Novartis AG (NVS)

$85.89 (As of 06/05/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **$90.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 06/10/19) Prior Recommendation: Underperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**3-Hold**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:B
	Value: B | Growth: B | Momentum: C	

Summary

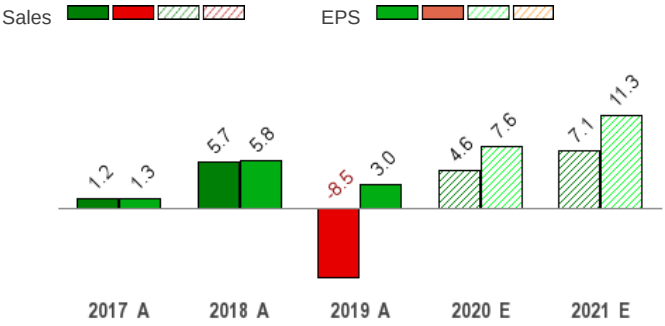
Novartis has a strong oncology portfolio, which maintains momentum. Solid performance of key drugs like Cosentyx and Entresto, and contributions from Kisqali and gene therapy, Zolgensma, have also boosted performance in recent times. Moreover, the company maintained its annual outlook even amid uncertainties related to the coronavirus pandemic. While the impact of forward purchasing will be reversed as the year progresses, these drugs and new launches like Piqray, Mayzent and Beovu should further boost sales. The biosimilar portfolio also gains traction with new key approvals. However, price erosion in the United States has adversely impacted the generics business. Moreover, pipeline setbacks and generic competition are concerning. Shares have underperformed the industry in the past year.

Price, Consensus & Surprise

Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	**$99.84 - $69.18**
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	**1,737,845**
Market Cap	**$196.8 B**
YTD Price Change	**-9.3%**
Beta	**0.51**
Dividend / Div Yld	**$2.01 / 2.3%**
Industry	**Large Cap Pharmaceuticals**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Top 7% (17 out of 253)**
Last EPS Surprise	**13.1%**
Last Sales Surprise	**1.1%**
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	**0.0%**
Expected Report Date	**07/16/2020**
Earnings ESP	**0.0%**
P/E TTM	**15.4**
P/E F1	**15.2**
PEG F1	**1.8**
P/S TTM	**4.1**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021					53,256 E
2020	12,283 A	12,530 E	12,724 E	13,097 E	49,706 E
2019	11,106 A	11,764 A	12,172 A	12,403 A	47,498 A

EPS Estimates

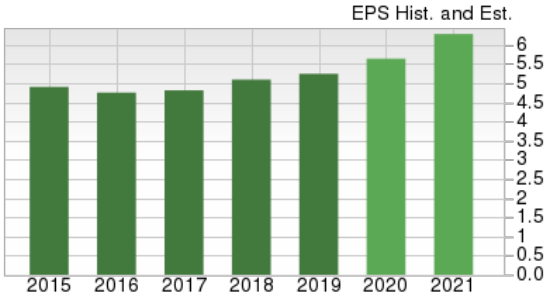
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021					$6.28 E
2020	$1.55 A	$1.42 E	$1.41 E	$1.37 E	$5.64 E
2019	$1.20 A	$1.32 A	$1.41 A	$1.31 A	$5.24 A

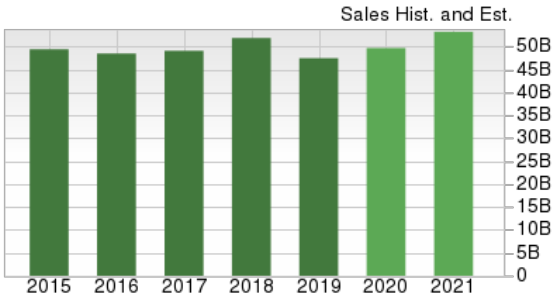
*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 06/05/2020. The reports text is as of 06/08/2020.

Overview

Switzerland-based Novartis has one of the strongest and broadest portfolio of oncology drugs and generics, which has enabled it to maintain its dominant position as a top pharma company over the years. Novartis is one of the leaders in healthcare solutions with a wide array of drugs and a presence in not only oncology but neuroscience, cardiovascular and generics as well.





