STRYKER CORP
Form S-3ASR
January 12, 2010
Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 12, 2010

Registration No. 333-

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, DC 20549

FORM S-3

REGISTRATION STATEMENT

UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

STRYKER CORPORATION

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Michigan	**38-1239739**
(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)	**(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)**

2825 Airview Boulevard

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002

(269) 385-2600

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant s principal executive offices)

Thomas R. Winkel

Stryker Corporation

2825 Airview Boulevard

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002

(269) 385-2600

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copies to:

William R. Kunkel

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

155 North Wacker Drive

Chicago, Illinois 60606

(312) 407-0700

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after this registration statement becomes effective.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box. ¨

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box. x

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. ¨

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering. ¨

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box. x

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box. ¨

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of larger accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer x	Accelerated filer ¨
Non-accelerated filer ¨ (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)	Smaller reporting company ¨

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Amount to be Registered(1)	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit(1)	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price(1)	Amount of Registration Fee(1)
Common Stock, par value $0.10 per share				
Preferred Stock				
Debt Securities				
Warrants				
Subscription Rights				
Stock Purchase Contracts				
Stock Purchase Units				

(1) An indeterminate aggregate initial offering price, principal amount or number of the securities of each identified class is being registered as may from time to time be issued at indeterminate prices or upon conversion, exchange or exercise of securities registered hereunder to the extent any such securities are, by their terms, convertible into, or exchangeable or exercisable for, such securities. Separate consideration may or may not be received for securities that are issuable on exercise, conversion or exchange of other securities. In accordance with Rule 456(b) and Rule 457(r), the Registrant is deferring payment of all of the registration fee.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

STRYKER CORPORATION

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Debt Securities

Warrants

Subscription Rights

Stock Purchase Contracts

Stock Purchase Units

We may offer and sell from time to time, in one or more offerings, in amounts, at prices and on terms determined at the time of any such offering, (i) shares of our common stock, (ii) shares of our preferred stock, which we may issue in one or more series, (iii) debt securities, which may be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities, (iv) warrants, (v) subscription rights, (vi) stock purchase contracts and (vii) stock purchase units, each representing ownership of a stock purchase contract and debt securities, preferred securities or debt obligations of third-parties, including U.S. treasury securities or any combination of the foregoing, securing the holder s obligation to purchase our common stock or other securities under the stock purchase contracts.

We will provide the specific terms of these securities in one or more supplements to this prospectus at the time of offering. You should read this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement carefully before you make your investment decision.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the trading symbol SYK. Each prospectus supplement will indicate if the securities offered thereby will be listed on any securities exchange.

We may offer securities through underwriting syndicates managed or co-managed by one or more underwriters, or directly to purchasers. The prospectus supplement for each offering of securities will describe in detail the plan of distribution for that offering. For general information about the distribution of securities offered, please see Plan of Distribution on page 20 in this prospectus.

Investing in our securities involves risks. You should carefully read and consider the risk factors included in our periodic reports, in any prospectus supplement relating to specific offerings of securities and in other documents that we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. See Risk Factors on page 2.

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

The date of this prospectus is January 12, 2010

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS	ii
STRYKER CORPORATION	1
RISK FACTORS	2
CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION	3
USE OF PROCEEDS	4
RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES	4
DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES	5
DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK	5
DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES	8
DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS	16
DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS	18
DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND STOCK PURCHASE UNITS	19
PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION	20
LEGAL MATTERS	21
EXPERTS	21
WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION	21

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic shelf registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, as a well-known seasoned issuer as defined in Rule 405 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act. Under this shelf registration process, we may sell, from time to time, an indeterminate amount of any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer, which is not meant to be a complete description of any security. Each time that securities are sold, a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of that offering will be provided, including the specific amounts, prices and terms of the securities offered. The prospectus supplement and any other offering material may also add to, update or change information contained in this prospectus or in documents we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus. We urge you to read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement and any other offering material (including any free writing prospectus) prepared by or on behalf of us for a specific offering of securities, together with additional information described under the heading Where You Can Find More Information on page 21 of this prospectus. You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer to sell or soliciting an offer to purchase these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Unless otherwise stated or the context otherwise requires, as used in this prospectus, the words we, us, our, the Company, or Stryker refer to Stryker Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries.

You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is accurate on any date other than the date on the front cover of such document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference, even though this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is delivered or securities are sold on a later date. Neither the delivery of this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement nor any distribution of securities pursuant to such documents shall, under any circumstances, create any implication that there has been no change in the information set forth in this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement or in our affairs since the date of this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

STRYKER CORPORATION

Stryker is one of the world s leading medical technology companies with the most broadly based range of products in orthopaedics and a significant presence in other medical specialties. Stryker works with respected medical professionals to help people lead more active and more satisfying lives. The Company s products include implants used in joint replacement, trauma, and spinal surgeries; surgical equipment and surgical navigation systems; endoscopic and communications systems; patient handling and emergency medical equipment; as well as other medical device products used in a variety of medical specialties. Stryker was incorporated in Michigan in 1946 as the successor company to a business founded in 1941 by Dr. Homer H. Stryker, a leading orthopaedic surgeon and the inventor of several orthopaedic products.

Our principal executive offices are located at 2825 Airview Boulevard, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002, and our telephone number is (269) 385-2600. Our website is www.stryker.com. The content of our website is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus, and you should not consider it a part of this prospectus.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves risk. Before you decide whether to purchase any of our securities, in addition to the other information, documents or reports included or incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any prospectus supplement or other offering materials, you should carefully consider the risk factors in the section entitled Risk Factors in any prospectus supplement as well as our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, any Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and any Current Reports on Form 8-K filed subsequent to such Annual Report on Form 10-K, which are incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any prospectus supplement in their entirety, as the same may be amended, supplemented or superseded from time to time by our filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. For more information, see the section entitled Where You Can Find More Information on page 21 of this prospectus. These risks could materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition or operating results and could result in a partial or complete loss of your investment.

Table of Contents

CAUTIONARY NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING INFORMATION

From time to time, in this prospectus and the documents we incorporate by reference in this prospectus, as well as in other written reports and oral statements, we discuss our expectations regarding our future performance. Statements and financial discussion and analysis contained herein and in the documents incorporated by reference herein that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements are identified by their use of terms and phrases such as believe, anticipate, could, estimate, intend, may, plan, expect and similar expressions, including references to assumptions. These forward-looking statements are based on currently available competitive, financial and economic data, current expectations, estimates, forecasts and projections about the industries in which we operate and management s beliefs and assumptions. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and involve risks, uncertainties and assumptions that are difficult to predict. Therefore, actual outcomes and results may differ materially from what is expressed or implied in forward-looking statements. We want to caution you not to place undue reliance on any forward-looking statement. Among the factors that might affect our performance are:

- weakening of economic conditions that could adversely affect the level of demand for our products;
- pricing pressures generally, including cost-containment measures that could adversely affect the price of or demand for our products;
- changes in foreign exchange markets;
- legislative and regulatory actions;
- unanticipated issues arising in connection with clinical studies and otherwise that affect U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval of new products;
- changes in reimbursement levels from third-party payors;
- a significant increase in product liability claims;
- unfavorable resolution of tax audits;
- changes in financial markets;
- changes in the competitive environment; and
- other risks detailed in our filings with the SEC.

