

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP
Form 10-K/A
November 12, 2002

=====

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Form 10-K/A
(Amendment No. 2)

(MARK ONE)

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE
ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended: December 31,2001

or

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES
EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

Commission file number: 0-10824

Genome Therapeutics Corp.
(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Massachusetts
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or
organization)

04-2297484
(IRS employer identification number)

100 Beaver Street, Waltham, Massachusetts
(Address of principal executive offices)

02453
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number: (781) 398-2300

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act: NONE

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:
COMMON STOCK, \$.10 PAR VALUE
(Title of Class)

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports
required to be filed by section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of
1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the
registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such
filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item
405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the
best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements
incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this
Form 10-K.

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

The aggregate market value of the voting stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant as of November 8, 2002 was approximately \$37,795,944.

The number of shares outstanding of the registrant's common stock as of November 8, 2002 was 23,066,072.

Documents Incorporated By Reference

Portions of the registrant's proxy statement for use at its Annual Meeting to be held on June 19, 2002 are incorporated by reference into Part III.

=====

Introductory Note

This Annual Report on Form 10-K/A replaces Exhibit 10.61 of Form 10-K filed on April 1, 2002.

1

PART IV

ITEM 14. Exhibits, Financial Statement Schedules and Reports on Form 8K

(a) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT SCHEDULES (1) AND (2) See "Index to Consolidated Financial Statements and Financial Statement Schedules" appearing on page F-1.

(3) Exhibits

Exhibit No.	Description
3	Restated Articles of Organization and By-laws/(1)/
3.1	Amendment dated January 5, 1982 to Restated Articles of Organization/(2)/
3.2	Amendment dated January 24, 1983 to Restated Articles of Organization/(3)/
3.3	Amendment dated January 17, 1984 to Restated Articles of Organization/(4)/
3.4	Amendment dated October 20, 1987 to the By-laws/(8)/
3.5	Amendment dated December 9, 1987 to Restated Articles of Organization/(9)/
3.6	Amendment dated October 16, 1989 to the By-law/(11)/
3.7	Amendment dated January 24, 1994 to Articles Restated Articles of Organization/(14)/
3.8	Amendment dated August 31, 1994 to Restated Articles of Organization/(14)/
3.9	Amendment dated March 15, 2001 to Restated Articles of Organization/(33)/
3.10	By-Laws of Genome Therapeutics Corp (as amended through July 24, 2001)/(34)/
4.2	Form of Note dated March 5, 2002 received by Smithfield Fiduciary LLC and the Tail Wind Fund, Ltd./(35)/
4.3	Form of Warrant received by Smithfield Fiduciary LLC and The Tail Wind Fund, Ltd./(35)/
10.4	Incentive Stock Option Plan and Form of Stock Option Certificate/(1)/

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

- 10.6 Genome Therapeutics Corp. (f/k/a Collaborative Research) Incentive Savings Plan/(6)/
- 10.7 Amendment dated November 4, 1986 to the Genome Therapeutics Corp. (f/k/a Collaborative Research) Incentive Savings Plan dated March 1, 1985/(7)/
- 10.14 1991 Stock Option Plan and Form of Stock Option Certificate/(12)/
- 10.15 Lease dated November 17, 1992 relating to certain property in Waltham, Massachusetts/(13)/
- 10.16 Lease dated June 3, 1993 relating to certain property in Waltham, Massachusetts/(13)/
- 10.19 Employment Agreement with Robert J. Hennessey/(13)/
- 10.22 Lease Amendment dated August 1, 1994 relating to certain property in Waltham, MA/(14)/
- 10.24 1993 Stock Option Plan and Form of Stock Option Certificate/(14)/
- 10.28 Agreement between the Company and AstraZeneca PLC (f/k/a Astra Hassle AB) dated August 31, 1995/(16)/*
- 10.29 Collaboration and License Agreement between the Company, Schering Corporation and Schering-Plough Ltd., dated as of December 6, 1995/(18)/*
- 10.30 Form of director Stock Option Agreement and schedule of director options granted/(17)/