Novartis' efforts to strengthen its wide and deep oncology portfolio by developing breakthrough treatments had made it even more formidable in this space. The FDA approval of its breakthrough gene transfer treatment Kymriah in August 2017 bolstered its position in this relatively new but competitive space. Further, in May 2019, the FDA approved Zolgensma, the first and only gene therapy for pediatric patients with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA).

Given the evolving and competitive nature of the pharma business, Novartis has constantly taken steps to reshape its business with prudent acquisitions and strategic divestitures. In March 2015, Novartis acquired certain oncology products and pipeline compounds from Glaxo for $16 billion. In exchange, it sold its non-influenza Vaccines business to Glaxo for $7.1 billion. Also, the company has spun off the Alcon business into a separate company to focus better on its growing pharma business. In January 2015, Novartis divested its Animal Health division to Lilly for approximately $5.4 billion. In July 2015, the company divested its influenza vaccines business to CSL Limited for $275 million. Apart from these, the company continues to make small tuck-in acquisitions to broaden its pipeline. Novartis recently acquired The Medicines Company, adding inclisiran — a potentially transformative cholesterol-lowering therapy — to its portfolio.

Following the separation of the Alcon business, Novartis now has two operating segments:

- **Innovative Medicines** (Pharmaceuticals): Innovative patent-protected prescription medicines and ophthalmic pharmaceutical (79.5% of 2019 Sales).
- **Sandoz**: Generic pharmaceuticals (20.5% of 2019 Sales)

Revenues for 2019 came in at $47.5 billion, up 6% from 2018.

Reasons To Buy:

> Novartis has a strong oncology portfolio and continues to work on developing its immuno-oncology pipeline. Besides, Sandoz is working on further advancing its portfolio of biosimilars and generics.

- **Strong Oncology Portfolio**: Novartis has a strong oncology portfolio, consisting of drugs like Afinitor, Exjade, Jakavi, Zykadia, Tasigna, Luthathera, Promacta and Jadenu. Particularly, Promacta/Revolade, Tafinlar + Mekinist, Jakavi, and Luthathera have fueled the top line in the recent quarters. The FDA approval of Kisqali for the first-line treatment of postmenopausal women with hormone receptor positive, human epidermal growth factor receptor-2 negative (HR+/HER2-) advanced or metastatic breast cancer has boosted the company's oncology portfolio. The label expansion of Kisqali, Zykadia, Tafinlar plus Mekinist should further drive sales. Novartis acquired Endocyte to expand expertise in radiopharmaceuticals and transformational therapeutic platforms. The acquisition added 177Lu-PSMA-617, a potential first-in-class radioligand therapy, to its diverse portfolio. The therapy is in phase III development for metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC). The recent approval of Piqray for advanced or metastatic breast cancer will further strengthen Novartis' oncology portfolio. The recent approval of Piqray for advanced or metastatic breast cancer and Tabrecta for lung cancer has further strengthened Novartis' oncology portfolio.

- **First CAR T Therapy Approved**: In August 2017, the FDA approved its breakthrough gene transfer treatment, Kymriah suspension, for the treatment of patients up to 25 years of age with B-cell precursor acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) that is refractory or in second or later relapse. The approval is a major boost for Novartis, given the potential in the CAR T therapy space. Kymriah is the first chimeric antigen receptor T cell (CAR-T) therapy that has been approved. A novel immunocellular therapy and one-time treatment, Kymriah, uses a patient's T cells to fight cancer. The approval opens up new frontiers in the treatment of cancer by advancing immunocellular therapy for children and young adults with r/r B-cell ALL. The uptake of the drug has been strong. Meanwhile, the FDA expanded the drug's label for the treatment of adult patients with relapsed or refractory (r/r) large B-cell lymphoma after two or more lines of systemic therapy, including diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL), high grade B-cell lymphoma and DLBCL arising from follicular lymphoma. New approvals in this space will fortify the company's position further.

- **Novartis Forays Into Gene Therapy:** Novartis is looking to solidify its presence in the gene therapy space. In 2018, Novartis acquired U.S.-based, clinical-stage, gene-therapy company, AveXis, Inc, which is focused on developing novel treatments for patients suffering from rare and life-threatening neurological genetic diseases.In May 2019, the FDA approved Zolgensma, the first and only gene therapy for pediatric patients with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), a rare genetic disorder. Zolgensma addresses the genetic root cause of SMA by providing a functional copy of the human SMN gene to halt disease progression through sustained SMN protein expression with a single, one-time intravenous (IV) infusion. The uptake of the drug was strong in 2019 and will likely propel sales.

