short sales may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of our shares or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of our shares. As a result, the price of our shares may be higher than the price that might otherwise exist in the open market.

In connection with this offering, the underwriters may also engage in passive market making transactions in our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Market in accordance with Rule 103 of Regulation M during a period before the commencement of offers or sales of shares of our common stock in this offering and extending through the completion of distribution. A passive market maker must display its bid at a price not in excess of the highest independent bid of that security. However, if all independent bids are lowered below the passive market maker's bid, that bid must then be lowered when specified purchase limits are exceeded.

Neither we nor the underwriters make any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of our common stock. In addition, neither we nor the underwriters make any representation that the underwriters will engage in these transactions or that any transaction, if commenced, will not be discontinued without notice.

Other Relationships

In connection with this offering, XMS Capital Partners, LLC, a FINRA member, will be paid a fee of \$ _____ for providing advisory services to us. This fee is deemed to constitute underwriting compensation under Rule 5110 of the rules of The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc.

Lazard Frères & Co. LLC referred this transaction to Lazard Capital Markets LLC and will receive a referral fee from Lazard Capital Markets LLC in connection therewith.

In the future, the underwriters and their affiliates may provide various investment banking, commercial banking, financial advisory and other services to us and our affiliates for which services they have received, and may in the future receive, customary fees. In the course of its businesses, the underwriters and their affiliates may actively trade our securities or loans for their own account or for the accounts of customers, and, accordingly, the underwriters and their affiliates may at any time hold long or short positions in such securities or loans.

Table of Contents

Notice to Investors

European Economic Area

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (as defined below) (each, a Relevant Member State), with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State, or the Relevant Implementation Date, an offer of our common stock to the public may not be made in that Relevant Member State prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to our common stock which has been approved by the competent authority in that Relevant Member State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant Member State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant Member State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Directive, except that an offer to the public in that Relevant Member State of any shares of our common stock may be made at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive if they have been implemented in the Relevant Member State:

- (a) to legal entities which are authorized or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorized or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities;
- (b) to any legal entity which has two or more of (1) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (2) a total balance sheet of more than €43,000,000 and (3) an annual net turnover of more than €50,000,000, as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts;
- (c) to fewer than 100 natural or legal persons per Relevant Member State (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive); or
- (d) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive;

provided that no such offer of our common stock shall result in a requirement for the publication by us or any underwriter of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an "offer of our common stock to the public" in relation to any shares of our common stock in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and our common stock to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe our common stock, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State and the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71/EC and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State.

France

This prospectus supplement has not been, and will not be, submitted to the clearance procedures of the Autorité des marchés financiers (the "AMF") in France and may not be directly or indirectly released, issued, or distributed to the public in France, or used in connection with any offer for subscription or sale of our common stock to the public in France, in each case within the meaning of Article L. 411-1 of the French Code monétaire et financier (the "French Financial and Monetary Code").

The securities have not been, and will not be, offered or sold to the public in France, directly or indirectly, and will only be offered or sold in France (i) to qualified investors (investisseurs qualifiés) investing for their own account, in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, and in particular in accordance with Articles L. 411-2 and D. 411-2 of the French Financial and Monetary Code; (ii) to investment services providers authorized to engage in portfolio investment on behalf of third parties, in accordance with Article L.411-2 of the French Financial and Monetary Code; or (iii) in a transaction that, in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, does not otherwise constitute an offer to the public ("appel public à l'épargne") in France within the meaning of Article L.411-1 of the French Financial and Monetary Code.

Table of Contents

This prospectus supplement is not to be further distributed or reproduced (in whole or in part) in France by any recipient, and this prospectus supplement has been distributed to the recipient on the understanding that such recipient is a qualified investor or otherwise meets the requirements set forth above, and will only participate in the issue or sale of the securities for their own account, and undertakes not to transfer, directly or indirectly, the securities to the public in France, other than in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and in particular with Articles L.411-1, L.411-2, D.411-1 and D.411-2 of the French Financial and Monetary Code.

United Kingdom

Shares of our common stock may not be offered or sold and will not be offered or sold to any persons in the United Kingdom other than to persons whose ordinary activities involve them in acquiring, holding, managing or disposing of investments (as principal or as agent) for the purposes of their businesses or otherwise in circumstances which have not resulted or will not result in an offer to the public in the United Kingdom within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, or the FSMA.

In addition, any invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of section 21 of the FSMA) in connection with the issue or sale of shares of our common stock may only be communicated or caused to be communicated in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us. Without limitation to the other restrictions referred to herein, this prospectus supplement is directed only at (1) persons outside the United Kingdom or (2) persons who:

- (a) are qualified investors as defined in section 86(7) of FSMA, being persons falling within the meaning of article 2.1(e)(i), (ii) or (iii) of the Prospectus Directive; and
- (b) are either persons who fall within article 19(1) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005, as amended, or Order, or are persons who fall within article 49(2)(a) to (d) ("high net worth companies, unincorporated associations, etc.") of the Order; or
- (c) to whom it may otherwise lawfully be communicated in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply.

Without limitation to the other restrictions referred to herein, any investment or investment activity to which this offering circular relates is available only to, and will be engaged in only with, such persons, and persons within the United Kingdom who receive this communication (other than persons who fall within (2) above) should not rely or act upon this communication.

Italy

This prospectus supplement has not been and will not be filed with or cleared by the Italian securities exchange commission (Commissione Nazionale per le società e la Borsa the "CONSOB") pursuant to Legislative Decree No. 58 of 24 February 1998 (as amended, the "Finance Law") and to CONSOB Regulation No. 11971 of 14 May 1999 (as amended, the "Issuers Regulation"). Accordingly, copies of this prospectus supplement or any other document relating to our common stock may not be distributed, made available or advertised in Italy, nor may our common stock be offered, purchased, sold, promoted, advertised or delivered, directly or indirectly, to the public other than (i) to "Professional Investors (such being the persons and entities as defined pursuant to article 31(2) of CONSOB Regulation No. 11522 of 1 July 1998, as amended, the "Intermediaries Regulation") pursuant to article 100 of the Finance Law; (ii) to prospective investors where the offer of our common stock relies on the exemption from the investment solicitation rules pursuant to, and in compliance with the conditions set out by article 100 of the Finance Law and article 33 of the Issuers Regulation, or by any applicable exemption; provided that any such offer, sale, promotion, advertising or delivery of our common stock or distribution of the prospectus supplement, or any part thereof, or of any other document or material relating to our common stock in Italy is made: (a) by investment firms, banks or financial intermediaries authorized to carry out such activities in the Republic of Italy in accordance with the Finance Law, the Issuers Regulation, Legislative Decree No. 385 of 1 September 1993 (as amended, the "Banking Law"), the Intermediaries Regulation, and any

Table of Contents

other applicable laws and regulations; and (b) in compliance with any applicable notification requirement or duty which may, from time to time, be imposed by CONSOB, Bank of Italy or by any other competent authority.