While we believe that the assumptions underlying such forward-looking statements are reasonable, there can be no assurance that future events or developments will not cause such statements to be inaccurate. All forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus and the documents we incorporate by reference in this prospectus are qualified in their entirety by this cautionary statement. We expressly disclaim any obligation or undertaking to update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect any changes in events or circumstances or in our expectations or results.

3

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds of any offering of our securities for working capital and other general corporate purposes, including acquisitions, repayment or refinancing of debt, stock repurchases and other business opportunities. We will have significant discretion in the use of any net proceeds. We may provide additional information on the use of the net proceeds from the sale of our securities in an applicable prospectus supplement or other offering materials relating to the offered securities.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the periods indicated:

	Nine Months Ended	Year Ended December 31,				
	September 30, 2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	31.3x	29.1x	31.4x	37.6x	35.4x	27.4x

The ratio of earnings to fixed charges is calculated by dividing earnings, as defined, by fixed charges, as defined. For this purpose, earnings consists of consolidated earnings from continuing operations before income taxes plus fixed charges, and fixed charges consists of interest expense and the portion of interest expense on operating leases we believe to be representative of the interest factor.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

This prospectus contains summary descriptions of the capital stock, debt securities, warrants, subscription rights, stock purchase contracts and stock purchase units that we may offer and sell from time to time. These summary descriptions are not meant to be complete descriptions of any security. At the time of an offering and sale, this prospectus together with the accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms of the securities being offered.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description briefly summarizes certain information regarding our capital stock. This information does not purport to be complete and is subject in all respects to the applicable provisions of the Michigan Business Corporation Act, as amended, or the MBCA, our Restated Articles of Incorporation, as amended, or our articles, and our By-laws, as amended, or our by-laws.

As used in this Description of Capital Stock, the terms we, us, our, the Company, or Stryker refer to Stryker Corporation, a Michigan corporation, and do not, unless otherwise specified, include our subsidiaries.

Capital Stock

Our authorized capital stock consists of (i) 1,000,000,000 shares of common stock, $0.10 par value per share and (ii) 500,000 shares of preferred stock, $1.00 par value per share. As of December 31, 2009, we had 397,882,281 shares of common stock issued and outstanding, and no shares of preferred stock issued.

Common Stock

Each share of common stock entitles the holder thereof to one vote for each share held by it of record on each matter submitted to a vote. Other than the election of directors, if an action is to be taken by vote of the shareholders, it will be authorized by a majority of the votes cast by the holders of shares entitled to vote on the action, unless a greater vote is required in our articles or by-laws. Directors are elected by a plurality of the votes cast at an election.

Subject to the prior payment or provision therefor of dividends on the preferred stock, if any, holders of the common stock are entitled to receive ratably such dividends, if any, as may be declared from time to time by our Board of Directors out of funds legally available therefor. Holders of our common stock have no conversion, preemptive or other rights to subscribe for any securities of ours, and there are no redemption or sinking fund provisions with respect to such shares. In the event of any liquidation, dissolution or distribution of our assets and after satisfaction of the preferential requirements of the preferred stock, if any, holders of common stock will be entitled to share ratably in the distribution of the remaining assets of the Company available for distribution. The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of common stock are subject to applicable law and the rights of the holders of any shares of preferred stock and any additional classes of stock that we may issue in the future.

Preferred Stock

Our articles authorize our Board of Directors to issue up to 500,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series, with such distinctive designation or title and in such number of shares as may be authorized by our Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors is authorized to prescribe the relative rights and preferences of each series, and the limitations applicable thereto, including but not limited to the following: (i) the voting powers, full, special, or limited, or no voting powers, of each such series; (ii) the rate, terms and conditions on which dividends will be paid, whether such dividends will be cumulative, and what preference such dividends shall have in relation to the dividends on other series or classes of stock; (iii) the rights, terms and conditions, if any, for conversion of such series of preferred stock into shares of other series or classes of stock; (iv) any right of the

Table of Contents

Company to redeem the shares of such series of preferred stock, and the price, time and conditions of such redemption, including the provisions for any sinking fund; and (v) the rights of holders of such series of preferred stock in relation to the rights of other series and classes of stock upon the liquidation, dissolution or distribution of our assets. Unless otherwise provided by our Board of Directors, upon redemption or conversion, shares of preferred stock will revert to authorized but unissued shares and may be reissued as shares of any series of preferred stock. As of the date hereof, no shares of preferred stock are outstanding and we have no present plans to issue any such stock.

Limitation of Liability

Our articles provide that, to the full extent authorized or permitted by the MBCA, directors of Stryker will not be personally liable to Stryker or its shareholders for any acts or omissions in such person s capacity as a director. Such limitation of liability does not affect the availability of equitable remedies such as injunctive relief or rescission. These provisions will not limit the liability of directors under federal securities laws.

Certain Statutory, Articles and By-law Provisions Affecting Shareholders

Certain provisions in our articles and by-laws and the MBCA may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change of control of the Company or may operate only with respect to extraordinary corporate transactions involving the Company.

Business Combination Act

We are subject to the provisions of Chapter 7A of the MBCA, which provides that business combinations between a Michigan corporation and a beneficial owner of shares entitled to 10% or more of the voting power of such corporation generally require the affirmative vote of 90% of the votes of each class of stock entitled to vote and not less than two-thirds of each class of stock entitled to vote (excluding voting shares owned by such 10% owner). Chapter 7A defines a business combination to encompass any merger, consolidation, share exchange, sale of assets, stock issue, liquidation, or reclassification of securities involving an interested shareholder or certain affiliates. An interested shareholder is generally any person who owns 10% or more of the voting shares of the corporation. An affiliate is a person who directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, a specified person. Such requirements do not apply if the transaction satisfies fairness standards, other specified conditions are met and the interested shareholder has been such for at least five years.

Article and By-Law Provisions

Our articles and by-laws include a number of provisions that may have the effect of encouraging persons considering unsolicited tender offers or other unilateral takeover proposals to negotiate with our Board of Directors rather than pursue non-negotiated takeover attempts. These provisions include an advance notice requirement for director nominations and actions to be taken at annual meetings of shareholders, the inability of the shareholders to call a special meeting of the shareholders and the availability of authorized but unissued blank check preferred stock.