- **Strong Biosimilars Business**: Sandoz is a strong player in the biosimilar market with five marketed biosimilars (Omnitrope, a human growth hormone; Binocrit, an erythropoiesis-stimulating agent used to treat anemia; and filgrastim for neutropenia under the brand names Zarzio outside the United States and Zarxio in the United States.). A biosimilar version of Rituxan (rituximab) was approved by the European Commission in June 2017 (marketed as Rixathon). In August 2016, Sandoz's Erelzi, a biosimilar version of Amgen blockbuster drug Enbrel gained approval in the United States for five indications. Erelzi was also approved by the European Commission in 2017. Sandoz also obtained approval for Zessly, a biosimilar version of Johnson & Johnson's Remicade, in Europe. The FDA also approved Hyrimoz, the biosimilar of Humira. Approval of additional biosimilars will fuel further growth.

- **New Drugs to Boost Portfolio**: The approval of new drugs and label expansion of existing drugs will also boost the top line, in the days to come. Heart failure drug, Entresto, and psoriasis drug, Cosentyx, have performed impressively since their launch. Psoriasis drug, Cosentyx, was also approved for the treatment of two new indications — ankylosing spondylitis (AS) and psoriatic arthritis (PsA) — in the EU in 2016. Moreover, the FDA approved Cosentyx for AS and PsA. The uptake of Cosentyx has been strong and the company has grabbed market shares from rivals, Humira and Enbrel. Additional label expansion of the drug should further propel the top line. Novartis and partner Amgen won FDA approval of Aimovig (erenumab) for the prevention of migraine in adults and the drug is off to a strong start in the United States. The drug was also approved in Europe. The FDA also approved Mayzent (siponimod), a next generation, selective sphingosine 1-phosphate receptor modulator, for the treatment of adults with relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (MS). The FDA recently approved Adakveo (crizanlizumab) to reduce the frequency of vaso-occlusive crises (VOCs) or pain crises in patients aged 16 years or above with sickle cell disease (SCD). The FDA also approved Beovu for the treatment of wet age-related macular degeneration and the drug has been launched in the United States. The drug also obtained a positive CHMP opinion in December. Strong uptake is expected from Beovu as it is the first FDA-approved anti-VEGF to offer greater fluid resolution as compared to market-leading drug, Eylea. Beovu's potential to treat patients with quarterly injections is a major positive and should enable it to capture market share. Approval of new drugs and label expansion of existing drugs bode well for the company, as it looks to streamline its business.

- **Developing Coronavirus Treatments**: Novartis initiated a phase III clinical trial in collaboration with Incyte to evaluate the use of Jakavi in combination with standard of care (SoC) compared to SoC alone for COVID-19 infection and a phase III study on Ilaris in patients with pneumonia as a result of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Additionally, Novartis announced a phase III study on hydroxychloroquine, alone and in combination with azithromycin, for the treatment of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 disease. Under an expedited managed access program, Novartis has granted requests and provided Jakavi and Ilaris. Requests for investigator-initiated trials have also been granted for COVID-19-related clinical studies of Gleevec, Cosentyx, hydroxychloroquine and Diovan. The company has committed to donate up to 130 million doses of generic hydroxychloroquine to support the global COVID-19 pandemic response.

- **Acquisitions to Boost Pipeline**: Novartis acquired U.S.-based biopharmaceutical company, The Medicines Company, for $85 per share in cash or a total valuation of $9.7 billion, and added a potentially transformational investigational cholesterol-lowering therapy. The acquisition added a potentially first-in-class siRNA inhibitor targeting PCSK9, inclisiran, to its pipeline. The Medicines Company submitted the New Drug Application (NDA) for inclisiran to the FDA in December 2019. Separately, Novartis continues to make small acquisitions to boost its pipeline and focus on other therapeutic areas apart from oncology. The Advanced Accelerator Applications acquisition added Lutathera to the company's portfolio.