Germany

Any offer or solicitation of securities within Germany must be in full compliance with the German Securities Prospectus Act (Wertpapierprospektgesetz WpPG). The offer and solicitation of securities to the public in Germany requires the publication of a prospectus that has to be filed with and approved by the German Federal Financial Services Supervisory Authority (Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht BaFin). This prospectus supplement has not been and will not be submitted for filing and approval to the BaFin and, consequently, will not be published. Therefore, this prospectus supplement does not constitute a public offer under the German Securities Prospectus Act (Wertpapierprospektgesetz). This prospectus supplement and any other document relating to our common stock, as well as any information contained therein, must therefore not be supplied to the public in Germany or used in connection with any offer for subscription of our common stock to the public in Germany, any public marketing of our common stock or any public solicitation for offers to subscribe for or otherwise acquire our common stock. This prospectus supplement and other offering materials relating to the offer of our common stock are strictly confidential and may not be distributed to any person or entity other than the designated recipients hereof.

Sweden

This is not a prospectus under, and has not been prepared in accordance with the prospectus requirements provided for in, the Swedish Financial Instruments Trading Act [lagen (1991:980) om handel med finansiella instrument] nor any other Swedish enactment. Neither the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority nor any other Swedish public body has examined, approved, or registered this document.

Table of Contents

Legal Matters

K&L Gates LLP, Raleigh, North Carolina, will pass upon certain legal matters relating to this offering. Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP, New York, New York, is counsel to the underwriters in connection with this offering.

Experts

The consolidated financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2009, incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, and the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Grant Thornton LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference, upon authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

The consolidated financial statements of Exact Sciences Corporation at December 31, 2008 and for each of the two years in the period then ended appearing in Exact Sciences Corporation's Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2009 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their report thereon, included therein and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Where You Can Find More Information

We are currently subject to the information requirements of the Exchange Act, and in accordance therewith, file periodic reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. We also filed a registration statement on Form S-3, including exhibits, under the Securities Act, with respect to the securities offered by this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are a part of the registration statement but do not contain all of the information included in the registration statement or the exhibits. You may read and copy the registration statement, and any other document that we file, at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference room. You can also find our public filings with the SEC on the internet at a website maintained by the SEC located at www.sec.gov.

Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" information into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, which means that we can disclose important information about us by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents and reports listed below:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009, filed with the SEC on March 12, 2010;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarters ended March 31, 2010, June 30, 2010 and September 30, 2010, filed on May 10, 2010, August 9, 2010 and October 29, 2010 respectively;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on April 13, 2010, April 14, 2010, April 19, 2010, July 2, 2010, July 16, 2010, July 22, 2010 and October 28, 2010;

Edgar Filing: EXACT SCIENCES CORP - Form 424B5

Table of Contents

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form S-1, filed with the SEC on January 30, 2001, including any amendment or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description (Registration No. 333-48812); and

All documents filed after the date of this prospectus supplement and prior to the termination of the offering hereunder pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Information in this prospectus supplement supersedes related information in the documents listed above, and information in subsequently filed documents supersedes related information in each of this prospectus supplement, the prospectus and the incorporated documents.

We will promptly provide, without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the prospectus, other than exhibits to those documents, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference in those documents. Requests should be directed to:

Corporate Secretary
Exact Sciences Corporation
441 Charmany Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53719
(608) 284-5700

You can also find these filings on our website at www.exactsciences.com. We are not incorporating the information on our website other than these filings into this prospectus supplement or the prospectus.

S-24

PROSPECTUS

EXACT SCIENCES CORPORATION

\$150,000,000

**Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Debt Securities
Warrants**

This prospectus relates to common stock, preferred stock, debt securities and warrants that we may sell from time to time in one or more offerings up to a total public offering price of \$150,000,000 on terms to be determined at the time of sale. We will provide specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and any supplement carefully before you invest. This prospectus may not be used to offer and sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement for those securities.

Our common stock trades on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "EXAS."

These securities may be sold directly by us, through dealers or agents designated from time to time, to or through underwriters or through a combination of these methods. See "Plan of Distribution" in this prospectus. We may also describe the plan of distribution for any particular offering of these securities in any applicable prospectus supplement. If any agents, underwriters or dealers are involved in the sale of any securities in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered, we will disclose their names and the nature of our arrangements with them in a prospectus supplement. The net proceeds we expect to receive from any such sale will also be included in a prospectus supplement.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is September 7, 2010.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>PROSPECTUS SUMMARY</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>THE COMPANY</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK WE MAY OFFER</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK WE MAY OFFER</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS WE MAY OFFER</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>EXPERTS</u>	<u>20</u>

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"). You can inspect and copy these reports, proxy statements and other information at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D. C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room. The SEC also maintains a web site that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers, such as Exact Sciences Corporation (www.sec.gov). Our web site is located at www.exactsciences.com. The information contained on our web site is not part of this prospectus.

This prospectus "incorporates by reference" certain information that we have filed with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. This means we are disclosing important information to you by referring you to those documents. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings made by us with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act until the offering is terminated:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009 as filed on March 12, 2010;

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2010 as filed on May 10, 2010;

Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on February 16, 2010, April 13, 2010, April 14, 2010, April 19, 2010, May 6, 2010, July 2, 2010, July 16, 2010 and July 22, 2010 (other than the portions of those documents furnished but deemed not to have been filed); and

The description of the Company's Common Stock contained in the Company's Registration Statement on Form 8-A, filed with the SEC pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Exchange Act on December 26, 2000, including any further amendment or report filed hereafter for the purpose of updating such description.