1

Exhibit No.	Description

10.37	Lease amendment dated November 15, 1996 to certain property in Waltham, MA/(19)/
10.38	Collaboration and License Agreement between the Company, Schering Corporation and Schering-Plough Ltd., dated as of December 20, 1996/(20)/*
10.39	Credit agreement between the Company and Fleet National Bank dated February 28, 1997/(21)/
10.40	Credit agreement between the Company and U S Trust (f/k/a Sumitomo Bank, Limited) dated July 31, 1997/(22)/
10.41	Collaboration and License Agreement between the Company and Schering Corporation, dated September 22, 1997/(23)/*
10.42	Collaboration and License Agreement between the Company and Schering-Plough Ltd. dated September 22, 1997/(23)/*
10.43	Credit modification agreement between the Company and Fleet National Bank, dated March 9, 1998/(24)/
10.44	1997 Directors' Deferred Stock Plan/(25)/
10.45	1997 Stock Option Plan/(25)/
10.46	Amended Employment Agreement with Robert J. Hennessey/(26)/
10.47	Collaboration and License Agreement between the Company and American Home Products, Inc., acting through its Wyeth-Ayerst Division, dated December 20, 1999/(27)/
10.49	Collaboration and License Agreement between Genome Therapeutics Corporation and bioMerieux Incorporated dated as of September 30, 1999/(29)/
10.50	Registration Rights Agreement between the Company and bioMerieux Alliance sa dated September 30, 1999/(30)/
10.51	Compound Discovery Collaboration Agreement, dated October 17, 2000 between the Company and ArQule, Inc./ (31)/*
10.52	2001 Incentive Plan/(32)/
10.53	Stock Option Agreements with Steven M. Rauscher/(32)/
10.55	Employment Letter with Steven M. Rauscher/(34)/
10.56	Employment Letter with Stephen Cohen/(34)/

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

- 10.57 Employment Letter with Richard Labaudinere PhD/(34)/
- 10.58 Purchase Agreement dated March 5, 2002 among Smithfield Fiduciary LLC, The Tail Wind Fund, Ltd. and the Company/(35)/
- 10.59 Registration Rights Agreement dated March 5, 2002 among Smithfield Fiduciary LLC, The Tail Wind Fund, Ltd. and the Company/(35)/
- 10.60 Employment Letter with Robert J. Hennessey/(36)/
- 10.61 License and Supply Agreement between the Company and Biosearch Italia, S.P.A., dated October 8, 2001/(38)/*
- 23. Consent of Arthur Andersen LLP Independent Public Accounts/(37)/
- 99.1 Risk Factors/(36)/
- 99.2 Letter to Commission Pursuant to Temporary Note 3T/(37)/

* Confidential treatment requested with respect to a portion of this Exhibit.

- /(1)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 (No. 2-75230) and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(2)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended February 27, 1982 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(3)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended February 26, 1983 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(4)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended February 25, 1984 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(6)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1985 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(7)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1986 and incorporated herein by reference.

2

- /(8)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended August 31, 1987 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(9)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended November 28, 1987 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(11)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1989 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(12)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1992 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(13)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1993 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(14)/ Filed as exhibits of the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1994 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(16)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K/A3 for the year ended August 31, 1995 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(17)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company Registration Statement on Forms S-8 (File No. 33-61191) and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(18)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended November 25, 1995 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(19)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-K for fiscal year ended August 31, 1996 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(20)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q/A for the quarter ended

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

- March 1, 1997 and incorporated herein by reference.
- /(21)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended May 31, 1997 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(22)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-K for fiscal year ended August 31, 1997 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(23)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended February 28, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(24)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended May 30, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(25)/ Filed as exhibits to the Company's Registration Statement on Forms S-8 (333-49069) and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(26)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-K for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1998 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(27)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 8-K filed on March 8, 2000 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(29)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended November 27, 1999 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(30)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Registration Statement on Forms S-3 (333-32614) and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(31)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-K for the quarter ended November 25, 2000 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(32)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-8 (333-58274) and incorporated herein by reference./ (31)/
 - /(33)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended February 24, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(34)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-Q for the quarter ended September 29, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(35)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 8-K filed on March 6, 2002 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(36)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(37)/ Filed as an exhibit to the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K/A1 for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2001 and incorporated herein by reference.
 - /(38)/ Filed herewith.