- **Alcon Spin-Off Positive**: Novartis spun-off its ophthalmology division, Alcon, into a separately-traded standalone company in order to grow

as a medicines company solely. The separation of the Alcon business is a step in the right direction, as the business was not performing as per management's expectations. While it did revive in between, the company decided to spin-off the same in order to focus better on its legacy drug business. Novartis acquired Alcon in 2011. The business then comprised surgical, vision care and ophthalmic pharmaceuticals. The company is looking to restructure its business to become a core drug-focused company, powered by data and digital technologies.

▲ **Favorable Debt Profile**: Novartis has a favorable debt profile. As of Mar 31, 2020, the company's debt to total capital ratio stands at 41.7, which compares favorably to the industry's 52.4. A lower ratio indicates lower financial risk and vice versa. While the cash position of $4.5 billion is down from $11.1 billion at the end of the previous quarter, it is still sound backed by a favorable debt ratio. Moreover, the company carries an AA- rating from Fitch (as of Dec 12, 2019). The AA rating from the agency implies very low default risk. Overall, Novartis is in good financial health.

Reasons To Sell:

> Novartis is expected to face challenging conditions ahead due to generic competition for several of its key drugs.

- **Share Price Performance:** Novartis' stock has underperformed the industry in the past year.

- **Generic Threat to Key Products**: We are highly concerned about the loss of patent protection for some of the key drugs in Novartis' portfolio. Gleevec/Glivec, Diovan and Exforge face continued and increasing generic competition in major markets. The loss of patent protection for these top-selling drugs continue to hurt sales. Patent protection for Exjade has expired in the United States. Generic competition is expected to start for Afinitor in 2020. Oncology drugs are facing competition from immuno-oncology therapies. Generic versions of Sandostatin SC are available in the United States, the EU and Japan.

- **Pipeline Setbacks a Concern**: Novartis suffered quite a few pipeline setbacks. The company received a complete response letter from the FDA in October 2018 regarding its supplemental Biologics License Application for ACZ885 (brand name Ilaris) in cardiovascular risk reduction. Earlier the company received a setback when a phase IIb/III study evaluating BYM338 (bimagrumab) in sporadic inclusion body myositis failed to meet the primary endpoint. Similar setbacks will weigh on the company as it looks to revive its core pharmaceutical business.

- **Sandoz Facing Pricing Pressure**: The generic division, Sandoz, is facing stiff competition from companies that market patented pharmaceutical products as well as other generic and biosimilar pharmaceutical companies, which aggressively compete for market share, mainly through significant price competition. In particular, industry-wide price competition among generic pharmaceutical companies and consolidation of buyers caused significant declines in sales and profits of Sandoz in the United States.

Last Earnings Report

Novartis Q1 Earnings and Revenues Surpass Estimates

Quarter Ending	03/2020
Report Date	**Apr 28, 2020**
Sales Surprise	**1.07%**
EPS Surprise	**13.14%**
Quarterly EPS	**1.55**
Annual EPS (TTM)	**5.59**

First-quarter 2020 core earnings (excluding one-time charges) of $1.55 per share easily beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $1.37 and increased from $1.21 reported in the year-ago quarter.

Revenues rose 11% year over year to $12.3 billion, driven by Entresto, Zolgensma, Cosentyx, Kisqali and Piqray. Revenues beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $12.15 billion. Excluding COVID-19-related forward purchases, sales grew approximately 9%.

All growth rates mentioned below are on a year-over-year basis and at constant exchange rates.

Quarter in Detail

Novartis operates under two segments — Innovative Medicines and Sandoz (generics).

The Innovative Medicines division recorded sales of $9.8 billion, up 13% year over year. Within this segment, the Pharmaceuticals business unit grew 14%, driven by continued momentum in Entresto and Cosentyx and the uptake of Zolgensma.

Psoriasis drug, Cosentyx, continues to gain traction. Cosentyx sales increased 19% to $930 million, driven by strong demand in the United States. Entresto sales grew 62% to $569 million, driven by demand growth across geographies. Increasing contribution from Zolgensma (gene therapy for pediatric patients with spinal muscular atrophy) also boosted this business unit.

The Oncology business unit grew 12%, driven by continued momentum in Promacta/Revolade, Tafinlar + Mekinist and Kisqali as well as the launch uptake of Piqray. Kisqali sales surged 82%, driven by strong double-digit growth owing to higher demand in all geographies. Kymriah grew strongly in Europe and the United States.