You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus. We have authorized no one to provide you with different information. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this document. All documents that we file pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus or after the date of the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part and prior to the termination of the offering will be deemed to be incorporated in this prospectus by reference and will be a part of this prospectus from the date of the filing of the document. Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus will be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus or in any other subsequently filed document which also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus modifies or supersedes that statement. Any statement that is modified or superseded will not constitute a part of this prospectus, except as modified or superseded.

We will provide, upon written or oral request, without charge to you, including any beneficial owner to whom this prospectus is delivered, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated herein by reference other than the exhibits to those documents, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference into the information that this prospectus incorporates. You should direct a request for copies to us at Attention: Secretary, 441 Charmany Drive, Madison, WI 53719 or you may call us at 608.284.5700.

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain information set forth in this prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus may contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), that are intended to be covered by the "safe harbor" created by those sections. Forward-looking statements, which are based on certain assumptions and describe our future plans, strategies and expectations, can generally be identified by the use of forward-looking terms such as "believe," "expect," "may," "will," "should," "would," "could," "seek," "intend," "plan," "estimate," "goal," "anticipate," "project" or other comparable terms. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements, as a result of various factors including those risks and uncertainties included in this prospectus under the caption "Risk Factors," and those risks and uncertainties described in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus. We urge you to consider those risks and uncertainties in evaluating our forward-looking statements. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or to persons acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the applicable cautionary statements. We further caution readers not to place undue reliance upon any such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date made. Except as otherwise required by the federal securities laws, we disclaim any obligation or undertaking to publicly release any updates or revisions to any forward-looking statement contained herein or in the accompanying prospectus (or elsewhere) to reflect any change in our expectations with regard thereto or any change in events, conditions or circumstances on which any such statement is based.

PROSPECTUS SUMMARY

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the SEC utilizing a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf process, we may from time to time, sell any combination of securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of the securities being offered. That prospectus supplement may include a discussion of any risk factors or other special consideration that apply to those securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and a prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in that prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement together with additional information described above under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information."

When acquiring any securities discussed in this prospectus, you should rely on the information provided in this prospectus and the prospectus supplement, including the information incorporated by reference. Neither we, nor any underwriters or agents, have authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not offering the securities in any state where such an offer is prohibited. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, or any document incorporated by reference, is truthful or complete at any date other than the date mentioned on the cover page of those documents. You should also carefully review the section entitled "Risk Factors", which highlights certain risks associated with an investment in our securities, to determine whether an investment in our securities is appropriate for you.

References in this prospectus to "Exact", the "Company", "we", "us" and "our" are to Exact Sciences Corporation and its subsidiaries.

Table of Contents

THE COMPANY

Exact Sciences Corporation is a molecular diagnostics company focused on the early detection and prevention of colorectal cancer. We have exclusive intellectual property protecting our non-invasive, molecular screening technology for the detection of colorectal cancer.

Our primary goal is to become the market leader for a patient-friendly diagnostic screening product for the early detection of colorectal pre-cancer and cancer. Our strategic roadmap to achieve this goal includes the following key components:

develop and refine our non-invasive stool-based (sDNA) colorectal pre-cancer and cancer screening test;

advance our product through U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, clinical trials;

secure insurance coverage and reimbursement for our product; and

commercialize an FDA-cleared product that detects colorectal pre-cancer and cancer.

Our current focus is on the commercial development and seeking FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product. We believe obtaining FDA clearance is critical to building broad demand and successful commercialization for our sDNA colorectal cancer screening technologies. As part of our product development efforts, we are exploring the marker combinations and platform requirements necessary for optimal performance of our technology based on market need. Objectives around performance, throughput and cost are among the elements that will need to be met in the design and development of a commercial product based on our technology.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We currently intend to use the estimated net proceeds from the sale of these securities for general corporate and working capital purposes, including to fund strategic initiatives that we may undertake from time to time, for product development and in furtherance of our efforts to obtain FDA clearance of our sDNA colorectal cancer screening product. We have not yet determined the amount of net proceeds to be used specifically for any of the foregoing purposes. Accordingly, our management will have significant discretion and flexibility in applying the net proceeds from the sale of these securities. Our plans to use the estimated net proceeds from the sale of these securities may change, and if they do, we will update this information in a prospectus supplement.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. See the risk factors described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for our most recent fiscal year (together with any material changes thereto contained in subsequent filed Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q) and those contained in our other filings with the SEC, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement applicable to each type or series of securities we offer may contain a discussion of risks applicable to the particular types of securities that we are offering under that prospectus supplement. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the caption "Risk Factors" in the applicable prospectus supplement, together with all of the other information contained in the prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. These risks could materially affect our business, results of operations or financial condition and cause the value of our securities to decline. You could lose all or part of your investment.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER

We may sell the securities being offered pursuant to this prospectus directly to purchasers, to or through underwriters, through dealers or agents, or through a combination of such methods. The prospectus supplement with respect to the securities being offered will set forth the terms of the offering of those securities, including the names of the underwriters, dealers or agents, if any, the purchase price, the net proceeds to us, any underwriting discounts and other items constituting underwriters' compensation, the initial public offering price, any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers and any securities exchanges on which such securities may be listed.

The following description of our common stock, together with the additional information included in any applicable prospectus supplement, summarizes the material terms and provisions of these securities but is not complete. For the complete terms of our common stock, please refer to our Sixth Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, as amended to date, which we refer to as our Certificate of Incorporation, and our Amended and Restated By-laws, which we refer to as our By-laws, each of which is incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

General

The debt securities that we may issue will constitute debentures, notes, bonds or other evidences of indebtedness of Exact, to be issued in one or more series, which may include senior debt securities, subordinated debt securities and senior subordinated debt securities. The particular terms of any series of debt securities we offer, including the extent to which the general terms set forth below may be applicable to a particular series, will be described in a prospectus supplement relating to such series.

