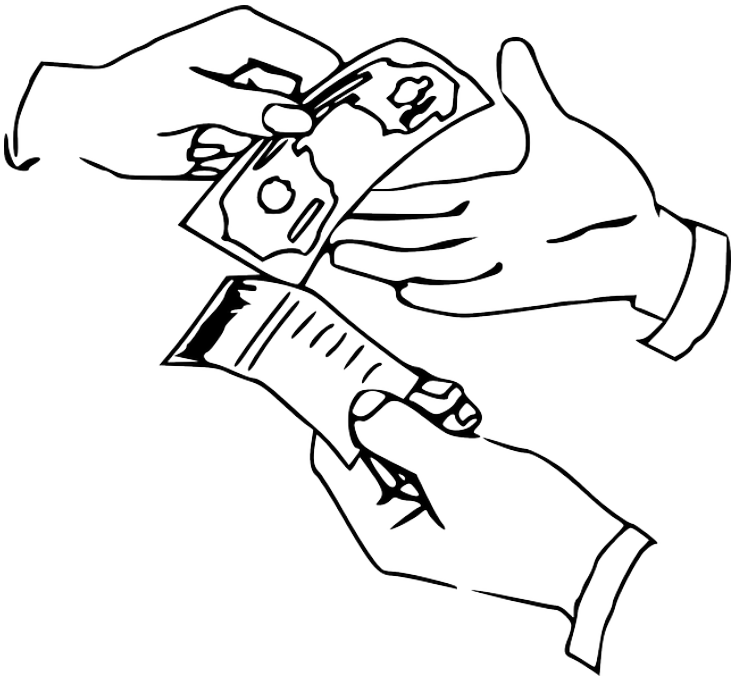
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ASIA EDITION

Mundipharma buys Merck's ophthalmology business

December 3, 2015 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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Singapore: Mundipharma Ophthalmology Products has announced an agreement with MSD, known as Merck in the United States and Canada, to acquire MSD's ophthalmology portfolio for the treatment of increased ocular pressure caused by open angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension, in Australia, Canada, Latin America, Middle East, Africa and New Zealand.

The acquired portfolio consists of COSOPT, COSOPT Preservative Free, SAFLUTAN, TIMOPTIC, TIMOPTIC XE, TIMOPTIC Preservative Free, TRUSOPT and TRUSOPT Preservative Free, which cover the primary treatment methods of open-angle glaucoma. TIMOPTIC is on the World Health Organisation's list of essential medicines, and an important first line therapy. SAFLUTAN is a prostaglandin analogue, the most common and effective category of drugs prescribed for glaucoma; while COSOPT, SAFLUTAN and TRUSOPT all provide important therapies for patients requiring subsequent treatment.

"For Mundipharma, this acquisition is a strategic entry to the global ophthalmology sector with a strong base of proven and trusted products," said Mr Raman Singh, president of Mundipharma Asia Pacific, Latin America, Middle East and Africa. He added, "Mundipharma will invest our capabilities, leverage Merck's successful clinical history and continue the legacy of trust by providing high quality solutions that address critical patient needs and expand access to these important medications in the regions which Mundipharma covers."

"We are pleased to have entered this agreement with Mundipharma to enable continued access for patients to these medicines," said Ms Muna Bhanji, president, Hospital and Specialty Care, MSD. "This transaction completes the divestiture of MSD's global ophthalmology business as we continue to sharpen our focus in core markets and therapeutic areas and advance our innovative pipeline."

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