This growth was partially offset by generic competition for Afinitor, Exjade, Travatan and Exforge.

Sales at the Sandoz division were $2.5 billion, up 11%, driven by volume growth including COVID-19-related forward purchasing, partly offset by price erosion. Biopharmaceuticals sales grew 31%, driven by continued strong double-digit growth in Europe. Novartis has decided to retain Sandoz US generic oral solids and dermatology businesses, after terminating its mutual agreement with Aurobindo.

Guidance for 2020 Reiterated

The company expects net sales in 2020 to grow in mid to high-single digits. Innovative Medicines revenues are projected to grow in mid to high-single digits. Revenues from Sandoz are expected to grow in low-single digits.

Recent News

Asthma Treatment Meets Primary Endpoint in Phase III – Jun 5

Novartis announced full results from the phase IIIb study, ARGON, on Enerzair Breezhaler (QVM149; indacaterol acetate, glycopyrronium bromide and mometasone furoate [IND/GLY/MF]) in patients with asthma not adequately controlled on current inhaled therapies.

The results showed that treatment with once-daily Enerzair Breezhaler met the primary endpoint, demonstrating non-inferiority to a free combination of twice-daily Sal/Flu plus once-daily tiotropium (Tio), in improving quality of life of people with uncontrolled asthma.

Additionally, among secondary analyses, improvements in lung function, asthma control and health status, and a reduction in moderate exacerbations were observed with once-daily high-dose IND/GLY/MF compared to a free combination of high-dose Sal/Flu plus Tio.

Data on Cosentyx – June 4

Novartis announced the full-52 week data from the ongoing PREVENT study on spondylitis drug, Cosentyx (secukinumab). The new, detailed data from the study reinforced the drug's substantial and sustained benefits across axial spondyloarthritis (axSpA) spectrum.

Data from the study showed that treatment with 150mg dose of Cosentyx achieved significant and sustained improvements in signs and symptoms of non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA) at 52 weeks. Treatment with Cosentyx improved signs and symptoms of nr-axSpA in patients by 40% as measured by Assessment of Spondyloarthritis International Society score, compared to placebo at week 16 and week 52. The company had announced late last year that the drug met the primary endpoint of the PREVENT study.

Setback for MS Candidate – Jun 2

Novartis announced that the FDA has extended the review period of its supplemental biologics license application (sBLA) for ofatumumab (OMB 157) by three months. The sBLA is seeking approval for subcutaneous ofatumumab, a novel B-cell to treat patients with relapsing multiple sclerosis (RMS).

As a result, the regulatory body will now announce its decision in September 2020 instead of the previously anticipated date in June.

Breast Cancer Drug – May 29

Novartis announced that the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the European Medicines Agency has adopted a positive opinion recommending the approval of breast cancer drug, Piqray (alpelisib).

The committee has recommended the approval of the drug in combination with Faslodex for the treatment of postmenopausal women, and men, with hormone receptor positive, human epidermal growth factor receptor-2 negative (HR+/HER2-) locally advanced or metastatic breast cancer with a PIK3CA mutation after disease progression following endocrine therapy as monotherapy.

Novartis announced updated results from the COMBI-AD study. The results showed that treatment with Tafinlar (dabrafenib) and Mekinist (trametinib) following the surgical removal of melanoma offers a long-term and durable relapse-free survival (RFS) benefit to high-risk patients diagnosed with stage III, BRAF-mutation positive melanoma. Moreover, 52% of patients treated with adjuvant Tafinlar + Mekinist were alive and relapse-free at five years. Data from the five-year follow-up of the COMBI-AD trial were presented at the ASCO20 Virtual Scientific Program.

Meanwhile, AveXis, a Novartis company, collaborated with Massachusetts Eye and Ear and Massachusetts General Hospital, members of Mass General Brigham, for the production of a vaccine for COVID-19. AveXis is contributing its technology, expertise and supply chain to supply the AAV vaccine for COVID clinical studies scheduled to begin in the second half of 2020. AveXis will lead the manufacturing efforts of the new vaccine, utilizing its AAV technology for the treatment of rare and life-threatening neurological genetic diseases.

EC Approval for Gene Therapy Zolgensma in SMA – May 19

Novartis announced that the European Commission (EC) granted conditional approval to gene therapy, Zolgensma (onasemnogeneabeparvovec), for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA).