Debt securities that we may issue will be issued under an indenture between us and a trustee qualified to act as such under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. We have filed the form of the indenture as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. When we refer to the "indenture" in this prospectus, we are referring to the indenture under which your debt securities are issued as supplemented by any supplemental indenture applicable to your debt securities. We will provide the name of the trustee in any prospectus supplement related to the issuance of debt securities, and we will also provide certain other information related to the trustee, including describing any relationship we have with the trustee, in such prospectus supplement.

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION IS A SUMMARY OF THE MATERIAL PROVISIONS OF THE INDENTURE. IT DOES NOT RESTATE THE INDENTURE IN ITS ENTIRETY. THE INDENTURE IS GOVERNED BY THE TRUST INDENTURE ACT OF 1939. THE TERMS OF THE DEBT SECURITIES INCLUDE THOSE STATED IN THE INDENTURE AND THOSE MADE PART OF THE INDENTURE BY REFERENCE TO THE TRUST INDENTURE ACT. WE URGE YOU TO READ THE INDENTURE BECAUSE IT, AND NOT THIS DESCRIPTION, DEFINES YOUR RIGHTS AS A HOLDER OF THE DEBT SECURITIES.

Information You Will Find In The Prospectus Supplement

The indenture provides that we may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more series and that we may denominate the debt securities and make them payable in foreign currencies. The indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of debt securities that can be issued thereunder. The prospectus supplement for a series of debt securities will provide information relating to the terms of the series of debt securities being offered, which may include:

the title and denominations of the debt securities of the series;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of the series;

Table of Contents

the date or dates on which the principal and premium, if any, with respect to the debt securities of the series are payable or the method of determination thereof;

the rate or rates, which may be fixed or variable, at which the debt securities of the series shall bear interest, if any, or the method of calculating and/or resetting such rate or rates of interest;

the dates from which such interest shall accrue or the method by which such dates shall be determined and the duration of the extensions and the basis upon which interest shall be calculated;

the interest payment dates for the series of debt securities or the method by which such dates will be determined, the terms of any deferral of interest and any right of ours to extend the interest payments periods;

the place or places where the principal and interest on the series of debt securities will be payable;

the terms and conditions upon which debt securities of the series may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option or otherwise;

our obligation, if any, to redeem, purchase, or repay debt securities of the series pursuant to any sinking fund or other specified event or at the option of the holders and the terms of any such redemption, purchase, or repayment;

the terms, if any, upon which the debt securities of the series may be convertible into or exchanged for other securities, including, among other things, the initial conversion or exchange price or rate and the conversion or exchange period;

if the amount of principal, premium, if any, or interest with respect to the debt securities of the series may be determined with reference to an index or formula, the manner in which such amounts will be determined;

if any payments on the debt securities of the series are to be made in a currency or currencies (or by reference to an index or formula) other than that in which such securities are denominated or designated to be payable, the currency or currencies (or index or formula) in which such payments are to be made and the terms and conditions of such payments;

any changes or additions to the provisions of the indenture dealing with defeasance, including any additional covenants that may be subject to our covenant defeasance option;

the currency or currencies in which payment of the principal and premium, if any, and interest with respect to debt securities of the series will be payable, or in which the debt securities of the series shall be denominated, and the particular provisions applicable thereto in accordance with the indenture;

the portion of the principal amount of debt securities of the series which will be payable upon declaration of acceleration or provable in bankruptcy or the method by which such portion or amount shall be determined;

whether the debt securities of the series will be secured or guaranteed and, if so, on what terms;

Edgar Filing: EXACT SCIENCES CORP - Form 424B5

any addition to or change in the events of default with respect to the debt securities of the series;

the identity of any trustees, authenticating or paying agents, transfer agents or registrars;

the applicability of, and any addition to or change in, the covenants currently set forth in the indenture;

Table of Contents

the subordination, ranking or priority, if any, of the debt securities of the series and terms of the subordination;

any other terms of the debt securities of the series which are not prohibited by the indenture; and

whether securities of the series shall be issuable as registered securities or bearer securities (with or without interest coupons), and any restrictions applicable to the offering, sale or delivery of such bearer securities and the terms upon which such bearer securities of a series may be exchanged for registered securities, and vice versa.

Holders of debt securities may present debt securities for exchange in the manner, at the places, and subject to the restrictions set forth in the debt securities, the indenture, and the prospectus supplement. We will provide these services without charge, other than any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection therewith, but subject to the limitations provided in the indenture, any board resolution establishing such debt securities and any applicable indenture supplement. Debt securities in bearer form and the coupons, if any, appertaining thereto will be transferable by delivery.

Senior Debt

We may issue senior debt securities under the indenture and any coupons that will constitute part of our senior debt. Unless otherwise set forth in the applicable indenture supplement and described in a prospectus supplement, the senior debt securities will be senior unsecured obligations, ranking equally with all of our existing and future senior unsecured debt. The senior debt securities will be senior to all of our subordinated debt and junior to any secured debt we may incur as to the assets securing such debt.

Subordinated Debt

We may issue subordinated debt securities under the indenture and any coupons that will constitute part of such subordinated debt. These subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent and in the manner set forth in the indenture and any applicable indenture supplement, to all of our senior indebtedness.

If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with a series of subordinated debt securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated by reference will set forth the approximate amount of senior indebtedness outstanding as of the end of the most recent fiscal quarter.

Senior Subordinated Debt

We may issue senior subordinated debt securities under the indenture and any coupons that will constitute part of our senior subordinated debt. These senior subordinated debt securities will be, to the extent and in the manner set forth in the applicable indenture supplement, subordinate and junior in right of payment to all of our "senior indebtedness" and senior to our other subordinated debt. See the discussions above under " Senior Debt" and " Subordinated Debt" for a more detailed explanation of our senior and subordinated indebtedness.

Interest Rate

Debt securities that bear interest will do so at a fixed rate or a floating rate. We may sell, at a discount below the stated principal amount, any debt securities which bear no interest or which bear interest at a rate that at the time of issuance is below the prevailing market rate. The relevant prospectus supplement will describe the special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to:

any discounted debt securities; and

any debt securities issued at par which are treated as having been issued at a discount for United States federal income tax purposes.