3

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Genome Therapeutics Corp. has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, on November 12, 2002.

GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP.

/S/ STEPHEN COHEN

Stephen Cohen
Senior Vice President and Chief
Financial Officer

N="BOTTOM">

USE OF PROCEEDS

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK

DIVIDENDS

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

LEGAL MATTERS

EXPERTS

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

YOU SHOULD RELY ONLY ON THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS PROSPECTUS, ANY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT OR ANY DOCUMENT INCORPORATED HEREIN OR THEREIN TO WHICH WE HAVE REFERRED YOU. WE HAVE NOT AUTHORIZED ANYONE ELSE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION THAT IS DIFFERENT. THIS PROSPECTUS AND ANY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT MAY BE USED ONLY WHERE IT IS LEGAL TO SELL THESE SECURITIES. THE INFORMATION IN THIS PROSPECTUS OR ANY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT IS CURRENT ONLY AS OF THE DATE ON THE FRONT OF THESE DOCUMENTS.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, using a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf process, we may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to a total public offering price of \$100,000,000 (or its equivalent in foreign or composite currencies). 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 securities being offered and the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add to, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information" carefully before making an investment decision.

Unless the context otherwise requires, in this prospectus, "EXACT Sciences," "the Company," "we," "us" and "our" refer to EXACT Sciences Corporation and its subsidiaries.

ABOUT EXACT SCIENCES CORPORATION

EXACT Sciences Corporation has developed and continues to develop proprietary technologies in applied genomics (our "PreGen technologies") that we believe will revolutionize the early detection of colorectal cancer and potentially other types of common cancers. We believe that medical practitioners will order tests based on our PreGen technologies as part of a regular screening program for the early detection of these cancers. We also believe that the widespread and regular application of tests utilizing our PreGen technologies will reduce mortality, morbidity and the costs associated with these cancers.

We have selected colorectal cancer as the first application of our PreGen technologies because it is the most deadly cancer among non-smokers, it is curable if detected early and it is well understood from a genomics point of view. There are over 80 million Americans age 50 and over for whom the American Cancer Society recommends regular colorectal cancer screening. Current detection methods for colorectal cancer have proven to be inadequate as screening tools due to invasiveness, inadequate performance characteristics, or poor patient compliance.

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware on February 10, 1995 as Lapidus Medical Systems, Inc. We changed our corporate name to EXACT Laboratories, Inc. on December 11, 1996, to EXACT Corporation on September 12, 2000 and to EXACT Sciences Corporation on December 1, 2000. Our principal executive offices are located at 100 Campus Drive, Marlborough, Massachusetts 01752 and our telephone number is (508) 683-1200. Our Internet address is www.exactsciences.com. We make available on our Internet website free of charge a link to our Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports as soon as practicable after we electronically file such material with the SEC. The information contained on our website is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

The prospectus supplement applicable to each type or series of securities we offer will contain a discussion of the risks applicable to an investment in EXACT Sciences and 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 or incorporated by reference in the prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You should also consider the risks, uncertainties and assumptions discussed under the caption "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Certain Business Risks" included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for our latest fiscal year, and our subsequent Form 10-Q's, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus, and which may be amended, supplemented or superseded from time to time by other reports we file with the SEC in the future.