We note that Zolgensma is a one-time gene therapy designed to address the genetic root cause of the disease by replacing the function of the missing or nonworking SMN1 gene.

Zolgensma has been approved for the treatment of patients with 5q SMA, with a bi-allelic mutation in the SMN1 gene and a clinical diagnosis of SMA Type 1 or for patients with 5q SMA with a bi-allelic mutation in the SMN1 gene and up to three copies of the SMN2 gene. The approval covers babies and young children with SMA (up to 21 kg), according to the approved dosing guidance.

Cancer Drug Approved – May 6

The FDA granted accelerated approval to capmatinib, an oral selective MET inhibitor, for first-line and previously treated patients with metastatic MET exon14 skipping-mutated non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) — a type of lung cancer with a particularly poor prognosis. Capmatinib will be marketed by the trade name of Tabrecta and is the first therapy approved in the United States to specifically target METex14 mutated advanced lung cancer. Novartis acquired rights to Tabrecta from Incyte in 2009 and the approval triggers a $70 million-milestone payment to Incyte.

CHMP positive opinion for Enerzair Breezhaler – May 1

Novartis today announced that the European Medicines Agency's (EMA) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has adopted a positive opinion recommending the approval of Enerzair Breezhaler (QVM149; indacaterol acetate, glycopyrronium bromide and mometasone furoate [IND/GLY/MF]) as a maintenance treatment of asthma in adult patients not adequately controlled with a maintenance combination of a

long acting beta2 agonist and a high dose of an inhaled corticosteroid who experienced one or more asthma exacerbations in the previous year.

Label Expansion of Cosentyx – Apr 29

Novartis announced the European Commission (EC) has approved Cosentyx (secukinumab) for the treatment of adult patients with active non-radi ographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA).

Kymriah receives FDA Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy – Apr 22

The FDA granted Regenerative Medicine Advanced Therapy (RMAT) designation to CAR-T cell therapy, Kymriah (tisagenlecleucel), for the indication of or refractory (r/r) follicular lymphoma (FL).

To sponsor large clinical trial of hydroxychloroquine – Apr 20

Novartis announced that it has reached an agreement with the FDA to initiate a phase III study to evaluate the efficacy and safety of malaria drug, hydroxychloroquine, in hospitalized COVID-19 patients. The FDA has allowed the use of the generic medicine, which is unapproved for COVID-19, under emergency use authorization.

Novartis accelerated its research related to hydroxychloroquine to start the late-stage study in a few weeks. The phase III study will evaluate hydroxychloroquine monotherapy and hydroxychloroquine in combination with antibiotic, azithromycin, compared to placebo in patients. As part of its fight against coronavirus, the company has announced that will make available any of its intellectual property related to hydroxychloroquine as COVID-19 treatment through non-exclusive voluntary licenses and other options for broader development of the drug.

In a separate press release, Novartis announced that it has completed the acquisition of a U.S.-based software startup, Amblyotech. The company plans to develop treatment for amblyopia or lazy eye using Amblyotech's technology in collaboration with Ubisoft and McGill University.

Evaluate Jakavi for COVID-19 – Apr 2

Novartis announced plans to initiate a Phase III clinical trial in collaboration with Incyte to evaluate the use of Jakavi(ruxolitinib) for treatment of a type of severe immune overreaction called cytokine storm that can lead to life-threatening respiratory complications in patients with COVID-191-3.

The decision is based on pre-clinical evidence and preliminary reports from independent studies. It supported by extensive data on the safety and efficacy of Jakavi in conditions like acute graft versus host disease and myeloproliferative neoplasms.

Terminates Sale of Sandoz Dermatology Business – Apr 2

Novartis announced that it will not sell Sandoz US generic oral solids and dermatology businesses to Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc.

Notably, Novartis had agreed to sell selected portions of the Sandoz US portfolio, specifically the Sandoz US dermatology business and generic US oral solids portfolio, to Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc. for $0.8 billion in cash and potential earn-outs in September 2018.

The company has terminated the agreement of sale as approval from the U.S. Federal Trade Commission for the transaction was not obtained within anticipated timelines.

Data on Inclisiran – Mar 28

Novartis has announced encouraging results from a prespecified analysis of pooled data from three phase III studies evaluating the safety and efficacy of inclisiran, its first-in-class experimental candidate for the treatment of hyperlipidemia in adults.