Table of Contents

Registered Global Securities

We may issue registered debt securities of a series in the form of one or more fully registered global securities. We will deposit the registered global security with a depository or with a nominee for a depository identified in the prospectus supplement relating to such series. The global security or global securities will represent and will be in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal amount of outstanding registered debt securities of the series to be represented by the registered global security or securities. Unless it is exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred, except as a whole in three cases:

by the depository for the registered global security to a nominee of the depository;

by a nominee of the depository to the depository or another nominee of the depository; and

by the depository or any nominee to a successor of the depository or a nominee of the successor.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of debt securities will describe the specific terms of the depository arrangement concerning any portion of that series of debt securities to be represented by a registered global security. We anticipate that the following provisions will generally apply to all depository arrangements.

Upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depository will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the principal amounts of the debt securities represented by the registered global security to the accounts of persons that have accounts with the depository. These persons are referred to as "participants." Any underwriters, agents or debtors participating in the distribution of debt securities represented by the registered global security will designate the accounts to be credited. Only participants or persons that hold interests through participants will be able to beneficially own interests in a registered global security. The depository for a global security will maintain records of beneficial ownership interests in a registered global security for participants. Participants or persons that hold through participants will maintain records of beneficial ownership interests in a global security for persons other than participants. These records will be the only means to transfer beneficial ownership in a registered global security.

The laws of some states may require that specified purchasers of securities take physical delivery of the securities in definitive form. These laws may limit the ability of those persons to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in global securities.

So long as the depository, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a registered global security, the depository or its nominee will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except as set forth below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security:

may not have the debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in their names;

will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of debt securities represented by a registered global security in definitive form; and

will not be considered the owners or holders of debt securities represented by a registered global security under the indenture.

Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depository for the registered global security and, if the person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which the person owns its interests, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture applicable to the registered global security.

Table of Contents

We understand that, under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders, or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security desires to give or take any action which a holder is entitled to give or take under the indenture, the depository for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take the action, and the participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through the participants to give or take the action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

Payment of Interest on and Principal of Registered Global Securities

We will make principal, premium, if any, and interest payments on debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee to the depository or its nominee as the registered owner of the registered global security. None of Exact, the trustee, or any paying agent for debt securities represented by a registered global security will have any responsibility or liability for:

any aspect of the records relating to, or payments made on account of, beneficial ownership interests in such registered global security;

maintaining, supervising, or reviewing any records relating to beneficial ownership interests;

the payments to beneficial owners of the global security of amounts paid to the depository or its nominee; or

any other matter relating to the actions and practices of the depository, its nominee or any of its participants.

We expect that the depository, upon receipt of any payment of principal, premium or interest in respect of the global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their beneficial interests in the principal amount of a registered global security as shown on the depository's records. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security held through participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices. This is currently the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers registered in "street name." Such payments will be the responsibility of participants.

Exchange of Registered Global Securities

We may issue debt securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security if both of the following occur:

the depository for any debt securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depository or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act; and

we do not appoint a successor depository within 90 days.

In addition, we may, at any time, determine not to have any of the debt securities of a series represented by one or more registered global securities. In this event, we will issue debt securities of that series in definitive form in exchange for all of the registered global security or securities representing those debt securities. In addition, some provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws may be deemed to have an anti-takeover effect and may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer or takeover attempt that a stockholder might deem to be in his or her best interest. The existence of

Table of Contents

these provisions could limit the price that investors might be willing to pay in the future for shares of our common stock. These provisions include:

Covenants by Exact

The indenture includes covenants by us, including among other things that we will make all payments of principal and interest at the times and places required. The supplemental indenture establishing each series of debt securities may contain additional covenants, including covenants which could restrict our right to incur additional indebtedness or liens and to take certain actions with respect to our businesses and assets.

Events of Default

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following will be events of default under the indenture with respect to each series of debt securities issued under the indenture:

failure to pay when due any interest on any debt security of that series, continued for 30 days;

failure to pay when due the principal of, or premium, if any, on, any debt security of that series;

default in the payment of any sinking fund installment with respect to any debt security of that series when due and payable;

failure to perform any other covenant or agreement of ours under the indenture or the supplemental indenture with respect to that series or the debt securities of that series, continued for 90 days after written notice to us by the trustee or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series to which the covenant or agreement relates;

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings affecting us; and

any other event of default specified in any supplemental indenture under which such series of debt securities is issued.

Except as to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings affecting us and except as provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, if any event of default shall occur and be continuing with respect to any series of debt securities under the indenture, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of such series may accelerate the maturity of all debt securities of such series. Upon certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings affecting us, the principal, premium, if any, and interest on all debt securities of each series shall be immediately due and payable.

After any such acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on acceleration has been obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of each affected series of debt securities may waive all defaults with respect to such series and rescind and annul such acceleration if all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal, have been cured, waived or otherwise remedied.

No holder of any debt securities will have any right to institute any proceeding with respect to the indenture or for any remedy under the indenture, unless such holder shall have previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default and the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the relevant series shall have made written request and offered indemnity satisfactory to the trustee to institute such proceeding as trustee, and the trustee shall not have received from the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series a direction inconsistent with such request and shall have failed to institute such proceeding within 60 days. However, such limitations do not apply to a suit

Table of Contents

instituted by a holder of a debt security for enforcement of payment of the principal of and premium, if any, or interest on such debt security on or after the respective due dates expressed in such debt security.

Supplemental Indentures

We and the trustee may, at any time and from time to time, without prior notice to or consent of any holders of debt securities, enter into one or more indentures supplemental to the indenture, among other things:

to add guarantees to or secure any series of debt securities;

to provide for the succession of another person pursuant to the provisions of the indenture relating to consolidations, mergers and sales of assets and the assumption by such successor of our covenants, agreements, and obligations, or to otherwise comply with the provisions of the indenture relating to consolidations, mergers, and sales of assets;

to surrender any right or power conferred upon us under the indenture or to add to our covenants further covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions for the protection of the holders of all or any series of debt securities;

to cure any ambiguity or to correct or supplement any provision contained in the indenture, in any supplemental indenture or in any debt securities that may be defective or inconsistent with any other provision contained therein;

to modify or amend the indenture in such a manner as to permit the qualification of the indenture or any supplemental indenture under the Trust Indenture Act;

to add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture to supplement any of the provisions of the indenture in order to permit the defeasance and discharge of any series of debt securities pursuant to the indenture, so long as any such action does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of debt securities of any series in any material respect;

to add to, change, or eliminate any of the provisions of the indenture with respect to one or more series of debt securities, so long as any such addition, change or elimination shall not apply to any debt securities of any series created prior to the execution of such supplemental indenture and entitled to the benefit of such provision;

to evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor or separate trustee; and

to establish the form or terms of debt securities of any series and to make any change that does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of debt securities.