2

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement (including any document incorporated by reference herein or therein) include forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Act, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the Exchange Act, that are subject to the "safe harbor" created by those sections. Some of the forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terms such as "believes," "expects," "may," "will," "should," "could," "seek," "intends," "plans," "estimates," "anticipates" or other comparable terms. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, which are difficult to predict and many of which are beyond our control. A number of important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements, including those factors discussed in "Risk Factors" in any prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference herein or therein. Factors that could cause actual results to differ from those reflected in forward-looking statements relating to our operations and business include:

the failure to meet expectations with respect to our future performance;

our dependence on collaborative relationships;

our ability to license certain technologies or maintain our license agreements;

our dependence on third parties for the supply of raw materials;

pricing pressures and other competitive factors;

demand for and market acceptance of our products and services;

successful development of products and services and the timing of product and service introductions;

reliance on third party payors to provide adequate reimbursements;

the availability and extent of utilization of manufacturing capacity and raw materials;

failure to comply with U.S. Food and Drug Administration requirements;

our ability to develop and implement new technologies;

our ability to protect our intellectual property;

changes in healthcare policy;

our ability to attract and retain qualified personnel;

our reliance on financial markets for future capital requirements;

the impact of new accounting policies;

the uncertainties of litigation; and

other risks and uncertainties, including those set forth or incorporated in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement, and those detailed from time to time in our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

You should read this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein completely and with the understanding that actual future results may be materially different from expectations. All forward-looking statements made or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any accompanying prospectus supplement are qualified by these cautionary statements. These forward-looking statements are made only as of the date of this prospectus, or the related prospectus supplement, as applicable, and we do not undertake any obligation, other than as may be required by law, to update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect changes in assumptions, the occurrence of unanticipated events or changes in future operating results over time.

3

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we tell you otherwise in a prospectus supplement, we will use the net proceeds from the sale of these securities for research and development and product marketing, and other general corporate purposes, which may also include acquisitions, investments, capital expenditures, repurchase of our capital stock, and for any other purposes that we may specify in any prospectus supplement. We may also invest the net proceeds temporarily in short-term securities until we use them for their stated purpose.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

The following table sets forth our ratio of earnings to fixed charges and earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for each of the periods indicated:

	SIX MONTHS ENDED JUNE 30, 2003	FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,				
		2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS	(2)	(2)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(3)

- (1) During each of these periods, our earnings were less than our fixed charges. The amount of such deficiency was approximately \$15.8 million for the six months ended June 30, 2003, and \$29.9 million, \$23.5 million, \$11.9 million, \$5.0 million and \$3.6 million for fiscal years 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999 and 1998, respectively.
- (2) During each of these periods, the Company had no preferred stock outstanding.
- (3) During each of these periods, our earnings were less than our combined fixed charges and preferred dividends. The amount of such deficiency was approximately \$11.9 million, \$5.0 million and \$3.6 million for fiscal years 2000, 1999 and 1998, respectively, or the same amounts reflected in Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges above, as dividends were at the discretion of the board of directors none of which were declared.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK AND PREFERRED STOCK

The following description of our common stock and preferred stock, together with the additional information included in any applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes the material terms and provisions of these types of securities but is not complete. For the complete terms of our common stock and preferred stock, please refer to our Sixth Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation and our Amended and Restated By-laws, that are incorporated by reference into the registration statement which includes this prospectus and, with respect to preferred stock, the certificate of designation which will be filed with the SEC for each series of preferred stock we may designate, if any.

We will describe in a prospectus supplement the specific terms of any common stock or preferred stock that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. If indicated in a prospectus supplement, the terms of such common stock or preferred stock may differ from the terms described below.

We have 105,000,000 shares of capital stock authorized under our certificate of incorporation, consisting of 100,000,000 shares of common stock and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock. As of September 5, 2003, we had 19,218,608 shares of common stock outstanding and no shares of preferred stock outstanding. The authorized shares of common stock and preferred stock are available for issuance without further action by our stockholders, unless such action is required by applicable law or the rules of any stock exchange or automated quotation system on which our securities may be listed or traded. If the approval of our stockholders is not so required, our board of directors may determine not to seek stockholder approval.

Common Stock

Holders of our common stock are entitled to such dividends as may be declared by our board of directors out of funds legally available for such purpose, subject to any preferential dividend rights of any then outstanding preferred stock. The shares of common stock are neither redeemable or convertible. Holders of common stock have no preemptive or subscription rights to purchase any securities of EXACT Sciences.