Advance Notice Requirement

Our by-laws set forth advance notice procedures with regard to shareholder proposals relating to the nomination of candidates for election as directors or new business to be presented at meetings of shareholders. These procedures provide that notice of such shareholder proposals must be timely given in writing to the secretary of Stryker prior to the meeting at which the action is to be taken. Generally, to be timely, notice must be received at the principal executive offices of Stryker not less than 90 days nor more than 120 days prior to the meeting. The advance notice requirement does not give the Board of Directors any power to approve or disapprove shareholder director nominations or proposals but may have the effect of precluding the consideration of certain business at a meeting if the proper notice procedures are not followed.

Table of Contents

Special Meetings of Shareholders

Our by-laws do not grant the shareholders the right to call a special meeting of shareholders. Under our by-laws, special meetings of shareholders may be called only by the chairman of our Board of Directors, our president or by order of our Board of Directors.

Blank Check Preferred Stock

Our preferred stock could be deemed to have an anti-takeover effect in that, if a hostile takeover situation should arise, shares of preferred stock could be issued to purchasers sympathetic with our management or others in such a way as to render more difficult or to discourage a merger, tender offer, proxy contest, the assumption of control by a holder of a large block of our securities or the removal of incumbent management.

The effects of the issuance of one or more series of the preferred stock on the holders of our common stock could include:

- reduction of the amount otherwise available for payments of dividends on common stock if dividends are payable on the series of preferred stock;
- restrictions on dividends on our common stock if dividends on the series of preferred stock are in arrears;
- dilution of the voting power of our common stock if the series of preferred stock has voting rights, including a possible veto power if the series of preferred stock has class voting rights;
- dilution of the equity interest of holders of our common stock if the series of preferred stock is convertible, and is converted, into our common stock; and
- restrictions on the rights of holders of our common stock to share in our assets upon liquidation until satisfaction of any liquidation preference granted to the holders of the series of preferred stock.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol SYK.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

As used in this prospectus, debt securities means the debentures, notes, bonds and other evidences of indebtedness that we may issue separately, upon exercise of a debt warrant, in connection with a stock purchase contract or as part of a stock purchase unit, from time to time. The debt securities may either be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. Senior debt securities may be issued under a Senior Indenture and subordinated debt securities may be issued under a Subordinated Indenture, each to be entered into between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee. This prospectus sometimes refers to the Senior Indenture and the Subordinated Indenture collectively as the Indentures. The forms of the Indentures have been filed with the SEC and are incorporated by reference in the registration statement on Form S-3 of which this prospectus forms a part. We may also issue debt securities under a separate, new indenture. If that occurs, we will describe any differences in the terms of any such indenture in the prospectus supplement.

The following briefly summarizes the material provisions of the Indentures and the debt securities, other than pricing and related terms disclosed in the accompanying prospectus supplement or pricing supplement, as the case may be. You should read the more detailed provisions of the applicable Indenture, including the defined terms, for provisions that may be important to you. You should also read the particular terms of an offering of debt securities, which will be described in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement or pricing supplement, as the case may be. Copies of the Indentures may be obtained from Stryker or the trustee.

As used in this Description of Debt Securities, the terms we, us, our, the Company, or Stryker refer to Stryker Corporation, a Michigan corporation, and do not, unless otherwise specified, include our subsidiaries.

General

The debt securities will be our direct unsecured obligations. The senior debt securities will rank equally with all of our other senior unsecured and unsubordinated debt. The subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in right of payment to all of our present and future senior indebtedness to the extent and in the manner set forth in the Subordinated Indenture. The debt securities will not be secured by any of our property or assets. Thus, by owning a debt security, you are one of our unsecured creditors.

Since our operations are partially conducted through our subsidiaries, the cash flow and the consequent ability to service our indebtedness, including the debt securities, is partially dependent upon the earnings of our subsidiaries and the distribution of those earnings or upon the payments of funds by those subsidiaries to us. Our subsidiaries are separate and distinct legal entities and have no obligation, contingent or otherwise, to pay any amounts due pursuant to the debt securities or to make funds available to us, whether by dividends, loans or other payments. In addition, the payment of dividends and the making of loans and advances to us by our subsidiaries may be subject to contractual or statutory restrictions, are contingent upon the earnings of those subsidiaries and are subject to various business considerations. Any right we may have to receive assets of any of our subsidiaries upon their liquidation or reorganization (and the consequent right of the holders of our debt securities to participate in those assets) will be effectively subordinated to the claims of such subsidiary s creditors, including trade creditors.

The Indentures do not limit the aggregate principal amount of debt securities that we may issue and provide that we may issue debt securities from time to time in one or more series, in each case with the same or various maturities, at par or at a discount. We may issue additional debt securities of a particular series without the consent of the holders of the debt securities of such series outstanding at the time of the issuance. Any such additional debt securities, together with all other outstanding debt securities of that series, will constitute a single series of debt securities under the applicable Indenture. The Indentures also do not limit our ability to incur other debt.

Table of Contents

Each prospectus supplement will summarize the material terms relating to the specific series of debt securities being offered. These terms may include some or all of the following:

- the title of the debt securities and whether they are senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of debt securities of such series;
- the purchase price for the debt securities and the denominations of the debt securities, if other than minimum denominations of $2,000 and integral multiples of $1,000 above that amount;
- the date or dates upon which the debt securities are payable and whether the stated maturity date may be extended or the method used to determine or extend those dates;
- the rate or rates at which the debt securities of the series shall bear interest, if any, which may be fixed or variable, or the method by which such rate or rates shall be determined;
- the basis for calculating interest if other than a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months;
- the date or dates from which any interest will accrue or the method by which such date or dates will be determined;
- the dates on which we will pay interest on the debt securities and the regular record date for determining who is entitled to the interest payable on any interest payment date, or the method by which such date or dates shall be determined;
- the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of any such deferral period;
- any provisions that would determine payments on the debt securities by reference to any index, formula or other method, and the manner of determining the amount of such payments;
- the place or places where payments on the debt securities will be payable, where any securities may be surrendered for registration of transfer, exchange or conversion, as applicable, and notices and demands may be delivered to or upon us pursuant to the applicable Indenture;
- the rate or rates of amortization of the debt securities, if any;
- our obligation or discretion, if any, to redeem, repay or repurchase debt securities by making periodic payments to a sinking fund or through an analogous provision or at the option of holders of the debt securities, and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the other terms and conditions upon which any debt securities of such series shall be redeemed, in whole or in part, pursuant to such obligation;

the terms and conditions, if any, regarding the mandatory conversion or exchange of debt securities;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which, and the terms and conditions upon which any debt securities of the series may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option and, if other than by a board resolution, the manner in which any election by us to redeem the debt securities shall be evidenced;

any restriction or condition on the transferability of the debt securities of a particular series;

the portion, or methods of determining the portion, of the principal amount of the debt securities which we must pay upon the acceleration of the maturity of the debt securities in connection with an Event of Default, as defined below, if other than the full principal amount;

if other than U.S. dollars, the currency or currencies in which the debt securities will be denominated and in which principal, any premium and any interest will or may be payable or a description of any units based on or relating to a currency or currencies in which the debt securities will be denominated;

provisions, if any, granting special rights to holders of the debt securities upon the occurrence of specified events;