With the consent of the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of debt securities of each series affected by such supplemental indenture (each series voting as one class), we and the trustee may enter into one or more supplemental indentures for the purpose of adding any provisions to or changing in any manner or eliminating any of the provisions of the indenture or modifying in any manner the rights of the holders of debt securities of each such series.

Notwithstanding our rights and the rights of the trustee to enter into one or more supplemental indentures with the consent of the holders of debt securities of the affected series as described above, no such supplemental indenture shall, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security of the affected series, among other things:

change the final maturity of the principal of, or any installment of interest on, any debt securities;

Table of Contents

reduce the principal amount of any debt securities or the rate of interest on any debt securities;

change the currency in which any debt securities are payable;

impair the right of the holders to conduct a proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee;

reduce the percentage in principal amount of any series of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment or supplemental indenture;

modify the ranking or priority of the securities;

reduce any premium payable upon the redemption of any debt securities; or

make any change that adversely affects the relative rights of holders of subordinated debt securities with respect to senior debt securities.

Satisfaction and Discharge of the Indenture; Defeasance

Except to the extent set forth in a supplemental indenture with respect to any series of debt securities, we, at our election, may discharge the indenture and the indenture shall generally cease to be of any further effect with respect to that series of debt securities if (a) we have delivered to the trustee for cancellation all debt securities of that series (with certain limited exceptions) or (b) all debt securities of that series not previously delivered to the trustee for cancellation shall have become due and payable, or are by their terms to become due and payable within one year or are to be called for redemption within one year, and we have deposited with the trustee the entire amount sufficient to pay at maturity or upon redemption all such debt securities.

In addition, we have a "legal defeasance option" (pursuant to which we may terminate, with respect to the debt securities of a particular series, all of our obligations under such debt securities and the indenture with respect to such debt securities) and a "covenant defeasance option" (pursuant to which we may terminate, with respect to the debt securities of a particular series, our obligations with respect to such debt securities under certain specified covenants contained in the indenture). If we exercise our legal defeasance option with respect to a series of debt securities, payment of such debt securities may not be accelerated because of an event of default. If we exercise our covenant defeasance option with respect to a series of debt securities, payment of such debt securities may not be accelerated because of an event of default related to the specified covenants.

We may exercise our legal defeasance option or our covenant defeasance option with respect to the debt securities of a series only if we irrevocably deposit in trust with the trustee cash or U.S. government obligations (as defined in the indenture) for the payment of principal, premium, if any, and interest with respect to such debt securities to maturity or redemption, as the case may be. In addition, to exercise either of our defeasance options, we must comply with certain other conditions, including the delivery to the trustee of an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of debt securities of such series will not recognize income, gain or loss for Federal income tax purposes as a result of such defeasance and will be subject to Federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such defeasance had not occurred (and, in the case of legal defeasance only, such opinion of counsel must be based on a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service or other change in applicable Federal income tax law).

The trustee will hold in trust the cash or U.S. government obligations deposited with it as described above and will apply the deposited cash and the proceeds from deposited U.S. government obligations to the payment of principal, premium, if any, and interest with respect to the debt securities of the defeased series.

Table of Contents

Mergers, Consolidations and Certain Sales of Assets

We may not

consolidate with or merge into any other person or entity or permit any other person or entity to consolidate with or merge into us in a transaction in which we are not the surviving entity, or

transfer, lease or dispose of all or substantially all of our assets to any other person or entity

unless:

the resulting, surviving or transferee entity shall be a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States or any state thereof and such resulting, surviving or transferee entity shall expressly assume, by supplemental indenture, executed and delivered in form satisfactory to the trustee, all of our obligations under the debt securities and the indenture;

immediately after giving effect to such transaction (and treating any indebtedness which becomes an obligation of the resulting, surviving or transferee entity as a result of such transaction as having been incurred by such entity at the time of such transaction), no default or event of default would occur or be continuing; and

we shall have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that such consolidation, merger or transfer and such supplemental indenture (if any) comply with the indenture.

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by the laws of the State of New York.

No Personal Liability of Directors, Officers, Employees and Stockholders

No director, officer, incorporator or stockholder of Exact, as such, shall have any liability for any obligations of Exact under the debt securities or the indenture or for any claim based on, in respect of, or by reason of, such obligations or their creation, solely by reason of his, her, or its status as director, officer, incorporator or stockholder of Exact. By accepting a debt security, each holder waives and releases all such liability, but only such liability. The waiver and release are part of the consideration for issuance of the debt securities. Nevertheless, such waiver may not be effective to waive liabilities under the federal securities laws and it has been the view of the SEC that such a waiver is against public policy.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

Any debt securities offered hereby may be convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our equity or other securities. The terms and conditions of such conversion or exchange will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Such terms may include, among others, the following:

the conversion or exchange price;

the conversion or exchange period;

provisions regarding our ability or that of the holder to convert or exchange the debt securities;

events requiring adjustment to the conversion or exchange price; and

provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of our redemption of such debt securities.

Table of Contents

Concerning the Trustee

The indenture provides that there may be more than one trustee with respect to one or more series of debt securities. If there are different trustees for different series of debt securities, each trustee will be a trustee of a trust under a supplemental indenture separate and apart from the trust administered by any other trustee under such indenture. Except as otherwise indicated in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement, any action permitted to be taken by a trustee may be taken by the trustee only with respect to the one or more series of debt securities for which it is the trustee under an indenture. Any trustee under the indenture or a supplemental indenture may resign or be removed with respect to one or more series of debt securities. All payments of principal of, premium, if any, and interest on, and all registration, transfer, exchange authentication and delivery (including authentication and delivery on original issuance of the debt securities) of, the debt securities of a series will be effected by the trustee with respect to such series at an office designated by the trustee.