The prespecified analysis of pooled data from ORION-9, -10 and -11 phase III studies shows inclisiran reduced low-density lipoprotein-cholesterol (LDL-C) by 51% in 17 months. In addition, the prespecified exploratory analysis showed fewer major adverse cardiovascular events (MACE) with inclisiran compared to placebo based on safety reporting from the three studies.

CHMP positive on Cosentyx – Mar 27

Novartis also announced that the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the EMA has adopted a positive opinion for spondylitis drug Cosentyx (secukinumab) for the treatment of adult patients with active non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis (nr-axSpA).

The CHMP also adopted a positive opinion recommending conditional marketing authorization of one-time administered gene therapy Zolgensma for patients with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) and a clinical diagnosis of Type 1 or SMA patients with up to three copies of the SMN2 gene.

Data on Zolgensma – Mar 24

Novartis announced a one-time infusion of Zolgensmashowed rapid, significant and clinically meaningful therapeutic benefit in patients with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) across a range of studies, including in patients treated presymptomatically, and sustained durability in patients now up to five years post-dosing and some patients more than five years of age.

To Donate Generic Hydroxychloroquine for Coronavirus – Mar 20

Novartis announced that it will provide up to 130 million doses of generic hydroxychloroquine to support the treatment of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Novartis plans to donate up to 130 million 200 mg doses by the end of May, including its current stock of 50 million 200 mg doses, for use in COVID-19 infected patients, supported by regulatory authorities. Novartis is also looking to ramp up its capacity to increase supply to meet global demand.

Novartis' generic arm, Sandoz, currently holds only a registration for hydroxychloroquine in the United States. The company said it will pursue appropriate regulatory authorizations from the FDA and the European Medicines Agency.

Approval of Zolgensma in Japan – Mar 19

Novartis announced that the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) approved Zolgensmafor the treatment of SMA in patients under the age of two, including those who are pre-symptomatic at diagnosis.

Valuation

Novartis' shares are are down 9.3% in the year-to-date period and 2.6% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Medical sector are down 1.4% and 0.5%% in the year-to-date period, respectively. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry is up 7.9% while the sector is down 2.7%.

The S&P 500 index is down 0.9% in the year-to-date period but up 10.5% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 14.52X forward 12-month earnings per share which compares to 14.6X for the Zacks sub-industry, 23.16X for the Zacks sector and 23.07X for the S&P 500 Index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 19.7X and as low as 11.99X, with a 5-year median of 15.92X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $90.00 price target reflects 15.2X forward 12-month earnings per share.

The table below shows summary valuation data for NVS

Valuation Multiples - NVS

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	14.52	14.6	23.16	23.07
	5-Year High	19.7	18.12	23.16	23.07
	5-Year Low	11.99	13.07	15.94	15.23
	5-Year Median	15.92	15.33	19.04	17.49
P/S F12M	Current	3.84	4.62	2.8	3.59
	5-Year High	4.84	4.83	3.74	3.59
	5-Year Low	3.14	3.92	2.21	2.53
	5-Year Median	3.85	4.39	2.91	3.02
P/B TTM	Current	3.86	6.21	4.29	4.36
	5-Year High	4.64	7.23	5.05	4.56
	5-Year Low	2.19	3.77	2.92	2.83
	5-Year Median	2.77	5.24	4.28	3.65

As of 05/05/2020

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Top 7% (17 out of 253)

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
AbbVie Inc. **(ABBV)**	Outperform	1
Eli Lilly and Company **(LLY)**	Outperform	1
Bayer Aktiengesellschaft **(BAYRY)**	Neutral	2
GlaxoSmithKline plc **(GSK)**	Neutral	2
MerckCo., Inc. **(MRK)**	Neutral	3
Pfizer Inc. **(PFE)**	Neutral	3
Roche Holding AG **(RHHBY)**	Neutral	3
Sanofi **(SNY)**	Neutral	3