Table of Contents

any deletions from or modifications or additions to the Events of Default or our covenants with respect to the applicable series of debt securities;

whether the debt securities will not be subject to defeasance or covenant defeasance, which terms are described below;

the terms, if any, upon which the holders may convert or exchange the debt securities into or for our common stock, preferred stock or other securities or property;

whether we are issuing the debt securities in whole or in part in global form;

the depositary for global or certificated debt securities;

the names of any trustees, depositaries, authenticating or paying agents, transfer agents or registrars or other agents with respect to the debt securities;

to whom any interest on any debt security shall be payable, if other than the person in whose name the security is registered on the record date for such interest, and the extent to which, or the manner in which, any interest payable on a temporary global debt security will be paid if other than in the manner provided in the applicable Indenture;

if the principal amount payable at the stated maturity of any debt security of the series will not be determinable as of any one or more dates prior to the stated maturity, the amount which shall be deemed to be the principal amount of such debt securities as of any such date for any purpose, including the principal amount thereof which shall be due and payable upon any maturity other than the stated maturity or which shall be deemed to be outstanding as of any date prior to the stated maturity (or, in any such case, the manner in which such amount deemed to be the principal amount shall be determined);

whether, under what circumstances and the currency in which we will pay any additional amounts on the debt securities as contemplated in the applicable Indenture in respect of any tax, assessment or governmental charge and, if so, whether we will have the option to redeem the debt securities rather than pay such additional amounts (and the terms of any such option);

whether and the extent to which the debt securities are entitled to the benefits of any guarantees by any of our subsidiaries or any other form of guarantee;

the subordination provisions applicable to the debt securities, if any; and

any other specific terms of the debt securities not inconsistent with the applicable Indenture.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not be listed on any securities exchange and will be issued in fully-registered form without coupons.

Debt securities may be sold at a substantial discount below their stated principal amount, bearing no interest or interest at a rate which at the time of issuance is below market rates. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the federal income tax consequences and special considerations applicable to any such debt securities. The debt securities may also be issued as indexed securities or securities denominated in foreign currencies, currency units or composite currencies, as described in more detail in the prospectus supplement relating to any of the

particular debt securities. The prospectus supplement relating to specific debt securities will also describe any special considerations and certain additional tax considerations applicable to such debt securities.

Subordination

The prospectus supplement relating to any offering of subordinated debt securities will describe the specific subordination provisions, including the extent of subordination of payments by us of the principal of, premium, if any, and interest on such subordinated debt securities.

Table of Contents

The Subordinated Indenture does not limit the issuance of additional senior indebtedness.

Certain Covenants

Except as set forth below or in any indenture supplemental to the Indentures or in a board resolution of ours establishing a series of securities under the Indentures, the Indentures will not:

- limit the amount of indebtedness or lease obligations that may be incurred by us and our subsidiaries; or
- contain provisions which would give holders of the debt securities the right to require us to repurchase their debt securities in the event of a decline in the credit rating of our debt securities resulting from a change in control, recapitalization or similar restructuring or in the case of any other event.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We may consolidate or merge with or into any other corporation, and we may sell or transfer all or substantially all of our assets to another corporation, provided, among other things, that (a) we are the surviving corporation or the corporation formed by or resulting from any such consolidation or merger or the transferee of such assets shall be a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state thereof or the District of Columbia and shall expressly assume by supplemental indenture payment of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities issued under either the Senior Indenture or the Subordinated Indenture and the performance and observance of the applicable Indenture and (b) we or such successor corporation shall not immediately thereafter be in default under the applicable Indenture.

Events of Default

The following events are defined in the Indentures as Events of Default :

- default in the payment of any installment of interest on any debt securities in such series for 30 days after becoming due;
- default in the payment of principal or premium, if any, of any debt securities in such series when due;
- default in the deposit of any sinking fund payment, when due;
- default in the performance of any other covenant for 90 days after notice, which must be sent by either the trustee or holders of 25% of the principal amount of the debt securities of the affected series;
- certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization; and
- any other Event of Default that may be set forth in the supplemental indenture or board resolution with respect to a particular series of debt securities.

If an Event of Default shall occur and be continuing with respect to a series of debt securities, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series (or such lesser amount as may be provided for in the debt securities of such series) may declare the entire principal amount of all the debt securities of such series to be due and payable; provided that, in the case of an Event of Default involving certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, such acceleration is automatic; and, provided further, that

after such acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on acceleration, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, subject to certain conditions, rescind and annul such acceleration if all Events of Default, other than the nonpayment of accelerated principal, have been cured or waived. Upon the acceleration of the maturity of original issue discount securities, an amount less than the principal amount thereof may become due and payable. Reference is made to the prospectus supplement relating to any original issue discount securities for the particular provisions relating to acceleration of maturity thereof. No such rescission shall affect any subsequent default or impair any right consequent thereon.

Table of Contents

The Indentures provide that the trustee shall, after the occurrence of a default with respect to a particular series of debt securities, give or may withhold from the holders of the debt securities of such series notice of such default known to it (the term default to mean the events specified above without grace periods) to the extent provided by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, or the Trust Indenture Act.

We will be required to furnish the trustee annually a statement by certain of our officers to the effect that to the best of their knowledge we are not in default in the fulfillment of any of our obligations under the Indentures or, if there has been a default in the fulfillment of any such obligation, specifying each such default. No holder of any debt securities of any particular series shall have any right to institute any judicial or other proceeding with respect to the Indentures, or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any other remedy unless:

- an Event of Default shall have occurred and be continuing and such holder shall have given the trustee prior written notice of such continuing Event of Default;
- the holders of not less than 25% of the outstanding principal amount of the debt securities of a particular series shall have requested the trustee for such series to institute proceedings in respect of such Event of Default;
- the trustee shall have been offered reasonable indemnity against its costs, expenses and liabilities in complying with such request;
- the trustee shall have failed to institute proceedings 60 days after the receipt of such notice, request and offer of indemnity; and
- no direction inconsistent with such written request shall have been given for 60 days by the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series.