The indenture contains limitations on the right of the trustee, should it become a creditor of Exact, to obtain payment of claims in certain cases or to realize on certain property received in respect of any such claim as security or otherwise. If the trustee acquires an interest that conflicts with any duties with respect to the debt securities, the trustee is required to either resign or eliminate such conflicting interest to the extent and in the manner provided by the indenture.

Limitations on Issuance of Bearer Debt Securities

Debt securities in bearer form are subject to special U.S. tax requirements and may not be offered, sold, or delivered within the United States or its possessions or to a U.S. person, except in certain transactions permitted by U.S. tax regulations. Investors should consult the relevant prospectus supplement, in the event that bearer debt securities are issued for special procedures and restrictions that will apply to such an offering.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK WE MAY OFFER

This section describes the general terms and provisions of the preferred stock we may offer. This information may not be complete in all respects and is qualified entirely by reference to our certificate of incorporation, with respect to each series of preferred stock. The specific terms of any series will be described in a prospectus supplement. Those terms may differ from the terms discussed below. Any series of preferred stock we issue will be governed by our certificate of incorporation and by the certificate of designations relating to that series. We will file the certificate of designations with the SEC and incorporate it by reference as an exhibit to our registration statement at or before the time we issue any preferred stock of that series.

Authorized Preferred Stock

Our certificate of incorporation authorizes us to issue 5,000,000 shares of undesignated preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. We may issue preferred stock from time to time in one or more series, without shareholder approval, when authorized by our board of directors.

Upon issuance of a particular series of preferred stock, our board of directors is authorized, to specify:

the number of shares to be included in the series;

the annual dividend rate for the series, if any, and any restrictions or conditions on the payment of dividends;

the redemption price, if any, and the terms and conditions of redemption;

any sinking fund provisions for the purchase or redemption of the series;

Table of Contents

if the series is convertible, the terms and conditions of conversion;

the amounts payable to holders upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up; and

any other rights, preferences and limitations relating to the series, including voting rights.

Our board of director's ability to authorize, without shareholder approval, the issuance of preferred stock with conversion and other rights, may adversely affect the rights of holders of our common stock or other series of preferred stock that may be outstanding.

No shares of our preferred stock are currently issued and outstanding.

Specific Terms of a Series of Preferred Stock

The preferred stock we may offer will be issued in one or more series. The preferred stock will have the dividend, liquidation, redemption and voting rights discussed below, unless otherwise described in a prospectus supplement relating to a particular series. A prospectus supplement will discuss the following features of the series of preferred stock to which it relates:

the designations and stated value per share;

the number of shares offered;

the amount of liquidation preference per share;

the public offering price at which the preferred stock will be issued;

the dividend rate, the method of its calculation, the dates on which dividends would be paid and the dates, if any, from which dividends would cumulate;

any redemption or sinking fund provisions;

any conversion or exchange rights; and

any additional voting, dividend, liquidation, redemption, sinking fund and other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions.

Rank

Unless otherwise stated in the prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will have priority over our common stock with respect to dividends and distribution of assets, but will rank junior to all our outstanding indebtedness for borrowed money. Any series of preferred stock could rank senior, equal or junior to our other capital stock, as may be specified in a prospectus supplement, as long as our certificate of incorporation so permits.

Dividends

Edgar Filing: EXACT SCIENCES CORP - Form 424B5

Holders of each series of preferred stock shall be entitled to receive cash dividends to the extent specified in the prospectus supplement when, as and if declared by our board of directors, from funds legally available for the payment of dividends. The rates and dates of payment of dividends of each series of preferred stock will be stated in the prospectus supplement. Dividends will be payable to the holders of record of preferred stock as they appear on our books on the record dates fixed by our board of directors. Dividends on any series of preferred stock may be cumulative or non-cumulative, as discussed in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Convertibility

Shares of a series of preferred stock may be exchangeable or convertible into shares of our common stock, another series of preferred stock or other securities or property. The conversion or

Table of Contents

exchange may be mandatory or optional. The prospectus supplement will specify whether the preferred stock being offered has any conversion or exchange features, and will describe all the related terms and conditions.

Redemption

The terms, if any, on which shares of preferred stock of a series may be redeemed will be discussed in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Liquidation

Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of Exact, holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive distributions upon liquidation in the amount described in the related prospectus supplement. These distributions will be made before any distribution is made on any securities ranking junior to the preferred stock with respect to liquidation, including our common stock. If the liquidation amounts payable relating to the preferred stock of any series and any other securities ranking on a parity regarding liquidation rights are not paid in full, the holders of the preferred stock of that series will share ratably in proportion to the full liquidation preferences of each security. Holders of our preferred stock will not be entitled to any other amounts from us after they have received their full liquidation preference.

Voting

The holders of preferred stock of each series will have no voting rights, except as required by law and as described below or in a prospectus supplement. Our board of directors may, upon issuance of a series of preferred stock, grant voting rights to the holders of that series to elect additional board members if we fail to pay dividends in a timely fashion.

Without the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares of preferred stock of any series then outstanding, we may not:

increase or decrease the aggregate number of authorized shares of that series;

increase or decrease the par value of the shares of that series; or

alter or change the powers, preferences or special rights of the shares of that series so as to affect them adversely.

No Other Rights

The shares of a series of preferred stock will not have any preferences, voting powers or relative, participating, optional or other special rights except:

as discussed above or in the prospectus supplement;

as provided in our certificate of incorporation and in the certificate of designations; and

as otherwise required by law.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK WE MAY OFFER

Edgar Filing: EXACT SCIENCES CORP - Form 424B5

The following summary description of our common stock is based on the provisions of our certificate of incorporation or bylaws and the applicable provisions of the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware. This information may not be complete in all respects and is qualified entirely by reference to the provisions of our certificate of incorporation, bylaws and the General Corporation Law of the State of Delaware. For information on how to obtain copies of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, see the discussion above under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information."

Table of Contents

We may offer our common stock issuable upon the conversion of debt securities or preferred stock and the exercise of warrants.