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of our common stock are entitled to receive pro rata the assets of EXACT Sciences which are legally available for distribution, after payments of all debts and other liabilities and subject to the prior rights of any holders of preferred stock then outstanding.

Each holder of our common stock is entitled to one vote for each such share outstanding in the holder's name. No holder of common stock is entitled to cumulate votes in voting for directors.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol "EXAS." American Stock Transfer & Trust Company is the transfer agent and registrar for our common stock. Its address is 59 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038, and its telephone number is (800) 937-5449.

Preferred Stock

Our certificate of incorporation permits us to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series and with rights and preferences that may be fixed or designated by our board of directors without any further action by our stockholders. The designation, powers, preferences, rights and qualifications, limitations and restrictions of the preferred stock of each series will be fixed by the certificate of

designation relating to such series, which will specify the terms of the preferred stock, including:

the designation of the series, which may be by distinguishing number, letter or title;

5

the number of shares of the series, which number the board of directors may thereafter (except where otherwise provided in the preferred stock designation) increase or decrease (but not below the number of shares thereof then outstanding);

whether dividends, if any, shall be cumulative or noncumulative and the dividend rate of the series;

the dates on which dividends, if any, shall be payable;

the redemption rights and price or prices, if any, for shares of the series;

the terms and amount of any sinking fund provided for the purchase or redemption of shares of the series;

the amounts payable on shares of the series in the event of any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of EXACT Sciences;

whether the shares of the series shall be convertible into shares of any other class or series, or any other security, of EXACT Sciences or any other corporation, and, if so, the specification of such other class or series or such other security, the conversion price or prices or rate or rates, any adjustments thereof, the date or dates as of which such shares shall be convertible and all other terms and conditions upon which such conversion may be made;

restrictions on the issuance of shares of the same series or of any other class or series; and

the voting rights, if any, of the holders of shares of the series, provided that no share of preferred stock of any series will be entitled to more than one vote per share of preferred stock.

Although our board of directors has no intention at the present time of doing so, it could issue a series of preferred stock that could, depending on the terms of such series, impede the completion of a merger, tender offer or other takeover attempt.

Certain Provisions in our Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws

The following is a summary of certain provisions of Delaware law, our certificate of incorporation and our by-laws. This summary does not purport to be complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the corporate law of Delaware and our certificate of incorporation and by-laws.

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws contain various provisions intended to promote the stability of our stockholder base and render more difficult certain unsolicited or hostile attempts to take us over that could disrupt EXACT Sciences, divert the attention of our directors, officers and employees and adversely affect the independence and integrity of our business.

Pursuant to our certificate of incorporation, the number of directors is fixed by our board of directors. Our directors are divided into three classes, each class to serve a three year term and to consist as nearly as possible of one third of the directors. Pursuant to our by-laws, directors elected by stockholders at an annual meeting of stockholders will be elected by a plurality of all votes cast.

Our by-laws provide that a special meeting of stockholders may be called only by the chairman of the board, a majority of the entire board of directors or the president. Stockholders are not permitted to call, or to require that the board of directors call, a special meeting of

stockholders. Moreover, the business permitted to be conducted at any special meeting of stockholders is limited to the business brought before the meeting pursuant to the notice of the meeting given. In addition, our certificate of incorporation provides that any action taken by our stockholders must be effected at an annual or special meeting of stockholders and may not be taken by written consent instead of a meeting. Our by-laws establish an advance notice procedure for stockholders to nominate candidates for election as directors or to bring other business before meetings of our stockholders.

6

Our certificate of incorporation requires the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 80% of the voting power of all the then outstanding shares of our capital stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors, voting together as a single class, to amend or repeal any provision of our by-laws, amend or repeal the provision of our certificate of incorporation relating to amendments to our by-laws or adopt any provision inconsistent with such provisions.

Our certificate of incorporation requires the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 75% of the voting power of all of the then outstanding shares of our capital stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors, voting together as a single class, to amend or repeal, the provisions of our certificate of incorporation relating to the election of directors, the classified board, or the right to act by written consent or to adopt any provision inconsistent with such provisions.