However, a holder may bring a lawsuit to receive payment of money due on a debt security on or after the due date of such payment.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of a particular series of debt securities outstanding will have the right, subject to certain limitations, to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee with respect to such series or exercising any trust or power conferred to the trustee, and to waive certain defaults. The Indentures provide that in case an Event of Default shall occur and be continuing, the trustee shall exercise such of its rights and powers under the Indentures, and use the same degree of care and skill in their exercise, as a prudent man would exercise or use under the circumstances in the conduct of his own affairs. Subject to such provisions, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the Indentures at the request of any of the holders of debt securities of a particular series unless they shall have offered to the trustee security or indemnity reasonably satisfactory to the trustee against the costs, expenses and liabilities which might be incurred by it in compliance with such request.

Discharge, Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

Unless otherwise indicated to the contrary in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may discharge or defease our obligations under each Indenture as set forth below.

We may discharge certain obligations to holders of any series of debt securities issued under either the Senior Indenture or the Subordinated Indenture which have not already been delivered to the trustee for cancellation and which have either become due and payable or are by their terms due and payable within one year (or scheduled for redemption within one year) by, among other things, irrevocably depositing with the trustee funds or government obligations denominated in U.S. dollars or in the foreign currency in which debt securities of such series are payable in an amount sufficient to pay the entire indebtedness on debt securities of such series with respect to principal (and premium and additional amounts, if any) and interest to the date of such deposit (if debt securities of such series have become due and payable) or to the maturity thereof or the date of redemption of debt securities of such series, as the case may be.

Table of Contents

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may elect either (i) to defease and be discharged from any and all obligations with respect to the debt securities of or within any series (except for, among other things, the obligation to pay additional amounts, if any, upon the occurrence of certain events of taxation, assessment or governmental charge with respect to payments on debt securities of such series and other obligations to register the transfer or exchange of debt securities of such series, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities, to maintain an office or agency with respect to the debt securities and to hold moneys for payment in trust), or (ii) to be released from our obligations with respect to certain covenants applicable to the debt securities of or within any series of debt securities and any omission to comply with such obligations shall not constitute an Event of Default with respect to such series of debt securities upon the deposit with the Indenture trustee, in trust for such purpose, of money and/or government obligations which through the payment of principal and interest in accordance with their terms will provide money in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of (and premium, if any) or interest on such debt securities to maturity. As a condition to defeasance or covenant defeasance, we must, among other things, deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of such debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of such defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such defeasance or covenant defeasance had not occurred. Such opinion of counsel, in the case of defeasance under clause (i) above, must refer to and be based upon a ruling of the Internal Revenue Service or a change in applicable federal income tax law occurring after the date of the relevant Indenture. In addition, in the case of either defeasance or covenant defeasance, we must deliver to the trustee an officers certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that all conditions precedent with respect to such defeasance or covenant defeasance have been complied with.

We may exercise our defeasance option with respect to such debt securities notwithstanding our prior exercise of our covenant defeasance option.

Modification and Waiver

Modification and amendments of the Indentures may be made by us and the trustee with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected thereby; provided, however, that no such modification or amendment may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby:

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

reduce the principal amount of, or the rate of interest on or any premium payable upon the redemption of, debt securities of any series;

change our obligation to pay additional amounts with respect to debt securities of any series or reduce the amount of the principal of an original issue discount debt security or any other debt security that would be due and payable upon a declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof;

change the place of payment where, or the coin or currency in which, the principal of, or any premium or interest on, debt securities of any series is payable;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on or after the stated maturity of debt securities of any series;

reduce the percentage in principal amount of an outstanding series of debt securities, the consent of whose holders is required in order to take certain actions;

modify any of the provisions in the Indentures regarding the waiver of past defaults and the waiver of certain covenants by the holders of a particular series of debt securities except to increase any percentage vote required or to provide that certain other

provisions of the Indentures cannot be

Table of Contents

modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each debt security of such series affected thereby;

make any change that adversely affects the right to convert or exchange any series of debt security into or for our common stock or other securities in accordance with its terms; or

modify any of the above provisions.

The holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of such series, waive our compliance with certain restrictive provisions of the applicable Indenture. The holders of not less than a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series may, on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of such series, waive any past default and its consequences under the Indenture with respect to the debt securities of such series, except a default:

in the payment of principal of (or premium, if any), any interest on or any additional amounts with respect to debt securities of such series; or

in respect of a covenant or provision of the Indenture that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each debt security of any series.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, certain types of changes do not require any vote by holders of the debt securities. These types of changes are limited to corrections and clarifications and certain other changes that would not adversely affect holders of the debt securities. Nor do we need any approval to make changes that affect only debt securities to be issued under the Indenture after the changes take effect.

The Subordinated Indenture may not be amended to alter the subordination of any outstanding subordinated debt securities without the consent of each holder of then outstanding senior indebtedness that would be adversely affected by the amendment.

Payment and Paying Agents

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, payment of interest on a debt security on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name a debt security is registered at the close of business on the record date for the interest.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, principal, interest and premium on the debt securities of a particular series will be payable at the office of such paying agent or paying agents as we may designate for such purpose from time to time. Notwithstanding the foregoing, at our option, payment of any interest may be made by check mailed to the address of the person entitled thereto as such address appears in the security register.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, a paying agent designated by us will act as paying agent for payments with respect to debt securities of each series. All paying agents initially designated by us for the debt securities of a particular series will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may at any time designate additional paying agents or rescind the designation of any paying agent or approve a change in the office through which any paying agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of a particular series.

All moneys paid by us to a paying agent for the payment of the principal, interest or premium on any debt security which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal, interest or premium has become due and payable will be repaid to us upon request, and the holder of such debt security shall thereafter, as an unsecured general creditor, look only to us for payment thereof.

Table of Contents

Denominations, Registrations and Transfer

Unless an accompanying prospectus supplement states otherwise, debt securities will be represented by one or more global certificates registered in the name of a nominee for The Depository Trust Company, or DTC. In such case, each holder s beneficial interest in the global securities will be shown on the records of DTC and transfers of beneficial interests will only be effected through DTC s records.

A holder of debt securities may only exchange a beneficial interest in a global security for certificated securities registered in the holder s name if:

- DTC notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue serving as the depositary for the relevant global securities or DTC ceases to maintain certain qualifications under the Exchange Act and no successor depositary has been appointed for 90 days; or
- we determine, in our sole discretion (but subject to the procedures of DTC), that the global security shall be exchangeable.

If debt securities are issued in certificated form, they will only be issued in the minimum denomination specified in the accompanying prospectus supplement and integral multiples of such denomination. Transfers and exchanges of such debt securities will only be permitted in such minimum denomination. Transfers of debt securities in certificated form may be registered at the trustee s corporate office or at the offices of any paying agent or trustee appointed by us under the Indentures. Exchanges of debt securities for an equal aggregate principal amount of debt securities in different denominations may also be made at such locations.

