ASKA Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

# Announcement on the Launch of RIFXIMA® Tablets 200 mg in Japan

On November 29th, 2016, ASKA Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd (Head Office located in Tokyo headed by the Representative Director/President Takashi Yamaguchi, hereinafter referred to as "ASKA") announced that ASKA has launched a poorly absorbable antimicrobial agent RIFXIMA® 200 mg (generic name: RIFAXIMIN) in Japan.

RIFAXIMIN was discovered and developed by Alfa Wassermann S.p.A (Head Office located in Bologna, Italy, hereinafter referred to as "AW"). ASKA acquired the exclusive marketing rights for RIFAXIMIN in Japan by concluding a licensing agreement with AW. In September 28th, 2016, ASKA received the marketing and manufacturing approval of RIFXIMA® from the Japanese authority for “indication of improvement of hyperammonemia in hepatic encephalopathy”.

RIFAXIMIN is marketed in 47 countries worldwide. Based on the evidence of clinical data, the Japanese Clinical Practice Guidelines 2015 for Hepatic Cirrhosis included RIFXIMA® as an effective drug for hepatic encephalopathy to be used in Japanese clinical practice. RIFXIMA® is therefore expected to be a new and promising option for hepatic encephalopathy in Japanese clinical practice.

ASKA has committed to “Contribute toward the improvement of people’s health and progress in medicine through the development of innovative products” that would gain the trust and acceptance of the general public.

RIFXIMA Product Reference

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| Brand name | RIFXIMA® TABLETS 200 mg |
| Generic name | RIFAXIMIN |
| Indications | Improvement of hyperammonemia in hepatic encephalopathy |
| Dosage and administration | The usual oral dosage for adults is 400mg of RIFAXIMIN-α, 3 times daily after meals. |
| Listing in the NHI reimbursement price | 18 November 2016 |
| NHI price | 201.90 yen |
| Packaging | 100 tablets (10 tablets×10, individual), 500 tablets (10 tablets×50) |

Hepatic Encephalopathy

Hepatic encephalopathy is a serious complication caused by hepatic disorders such as fulminant hepatitis or hepatic cirrhosis, and it is presented primarily with psychoneurotic symptoms.

Various factors are considered as the pathological mechanism of developing hepatic encephalopathy. In particular, ammonia, which is produced through decomposition of proteins from foods taken by means of intestinal bacteria, is considered to have negative effects on the functions of the nervous system. When the liver functions are in a normal manner, ammonia is primarily metabolized by the liver. However, when the functions of the liver become compromised because of hepatic cirrhosis or other disorders, metabolism at the liver becomes insufficient.

This results in elevation of blood ammonia levels, leading to the direct damage on the brain, causing various kinds of psychoneurotic symptoms. Hepatic encephalopathy is associated with impaired consciousness or abnormal behaviors. If further progressed, patients may eventually fall into coma, leading to a life-threatening status.

**Alfa Wassermann S.p.A**

Alfa Wassermann is a private pharmaceutical company wholly owned by and subject to the direction and coordination of Alfasigma S.p.A. Alfa Wassermann has its headquarters in Bologna, Italy with its own R&D and manufacturing facilities. In 2015, Alfa Wassermann net sales were €429 million and the company employs over 1,500 people. It has a growing number of affiliate companies in both European markets and emerging markets such as Russia, China and Mexico.

Its main product RIFAXIMIN is a gut-selective antibiotic marketed under the trade names of NORMIX®, XIFAXAN® and others, in 47 countries, including the USA. Alfa Wassermann has also developed other important products: SULODEXIDE (VESSEL®) and PARNAPARIN (FLUXUM®). For more information, please visit the website www.alfawassermann.com