We are also subject to a Delaware statute regulating "business combinations," defined to include a broad range of transactions, between Delaware corporations and "interested stockholders," defined as persons who have acquired at least 15% of a corporation's stock. Under such statute, a corporation may not engage in any business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years after the date such person became an interested stockholder unless certain conditions are satisfied. The statute contains provisions enabling a corporation to avoid the statute's restrictions. We have not sought to "elect out" of the statute. Therefore, the restrictions imposed by such statute will apply to us.

7

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

General

The debt securities that we may issue will constitute debentures, notes, bonds or other evidences of indebtedness of EXACT Sciences, 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 U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee. This prospectus refers to U.S. Bank National Association as the trustee. We have filed the form of the indenture as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. If we enter into any indenture supplement, we will file a copy of that supplement with the SEC.

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, AS AMENDED. 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.

The indenture contains no covenant or provision which affords debt holders protection in the event of a highly leveraged transaction.

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 by resolution of our board of directors or by means of a supplemental indenture, 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:

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

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

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;

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

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;

8

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 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;

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;

the subordination, 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 any 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 or board resolution establishing such debt securities 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 indenture, 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.

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

10

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.

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.

11

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 Sciences, 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.

Covenants by EXACT Sciences

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 board resolution or 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.

12

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:

- (a) failure to pay when due any interest on any debt security of that series, continued for 30 days;
- (b) failure to pay when due the principal of, or premium, if any, on, any debt security of that series;
- (c) default in the payment of any sinking fund installment with respect to any debt security of that series when due and payable;
- (d) 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;
- (e) certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or similar proceedings affecting us; and
- (f) 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 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 supplemental indentures to, among other things:

add guarantees to or secure any series of debt securities;

13

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;

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;

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;

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;

add to or change any of the provisions of the indenture 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;

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;

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

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:

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

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

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;

release any security interest that may have been granted with respect to such debt securities;

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;

14

reduce any premium payable upon the redemption of any debt securities or change the time at which any debt security may be redeemed; 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.

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

15

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, 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 Sciences, as such, shall have any liability for any obligations of EXACT Sciences 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 Sciences. 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 issued under the indenture 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.

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

16

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 of (including authentication and delivery on original issuance of the debt securities), 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 Sciences, 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.

The initial trustee is one of a number of banks with which we may maintain commercial or investment banking relationships and with which we may enter into credit facilities or other transactions.

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.

17

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue securities warrants for the purchase of debt securities, preferred stock or common stock. Securities 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. Each series of securities warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a warrant agent. The securities warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the securities warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any registered holders of securities warrants or beneficial owners of securities warrants. This summary of some provisions of the securities warrants is not complete. You should refer to the securities warrant agreement, including the forms of securities warrant certificate representing the securities warrants, relating to the specific securities warrants being offered for the complete terms of the securities warrant agreement and the securities warrants. That securities warrant agreement, together with the terms of securities warrant certificate and securities warrants, will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering of the specific securities warrants.

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

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

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;

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.

Securities warrants for the purchase of preferred stock and common stock will be offered and exercisable for U.S. dollars only. Securities warrants will be issued in registered form only.

Each securities 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 securities warrants will become void. We will specify the place or places where, and the manner in which, securities warrants may be exercised in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Upon receipt of payment and the warrant certificate properly completed and duly executed at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the purchased securities. If less than all of the warrants represented by the warrant certificate are exercised, a new warrant certificate will be issued for the remaining warrants.

Prior to the exercise of any securities warrants to purchase debt securities, preferred stock or common stock, holders of the securities warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities, preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise, including (i) in the case of securities warrants for the purchase of debt securities, the right to receive payments of principal of, any premium or interest on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise or to enforce covenants in the applicable indenture, or (ii) in the case of securities warrants for the purchase of preferred stock or common stock, the right to vote or to receive any payments of dividends on the preferred stock or common stock purchasable upon exercise.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may offer and sell the securities being offered pursuant to this prospectus, to or through one or more underwriters, through one or more dealers or agents, through a block trade in which the broker or dealer engaged to handle the block trade will attempt to sell the securities as agent (but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction) directly to one or more purchasers (through a specific bidding or auction process or otherwise) 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.