Governing Law

The Indentures and debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York, without regard to its principles of conflicts of laws (other than Section 5-1401 of the General Obligations Law of the State of New York), except to the extent that the Trust Indenture Act is applicable, in which case the Trust Indenture Act will govern.

Concerning the Trustee

We anticipate appointing U.S. Bank National Association as the trustee under the Indentures and also as the paying agent, conversion agent, registrar and custodian with regard to the debt securities. The trustee or its affiliates may in the future provide banking and other services to us in the ordinary course of their respective businesses.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

The prospectus supplement will describe the terms, if any, on which a series of debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, preferred stock or other debt securities. These terms will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. These provisions may allow or require the number of shares of our common stock or other securities to be received by the holders of such series of debt securities to be adjusted.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

This section describes the general terms and provisions of warrants to acquire our securities that we may issue from time to time. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any warrant agreement and the warrants issuable thereunder. If any particular terms of the warrants described in the prospectus supplement differ from any of the terms described herein, then the terms described herein will be deemed superseded by that prospectus supplement.

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or securities of third parties or other rights, including rights to receive payment in cash or securities based on the value, rate or price of one or more specified commodities, currencies, securities or indices, or any combination of the foregoing. We may issue warrants independently or together with other securities, and they may be attached to or separate from the other securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement that we will enter into with a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, as detailed in the applicable prospectus supplement. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation, or agency or trust relationship, with you. We will file a copy of the warrant and warrant agreement with the SEC each time we issue a series of warrants, and these warrants and warrant agreements will be incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. A holder of our warrants should refer to the provisions of the applicable warrant agreement and prospectus supplement for more specific information.

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular issue of warrants will describe the terms of those warrants, including, when applicable:

- the offering price;
- the currency or currencies, including composite currencies, in which the price of the warrants may be payable;
- the number of warrants offered;
- the securities underlying the warrants, including the securities of third parties or other rights, if any, to receive payment in cash or securities based on the value, rate or price of one or more specified commodities, currencies, securities or indices, or any combination of the foregoing, purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- the exercise price and the amount of securities you will receive upon exercise;
- the procedure for exercise of the warrants and the circumstances, if any, that will cause the warrants to be automatically exercised;
- the rights, if any, we have to redeem the warrants;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and the date on which the warrants will expire;
- the designation and terms of the securities with which the warrants are issued and the number of warrants issued with each such security;
- the date on and after which the warrants and the related securities will be separately transferable;

U.S. federal income tax consequences;

the name of the warrant agent; and

any other material terms of the warrants.

Table of Contents

After warrants expire they will become void. All warrants will be issued in registered form. The prospectus supplement may provide for the adjustment of the exercise price of the warrants.

Warrants may be exercised at the appropriate office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Before the exercise of warrants, holders will not have any of the rights of holders of the securities purchasable upon exercise and will not be entitled to payments made to holders of those securities.

The applicable warrant agreement may be amended or supplemented without the consent of the holders of the warrants to which it applies to effect changes that are not inconsistent with the provisions of the warrants and that do not materially and adversely affect the interests of the holders of the warrants. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of warrants will not be effective unless the holders of at least a majority of the applicable warrants then outstanding approve the amendment. Every holder of an outstanding warrant at the time any amendment becomes effective, by continuing to hold the warrant, will be bound by the applicable warrant agreement as amended. The prospectus supplement applicable to a particular series of warrants may provide that certain provisions of the warrants, including the securities for which they may be exercisable, the exercise price and the expiration date, may not be altered without the consent of the holder of each warrant.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS

We may issue subscription rights to purchase debt securities, preferred stock, common stock or other securities. These subscription rights may be issued independently or together with any other security offered hereby and may or may not be transferable by the shareholder receiving the subscription rights in such offering. In connection with any offering of subscription rights, we may enter into a standby arrangement with one or more underwriters or other purchasers pursuant to which the underwriters or other purchasers may be required to purchase any securities remaining unsubscribed for after such offering.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of any offering of subscription rights for which this prospectus is being delivered, including the following:

- the price, if any, for the subscription rights;
- the exercise price payable for each share of debt securities, preferred stock, common stock or other securities upon the exercise of the subscription rights;
- the number of subscription rights issued to each shareholder;
- the number and terms of the shares of debt securities, preferred stock, common stock or other securities which may be purchased per each subscription right;
- the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;
- any other terms of the subscription rights, including the terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;
- the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights shall commence, and the date on which the subscription rights shall expire;
- the extent to which the subscription rights may include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities; and
- if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting or purchase arrangement entered into by us in connection with the offering of subscription rights.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any subscription rights we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable subscription rights certificate, which will be filed with the SEC if we offer subscription rights. For more information on how you can obtain copies of any subscription rights certificate if we offer subscription rights, please see the section entitled Where You Can Find More Information.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF STOCK PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND STOCK PURCHASE UNITS

We may issue stock purchase contracts, including contracts obligating holders to purchase from or sell to us, and obligating us to sell to or purchase from the holders, a specified number of shares of common stock or other securities at a future date or dates, which we refer to in this prospectus as stock purchase contracts. The price per share of the securities and the number of shares of the securities may be fixed at the time the stock purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the stock purchase contracts, and may be subject to adjustment under anti-dilution formulas. The stock purchase contracts may be issued separately or as part of units consisting of a stock purchase contract and debt securities, preferred securities or debt obligations of third parties, including U.S. treasury securities, any other securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any combination of the foregoing, securing the holders obligations to purchase or sell the securities under the stock purchase contracts, which we refer to herein as stock purchase units. The stock purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations under the stock purchase contracts in a specified manner. The stock purchase contracts also may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the stock purchase contracts or the stock purchase units, as the case may be, or vice versa, and those payments may be unsecured or pre-funded on some basis.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units. This description is not complete and the description in the prospectus supplement will not necessarily be complete, and reference is made to the stock purchase contracts, and, if applicable, collateral or depositary arrangements relating to the stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units, which will be filed with the SEC each time we issue stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units. If any particular terms of the stock purchase contracts or stock purchase units described in the prospectus supplement differ from any of the terms described herein, then the terms described herein will be deemed superseded by that prospectus supplement. Material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the stock purchase units and the stock purchase contracts will also be discussed in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities being offered hereby in one or more of the following ways from time to time:

- to underwriters for resale to purchasers;
- directly to purchasers; or
- through agents or dealers to purchasers.