Authorized Capital

We currently have authority to issue 100,000,000 shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share. As of June 30, 2010, 40,201,552 shares of our common stock were issued and outstanding.

Voting Rights

Each outstanding share of our common stock is entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders. There is no cumulative voting.

Dividend and Liquidation Rights

The holders of outstanding shares of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends out of assets legally available for the payment of dividends at the times and in the amounts as our board of directors may from time to time determine. The shares of our common stock are neither redeemable nor convertible. Holders of our common stock have no preemptive or subscription rights to purchase any securities of Exact. Upon the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of Exact, the holders of our common stock are entitled to receive pro rata the assets of Exact which are legally available for distribution, after payment of all debts and other liabilities and subject to the prior rights of any holders of preferred stock then outstanding.

We have never paid any cash dividends on our common stock.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS WE MAY OFFER

We may issue warrants for the purchase of debt securities, preferred stock or common stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with debt securities, preferred stock or common stock and may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. Any issue of warrants will be governed by the terms of the applicable form of warrant and any related warrant agreement which we will file as an exhibit to our registration statement at or before the time we issue any warrants.

The particular terms of any issue of warrants will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to the issue. Those terms may include:

the title of such warrants;

the aggregate number of such warrants;

the price or prices at which such warrants will be issued;

the currency or currencies (including composite currencies) in which the price of such warrants may be payable;

the terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of such warrants and the procedures and conditions relating to the exercise of such warrants;

the price at which the securities purchasable upon exercise of such warrants may be purchased;

the date on which the right to exercise such warrants will commence and the date on which such right shall expire;

any provisions for adjustment of the number or amount of securities receivable upon exercise of the warrants or the exercise price of the warrants;

Table of Contents

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of such warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which such warrants are issued and the number of such warrants issued with each such security;

if applicable, the date on and after which such warrants and the related securities will be separately transferable;

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any; and

any other terms of such warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange or exercise of such warrants.

The prospectus supplement relating to any warrants to purchase equity securities may also include, if applicable, a discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax and ERISA considerations.

Warrants for the purchase of preferred stock and common stock will be offered and exercisable for U.S. dollars only.

Each warrant will entitle its holder to purchase the principal amount of debt securities or the number of shares of preferred stock or common stock at the exercise price set forth in, or calculable as set forth in, the applicable prospectus supplement.

After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void. We will specify the place or places where, and the manner in which, warrants may be exercised in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Prior to the exercise of any warrants to purchase debt securities, preferred stock or common stock, holders of the warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities, preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities offered by this prospectus to one or more underwriters or dealers for public offering, through agents, directly to purchasers or through a combination of any such methods of sale. The name of any such underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the offer and sale of the securities, the amounts underwritten and the nature of its obligation to take the securities will be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. We have reserved the right to sell the securities directly to investors on our own behalf in those jurisdictions where we are authorized to do so. The sale of the securities may be effected in transactions (a) on any national or international securities exchange or quotation service on which the securities may be listed or quoted at the time of sale, (b) in the over-the-counter market, (c) in transactions otherwise than on such exchanges or in the over-the-counter market or (d) through the writing of options.

We and our agents and underwriters, may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices that may be changed, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. The securities may be offered on an exchange, which will be disclosed in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may, from time to time, authorize dealers, acting as our agents, to offer and sell the securities upon such terms and conditions as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we use underwriters to sell securities, we will enter into an underwriting agreement with them at the time of the sale to them. In connection with the sale of the securities, underwriters may receive compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agent. Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and

Table of Contents

any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement to the extent required by applicable law. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions (which may be changed from time to time) from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents.

Dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, an agent will be acting on a best efforts basis and a dealer will purchase debt securities as a principal, and may then resell the debt securities at varying prices to be determined by the dealer.

If so indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain specified institutions to purchase offered securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. Such contracts will be subject to any conditions set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement and the prospectus supplement will set forth the commission payable for solicitation of such contracts. The underwriters and other persons soliciting such contracts will have no responsibility for the validity or performance of any such contracts.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us, to indemnification against and contribution towards certain civil liabilities, including any liabilities under the Securities Act.

To facilitate the offering of securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain, or otherwise affect the price of the securities. These may include over-allotment, stabilization, syndicate short covering transactions and penalty bids. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which creates a short position. Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Syndicate short covering transactions involve purchases of securities in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim selling concessions from dealers when the securities originally sold by the dealers are purchased in covering transactions to cover syndicate short positions. These transactions may cause the price of the securities sold in an offering to be higher than it would otherwise be. These transactions, if commenced, may be discontinued by the underwriters at any time.

Any securities other than our common stock issued hereunder may be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters or agents to or through whom such securities are sold for public offering and sale may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters or agents will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for any such securities. The amount of expenses expected to be incurred by us in connection with any issuance of securities will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. Certain of the underwriters, dealers or agents and their associates may engage in transactions with, and perform services for, us and certain of our affiliates in the ordinary course of business.

During such time as we may be engaged in a distribution of the securities covered by this prospectus we are required to comply with Regulation M promulgated under the Exchange Act. With certain exceptions, Regulation M precludes us, any affiliated purchasers, and any broker-dealer or other person who participates in such distribution from bidding for or purchasing, or attempting to induce any person to bid for or purchase, any security which is the subject of the distribution until the entire distribution is complete. Regulation M also restricts bids or purchases made in order to stabilize the

Table of Contents

price of a security in connection with the distribution of that security. All of the foregoing may affect the marketability of our shares of common stock.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity and legality of the securities offered hereby and certain other legal matters will be passed upon for the Company by K&L Gates LLP, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2009, incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2009, and the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting, have been audited by Grant Thornton LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference, upon authority of said firm as experts in accounting and auditing in giving said reports.

The consolidated financial statements of Exact Sciences Corporation at December 31, 2008 and for each of the two years in the period then ended appearing in Exact Sciences Corporation's Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2009 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in its report thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

Shares

Common Stock

Prospectus Supplement

Joint Book-Running Managers

Jefferies & Company

Baird

Co-Managers

Lazard Capital Markets

Rodman & Renshaw, LLC

November , 2010