Industry Comparison Industry: Large Cap Pharmaceuticals

Industry Peers

	NVS	X Industry	S&P 500	BAYRY	PFE	RHHBY
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	2	3	3
VGM Score	B	-	-	A	A	A
Market Cap	196.84 B	141.32 B	23.09 B	69.27 B	199.92 B	294.14 B
# of Analysts	5	2	14	2	3	4
Dividend Yield	2.34%	2.74%	1.82%	2.86%	4.22%	1.67%
Value Score	B	-	-	A	B	A
Cash/Price	0.02	0.05	0.06	0.10	0.05	0.04
EV/EBITDA	13.95	13.95	13.17	9.15	9.53	13.38
PEG Ratio	1.78	2.04	3.13	1.34	2.84	3.02
Price/Book (P/B)	3.86	3.96	3.15	1.30	3.06	8.15
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	11.00	12.30	12.43	5.34	8.76	13.44
P/E (F1)	15.23	15.24	22.80	9.77	12.60	16.52
Price/Sales (P/S)	4.05	4.20	2.52	1.39	3.95	NA
Earnings Yield	6.57%	6.57%	4.19%	10.23%	7.95%	6.05%
Debt/Equity	0.50	0.67	0.76	0.78	0.56	0.35
Cash Flow ($/share)	7.80	4.33	7.01	3.48	4.11	3.20
Growth Score	B	-	-	C	B	A
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	1.77%	8.53%	10.87%	NA	8.07%	NA
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	7.56%	3.06%	-10.79%	7.34%	-3.16%	2.36%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	4.27%	3.68%	5.48%	-8.03%	-6.57%	11.61%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	7.11%	7.62%	8.55%	6.30%	2.54%	9.89%
Current Ratio	0.74	1.11	1.29	1.40	1.02	1.30
Debt/Capital	33.33%	39.71%	44.75%	43.72%	35.70%	26.10%
Net Margin	24.97%	22.54%	10.59%	9.65%	31.17%	NA
Return on Equity	24.39%	32.02%	16.26%	14.15%	25.76%	NA
Sales/Assets	0.41	0.46	0.55	0.35	0.31	NA
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	4.76%	4.52%	-2.61%	-3.06%	-12.74%	5.32%
Momentum Score	C	-	-	D	C	B
Daily Price Chg	0.90%	0.36%	2.89%	3.74%	-0.06%	-0.81%
1 Week Price Chg	2.97%	1.84%	4.60%	8.50%	1.84%	-3.02%
4 Week Price Chg	1.44%	1.98%	15.60%	18.66%	-2.62%	-1.78%
12 Week Price Chg	15.96%	19.89%	29.34%	35.75%	19.89%	20.44%
52 Week Price Chg	-2.02%	19.54%	2.76%	23.06%	-15.73%	27.07%
20 Day Average Volume	1,737,845	2,900,643	2,537,324	589,025	25,428,056	1,821,593
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.60%	0.00%	0.00%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	0.00%	0.09%	-0.08%	1.60%	0.23%	0.19%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	-1.81%	-2.06%	-16.19%	-2.06%	2.12%	-2.07%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	NA	-7.81%	NA

Zacks Stock Rating System

We offer two rating systems that take into account investors' holding horizons: Zacks Rank and Zacks Recommendation. Each provides valuable insights into the future profitability of the stock and can be used separately or in combination with each other depending on your investment style.

Zacks Recommendation

The Zacks Recommendation aims to predict performance over the next 6 to 12 months. The foundation for the quantitatively determined Zacks Recommendation is trends in the company's estimate revisions and earnings outlook. The Zacks Recommendation is broken down into 3 Levels; Outperform, Neutral and Underperform. Unlike many Wall Street firms, we have an excellent balance between the number of Outperform and Neutral recommendations. Our team of 70 analysts are fully versed in the benefits of earnings estimate revisions and how that is harnessed through the Zacks quantitative rating system. But we have given our analysts the ability to override the Zacks Recommendation for the 1200 stocks that they follow. The reason for the analyst over-rides is that there are often factors such as valuation, industry conditions and management effectiveness that a trained investment professional can spot better than a quantitative model.

Zacks Rank

The Zacks Rank is our short-term rating system that is most effective over the one- to three-month holding horizon. The underlying driver for the quantitatively-determined Zacks Rank is the same as the Zacks Recommendation, and reflects trends in earnings estimate revisions.

Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	B
Growth Score	B
Momentum Score	C
VGM Score	B

As an investor, you want to buy stocks with the highest probability of success. That means buying stocks with a Zacks Recommendation of Outperform, which also has a Style Score of an A or a B.

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