In addition, Stryker may enter into derivative or hedging transactions with third parties or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. In connection with such a transaction, the third parties may sell securities covered by and pursuant to this prospectus and an applicable prospectus supplement. If so, the third parties may use securities borrowed from us or others to settle such sales and may use securities received from us to close out any related short positions. We may also loan or pledge securities covered by this prospectus and an applicable prospectus supplement to third parties, who may sell the loaned securities or, in an event of default in the case of a pledge, sell the pledged securities pursuant to this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement.

We will identify the specific plan of distribution, including any underwriters, dealers, agents or direct purchasers and their compensation, in a prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Chicago, Illinois, will act as counsel to Stryker and certain matters of Michigan law will be passed upon for us by Warner Norcross & Judd LLP. Counsel for any underwriter or agent will be noted in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Stryker Corporation and its subsidiaries appearing in Stryker s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2008 (including the schedule appearing therein), and the effectiveness of Stryker s internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2008 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have filed with the SEC a registration statement on Form S-3 under the Securities Act relating to the securities covered by this prospectus. This prospectus does not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement and the exhibits filed as part of the registration statement. For further information with respect to us and the securities being offered, we refer you to the registration statement and the exhibits filed as a part of the registration statement. Statements contained in the prospectus concerning the contents of any contract or any other document are not necessarily complete. If a contract or document has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or otherwise filed with the SEC, we refer you to the copy of the contract or document that has been filed. Each statement in this prospectus relating to a contract or document is qualified in all respects by reference to the contract or document to which it refers. In addition, we file annual, quarterly and periodic reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document that we file with the SEC at the SEC s public reference room at 100 F Street N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the SEC s public reference facilities by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. You may request copies of these documents, upon payment of a duplicating fee, by writing to the SEC at its principal office at 100 F Street NE, Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. The SEC maintains an Internet website at http://www.sec.gov that contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. Our SEC filings are accessible through the Internet at that website. You may also inspect our SEC reports and other information at the New York Stock Exchange, Inc., 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. Our reports on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K, and amendments to those reports, are also available for download, free of charge, as soon as reasonably practicable after these reports are filed with the SEC, at our website at www.stryker.com. The content of our website is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus, and you should not consider it a part of this prospectus.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that (i) we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents and (ii) those documents are considered part of this prospectus. The following documents are incorporated by reference into this prospectus (other than documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules):

- Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008 (including portions of our definitive Proxy Statement for the 2009 Annual Meeting of Shareholders incorporated therein by reference);

Table of Contents

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2009;

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2009;

Amendment No. 1 to Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2009;

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2009;

Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 12, 2009, March 10, 2009, May 11, 2009, August 3, 2009, October 30, 2009, December 3, 2009 and January 5, 2010; and

The description of our common stock set forth in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on July 1, 1997.

We also incorporate by reference all documents we may subsequently file pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the initial filing date of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and prior to the termination of the offering (other than documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules). The most recent information that we file with the SEC automatically updates and supersedes older information. The information contained in any such filing will be deemed to be a part of this prospectus, commencing on the date on which the document is filed.

We will provide to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom this prospectus is delivered a copy of any or all of the information that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus but not delivered with this prospectus, at no cost to the requestor. To receive a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus, other than exhibits, unless they are specifically incorporated by reference into those documents, call or write:

Stryker Corporation

2825 Airview Boulevard

Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002

Attention: Corporate Secretary

Tel: (269) 385-2600

Table of Contents

PART II

INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution

The following table sets forth estimated expenses relating to the issuance and distribution of the securities being registered, other than underwriting discounts and commissions, to be paid by the registrant.

	Amount To Be Paid
SEC registration fee	$ *
Trustee and transfer agent fees	**
Legal fees and expenses	**
Accounting fees and expenses	**
Rating agency and listing fees	**
Printing and engraving fees and expenses	**
Miscellaneous	**
Total	$ **

* To be deferred pursuant to Rule 456(b) under the Securities Act and calculated in connection with an offering of securities under this registration statement pursuant to Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act.

** These fees cannot be estimated at this time as they are calculated based on the securities offered and the number of issuances. An estimate of the aggregate expenses in connection with the sale and distribution of the securities being offered will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers

Our by-laws require us to indemnify our directors and certain officers as designated by our Board of Directors from time to time to the fullest extent authorized or permitted by law (as now or hereafter in effect). Such right to indemnification continues as to a person who has ceased to be a director or designated officer and inures to the benefit of his or her heirs, executors and personal and legal representatives. However, except for proceedings to enforce rights to indemnification, we are not obligated to indemnify any director or designated officer (or his or her heirs, executors or personal or legal representatives) in connection with a proceeding (or part thereof) initiated by such person unless such proceeding (or part thereof) was authorized or consented to by our Board of Directors. The right to indemnification includes the right to be paid by Stryker, promptly as incurred, the reasonable expenses of defending or otherwise participating in any action, suit or proceeding in advance of its final disposition upon receipt of a written undertaking executed by or on behalf of such director or designated officer to repay the advance if it is ultimately determined that he or she did not meet the standard of conduct, if any, required for the indemnification of a person under the circumstances. We may, to the extent authorized from time to time by our Board of Directors, provide rights to indemnification and to the advancement of expenses to other officers, employees and agents of Stryker. These rights to indemnification and to the advancement of expenses are not exclusive of any other right that any person may have or hereafter acquire under our by-laws, our articles, any statute, agreement, vote of shareholders or disinterested directors or otherwise. Any repeal or modification of the relevant sections of our by-laws will not adversely affect any rights to indemnification and to the advancement of expenses of a director or designated officer existing at the time of such repeal or modification with respect to any acts or omissions occurring prior to such repeal or modification.

Under our by-laws, we also have the power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of Stryker, or is or was serving at our request as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him or her in any such capacity or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not we would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liability under applicable law.

Table of Contents

Our articles provide that, to the full extent authorized or permitted by the MBCA, directors of Stryker will not be personally liable to Stryker or its shareholders for any acts or omissions in such person s capacity as a director. Any amendment, alteration or repeal of such provision of our articles by our shareholders will not adversely affect any right or protection of a director of Stryker for or with respect to any act or omission of such director occurring prior to, or at the time of, such amendment, alteration or repeal.

Section 561 of the MBCA provides that a Michigan corporation may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding (whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative and whether formal or informal), other than an action by or in the right of the corporation, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, whether for profit or not, against expenses, including attorneys fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if the person acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation or its shareholders, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, if the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. In addition, Section 562 of the MBCA provides that a Michigan corporation may indemnify a person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to a threatened, pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, whether for profit or not, against expenses, including attorneys fees and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with the action or suit, if the person acted in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation or its shareholders. The MBCA does not permit indemnification for a claim, issue or matter in which the person has been found liable to the corporation unless application for indemnification is made to, and ordered by, the court conducting the proceeding or another court of competent jurisdiction.