If underwriters are used in an offering, we will execute an underwriting agreement with such underwriters and will specify the name of each underwriter and the terms of the transaction (including any underwriting discounts and other terms constituting compensation of the underwriters and any dealers) in a prospectus supplement. The securities may be offered to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by managing underwriters or directly by one or more investment banking firms or others, as designated. If an underwriting syndicate is used, the managing underwriter(s) will be specified on the cover of the prospectus supplement. If underwriters are used in the sale, the offered securities will be acquired by the underwriters for their own accounts and may be resold from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. Any public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers may be changed from time to time. Unless otherwise set forth in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the offered securities will be subject to conditions precedent and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of the offered securities if any are purchased.

We may grant to the underwriters options to purchase additional securities to cover over-allotments, if any, at the public offering price, with additional underwriting commissions or discounts, as may be set forth in a related prospectus supplement. The terms of any over-allotment option will be set forth in the prospectus supplement for those securities.

If any underwriters are involved in the offer and sale, they will be permitted to engage in transactions that maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities. These transactions may include over-allotment transactions, purchases to cover short positions created by the underwriter in connection with the offering and the imposition of penalty bids. If an underwriter creates a short position in the securities in connection with the offering, i.e., if it sells more securities than set forth on the cover page of the applicable prospectus supplement, the underwriter may reduce that short position by purchasing the securities in the open market. In general, purchases of a security to reduce a short position could cause the price of the security to be higher than it might be in the absence of such purchases. As noted above, underwriters may also choose to impose penalty bids on other underwriters and/or selling group members. This means that if underwriters purchase securities on the open market to reduce their short position or to stabilize the price of the securities, they may reclaim the amount of the selling concession from those underwriters and/or selling group members who sold such securities as part of the offering.

Neither we nor any underwriter 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 such securities. In addition, neither we nor any underwriter make any representation that such underwriter will engage in such transactions or that such transactions, once commenced, will be discontinued without notice.

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

If dealers are used in an offering, we will sell the securities to the dealers as principals. The dealers then may resell the securities to the public at varying prices which they determine at the time of resale. We may solicit offers to purchase the securities directly and we may sell the securities directly to institutional or other investors, who may be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any resales of those securities. The terms of these sales, including the terms of any bidding or auction process, if utilized, will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. The names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction will be specified in a prospectus supplement.

The securities may be sold directly by us through agents we designate from time to time at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed, or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. If agents are used in an offering, the names of the agents and the terms of the agency will be specified in a prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, the agents will act on a best-efforts basis for the period of their appointment.

Dealers and agents named in a prospectus supplement may be deemed to be underwriters (within the meaning of the Securities Act) of the securities described therein. In addition, we may sell the securities directly to institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any resales thereof.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled to indemnification by us against specific civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribution with respect to payments which the underwriters or agents may be required to make in respect thereof, under underwriting or other agreements. The terms of any indemnification provisions will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. Certain underwriters, dealers or agents and their associates may engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

If so indicated in a prospectus supplement, we may authorize underwriters or other persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by institutional investors to purchase securities pursuant to contracts providing for payment and delivery on a future date. We may enter contracts with commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and other institutional investors. The obligations of any institutional investor will be subject to the condition that its purchase of the offered securities will not be illegal at the time of delivery. The underwriters and other agents will not be responsible for the validity or performance of such contracts.

Each series of securities will be a new issue of securities and will have no established trading market (other than our common stock). Any common stock sold pursuant to a prospectus supplement will be eligible for quotation and trading on Nasdaq, subject to official notice of issuance. Any underwriters to whom securities are sold by us for public offering and sale may make a market in the securities, but such underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. The securities, other than the common stock, may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange or eligible for quotation and trading on Nasdaq.