Section 563 of the MBCA provides that a director or officer who has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of an action, suit or proceeding referred to in Sections 561 and 562 of the MBCA, or in defense of a claim, issue, or matter in the action, suit, or proceeding, shall be indemnified by the corporation against actual and reasonable expenses, including attorneys fees, incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit or proceeding, and an action, suit, or proceeding brought to enforce this mandatory indemnification.

The foregoing statements are subject to the detailed provisions of the MBCA, our articles and our by-laws.

16. Exhibits

Exhibit No.	Document
1.1	Form of Underwriting Agreement.*
4.1	Composite copy of Restated Articles of Incorporation as amended through April 19, 2000 (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(i) to the Company s Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2000 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.2	Certificate of Amendment of Restated Articles of Incorporation dated June 4, 2004 (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(i) to the Company s Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2004 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.3	Articles of Amendment with respect to any preferred stock issued hereunder.*

Table of Contents

Exhibit No.	Document
4.4	By-Laws (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(ii) to the Company s Form 8-K dated October 28, 2008 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.5	Form of certificate representing shares of preferred stock.*
4.6	Form of senior indenture, to be entered into between Stryker Corporation and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee.
4.7	Form of subordinated indenture, to be entered into between Stryker Corporation and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee.
4.8	Form of debt security.*
4.9	Form of warrant agreement (including form of warrant certificate).*
4.10	Form of subscription rights agreement (including form of subscription rights certificate).*
4.11	Form of stock purchase contract (including form of stock purchase contract certificate).*
4.12	Form of stock purchase unit agreement (including form of stock purchase unit certificate).*
5.1	Opinion of Warner Norcross & Judd LLP.
5.2	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.
12.1	Statement regarding computation of ratio of earnings to fixed charges.
23.1	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP.
23.2	Consent of Warner Norcross & Judd LLP (included in exhibit 5.1).
23.3	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included in exhibit 5.2).
24.1	Power of Attorney (included as part of the signature pages hereto).
25.1	Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility of Trustee under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee under the senior indenture.

* To be filed, if necessary, after the effectiveness of this registration statement as an exhibit to a post-effective amendment hereto or to be filed with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Item 17. Undertakings

(a) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of the registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in this registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20 percent change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement; and

Table of Contents

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in this registration statement or any material change to such information in this registration statement;

provided, however, that paragraphs (a)(1)(i), (a)(1)(ii) and (a)(1)(iii) of this section do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in the registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is a part of the registration statement.

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time to be deemed the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:

(i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

(ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by Section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is a part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was a part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities:

The undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

Table of Contents

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

(b) That for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of the registrant s annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan s annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in the registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

(c) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to supplement the prospectus, after the expiration of the subscription period, to set forth the results of the subscription offer, the transactions by the underwriters during the subscription period, the amount of unsubscribed securities to be purchased by the underwriters, and the terms of any subsequent reoffering thereof. If any public offering by the underwriters is to be made on terms differing from those set forth on the cover page of the prospectus, a post-effective amendment will be filed to set forth the terms of such offering.

(d) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

Table of Contents

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Kalamazoo, State of Michigan, on January 12, 2010.

STRYKER CORPORATION

By: /s/ Curt R. Hartman
Name: **Curt R. Hartman**
Title: **Vice President and Chief Financial Officer**

POWER OF ATTORNEY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that each person whose signature appears below constitutes and appoints Curt R. Hartman, Jeanne M. Blondia and Curtis E. Hall, and each of them, as attorneys-in-fact, each with the power of substitution, for him or her and in his or her name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments (including post-effective amendments) to this Registration Statement, and to sign any registration statement for the same offering covered by this Registration Statement that is to be effective upon filing pursuant to Rule 462(b) promulgated under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and all post-effective amendments thereto, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto and all documents in connection therewith, with the SEC, granting unto said attorneys-in-fact and agents, and each of them, full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as he or she might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that such attorneys-in-fact and agents or any of them, or her or their substitute or substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed below by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ Stephen P. MacMillan **Stephen P. MacMillan**	President, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Directors (Principal Executive Officer)	January 12, 2010
/s/ Curt R. Hartman **Curt R. Hartman**	Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (Principal Financial Officer)	January 12, 2010
/s/ Tony M. McKinney **Tony M. McKinney**	Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer (Principal Accounting Officer)	January 12, 2010
/s/ Howard E. Cox, Jr. **Howard E. Cox, Jr.**	Director	January 12, 2010
/s/ Srikant M. Datar, Ph.D. **Srikant M. Datar, Ph.D.**	Director	January 12, 2010

Table of Contents

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ Donald M. Engelman, Ph.D. **Donald M. Engelman, Ph.D.**	Director	January 12, 2010
/s/ Louise L. Francesconi **Louise L. Francesconi**	Director	January 12, 2010
/s/ Howard L. Lance **Howard L. Lance**	Director	January 12, 2010
/s/ William U. Parfet **William U. Parfet**	Director	January 12, 2010
/s/ Ronda E. Stryker **Ronda E. Stryker**	Director	January 12, 2010

Table of Contents

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit No.	Document
1.1	Form of Underwriting Agreement.*
4.1	Composite copy of Restated Articles of Incorporation as amended through April 19, 2000 (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(i) to the Company s Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2000 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.2	Certificate of Amendment of Restated Articles of Incorporation dated June 4, 2004 (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(i) to the Company s Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2004 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.3	Articles of Amendment with respect to any preferred stock issued hereunder.*
4.4	By-Laws (Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3(ii) to the Company s Form 8-K dated October 28, 2008 (Commission File No. 000-09165)).
4.5	Form of certificate representing shares of preferred stock.*
4.6	Form of senior indenture, to be entered into between Stryker Corporation and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee.
4.7	Form of subordinated indenture, to be entered into between Stryker Corporation and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee.
4.8	Form of debt security.*
4.9	Form of warrant agreement (including form of warrant certificate).*
4.10	Form of subscription rights agreement (including form of subscription rights certificate).*
4.11	Form of stock purchase contract (including form of stock purchase contract certificate).*
4.12	Form of stock purchase unit agreement (including form of stock purchase unit certificate).*
5.1	Opinion of Warner Norcross & Judd LLP.
5.2	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.
12.1	Statement regarding computation of ratio of earnings to fixed charges.
23.1	Consent of Ernst & Young LLP.
23.2	Consent of Warner Norcross & Judd LLP (included in exhibit 5.1).
23.3	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included in exhibit 5.2).
24.1	Power of Attorney (included as part of the signature pages hereto).
25.1	Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility of Trustee under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee under the senior indenture.

* To be filed, if necessary, after the effectiveness of this registration statement as an exhibit to a post-effective amendment hereto or to be filed with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.