In order to comply with the securities laws of some states, if applicable, the securities offered hereby will be sold in those jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in some states securities may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and complied with.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault, LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. Certain legal matters in connection with the securities offered hereby will be passed upon for the underwriter(s), dealer(s) or agents by Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, PC.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of EXACT Sciences Corporation at December 31, 2002, and for the year then ended, incorporated by reference in this prospectus and registration statement have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent auditors, and at December 31, 2001 and for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2001, by Arthur Andersen LLP, independent auditors, as set forth in their respective reports thereon included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firms as experts in accounting and auditing.

Edgar Filing: GENOME THERAPEUTICS CORP - Form 10-K/A

We have been unable to obtain, after reasonable efforts, the written consent of Arthur Andersen LLP to our naming it as an expert and as having audited the consolidated financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2001 and including its audit report in this prospectus. Under these circumstances, Rule 437(a) under the Securities Act permits this registration statement to be filed without the consent of Arthur Andersen LLP. This lack of consent may limit your ability to recover damages from Arthur Andersen LLP under Section 11 of the Securities Act for any untrue statements of material fact contained in the financial statements audited by Arthur Andersen LLP or any omissions to state a material fact required to be stated therein or necessary to make the statements therein not misleading.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy these reports, proxy statements and other information filed by us at the SEC's public reference rooms at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can request copies of these documents by writing to the SEC and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference rooms. Our SEC filings are also available at the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you can read and copy our SEC filings at the office of the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. at 1735 "K" Street, Washington, D.C. 20006.

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act in connection with this prospectus. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. We have omitted certain parts of the registration statement in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC. For further information you should refer to the registration statement. Statements contained in this prospectus as to the contents of any contract or other document are not necessarily complete and, in each instance, you should refer to the copy of such contract or document filed as an exhibit to or incorporated by reference in the registration statement. Each statement as to the contents of such contract or document is qualified in all respects by such reference. You may obtain copies of the registration statement from the SEC's principal office in Washington, D.C. upon payment of the fees prescribed by the SEC, or you may examine the registration statement without charge at the offices of the SEC described above.

22

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" information that we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus. We incorporate by reference in this prospectus the following documents:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2002, including those portions incorporated by reference therein from our definitive proxy materials on Schedule 14A as filed with the SEC on April 28, 2003;

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the fiscal quarters ended March 31, 2003 and June 30, 2003;

the description of our common stock contained in Item 1 of our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on December 26, 2000, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating the description; and

our Current Report on Form 8-K, filed with the SEC on April 24, 2003.

Current Reports on Form 8-K containing only Regulation FD or Regulation G disclosure furnished under Item 9 or 12 of Form 8-K are not incorporated herein by reference.

All documents and reports filed by us with the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act (other than Current Reports on Form 8-K containing only Regulation FD or Regulation G disclosure furnished under Item 9 or 12 of Form 8-K, unless otherwise indicated therein) after the date of this prospectus and prior to the termination of the offering made hereby shall be deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus and to be a part hereof from the date of filing of such documents. Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained herein or in any other subsequently filed document which also is or is deemed to be incorporated by

reference herein or in any prospectus supplement modifies or supersedes such statement. Any statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We will provide, without charge to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom this prospectus is delivered, upon written or oral request of such person, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated herein by reference other than exhibits, unless such exhibits specifically are incorporated by reference into such documents or this document. Requests for such documents should be addressed in writing or by telephone to:

EXACT Sciences Corporation 100 Campus Drive
Marlborough, Massachusetts 01752
Attention: Investor Relations
(508) 683-1200

You should rely only on the information contained in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any document to which we have referred you. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with information that is different. This prospectus and any prospectus supplement may be used only where it is legal to sell these securities. The information in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is current only as of the date on the front of these documents.

23

6,000,000 Shares

EXACT SCIENCES CORPORATION

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Merrill Lynch & Co.

UBS Investment Bank

Thomas Weisel Partners LLC

Leerink Swann & Company

, 2004
