

STRYKER CORP
Form 424B5
September 13, 2011
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-164299

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities and are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion

Preliminary Prospectus Supplement Dated September 13, 2011

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To prospectus dated January 12, 2010)

\$

STRYKER CORPORATION

% Notes due 20

We are offering for sale \$ aggregate principal amount of % notes due 20 , or the notes. We will pay interest on the notes on and of each year, beginning , 2012. The notes will mature on , 20 .

We may redeem the notes prior to maturity, any time in whole or from time to time in part, at the applicable redemption prices described in this prospectus supplement under Description of the Notes Optional Redemption. If a change of control repurchase event as described in this prospectus supplement under the heading Description of the Notes Repurchase at the Option of Holders Upon Change of Control Repurchase Event occurs, we will be required to offer to purchase the notes from the holders.

The notes will be our senior unsecured obligations and will rank equally with our other existing and future senior unsecured indebtedness. The notes will be issued only in registered form in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount.

The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange. Currently, there is no public market for the notes.

Investing in the notes involves risks that are described under Risk Factors beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement.

	Per Note	Total
Public Offering Price(1)	%	\$
Underwriting Discount	%	\$
Proceeds, before expenses, to us(1)	%	\$

(1) Plus accrued interest, if any, from September , 2011.

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

The notes will be ready for delivery in book-entry form only through the facilities of The Depository Trust Company for the accounts of its participants, including Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V., as operator of the Euroclear System, and Clearstream Banking, *société anonyme*, on or about September , 2011.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Citigroup

Morgan Stanley

Wells Fargo Securities

The date of this prospectus supplement is September , 2011.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

	Page
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT</u>	S-ii
<u>PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY</u>	S-1
<u>THE OFFERING</u>	S-2
<u>SUMMARY CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL INFORMATION</u>	S-4
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	S-5
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	S-7
<u>CAPITALIZATION</u>	S-8
<u>RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	S-9
<u>DESCRIPTION OF THE NOTES</u>	S-10
<u>CERTAIN UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS</u>	S-22
<u>UNDERWRITING</u>	S-25
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	S-28
<u>EXPERTS</u>	S-28
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	S-28

Prospectus

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

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which contains the terms of this offering of notes. The second part is the accompanying prospectus dated January 12, 2010, which is part of our Registration Statement on Form S-3.

This prospectus supplement may add to, update or change the information in the accompanying prospectus. If information in this prospectus supplement is inconsistent with information in the accompanying prospectus, the information in this prospectus supplement will apply and will supersede the information in the accompanying prospectus.

It is important for you to read and consider all information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in making your investment decision. You should also read and consider the information in the documents to which we have referred you in "Where You Can Find More Information" in the accompanying prospectus.

No person is authorized to give any information or to make any representations other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus and, if given or made, such information or representations must not be relied upon as having been authorized. Neither the delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, nor any sale made hereunder, shall under any circumstances create any implication that there has been no change in our affairs since the date of this prospectus supplement, or that the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is correct as of any time subsequent to the date of such information.

The distribution of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the offering of the notes in certain jurisdictions may be restricted by law. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an offer, or an invitation on our behalf or the underwriters or any of them, to subscribe to or purchase any of the notes, and may not be used for or in connection with an offer or solicitation by anyone, in any jurisdiction in which such an offer or solicitation is not authorized or to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such an offer or solicitation. See "Underwriting."

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

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights selected information about us and this offering. It does not contain all of the information that may be important to you in deciding whether to purchase the notes. We encourage you to read the entire prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents that we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, that are incorporated by reference herein.

Our Company

We are one of the world's leading medical technology companies. We are dedicated to helping healthcare professionals perform their jobs more efficiently while enhancing patient care. The Company offers a diverse array of innovative medical technologies, including reconstructive, medical and surgical, and neurotechnology and spine products, to help people lead more active and more satisfying lives. Our products include implants used in joint replacement and trauma surgeries; surgical equipment and surgical navigation systems; endoscopic and communications systems; patient handling and emergency medical equipment; neurosurgical, neurovascular and spinal devices; as well as other medical device products used in a variety of medical specialties.

We segregate our operations into three reportable business segments: Reconstructive, MedSurg, and Neurotechnology and Spine. The Reconstructive segment includes orthopaedic reconstructive (hip and knee) and trauma implant systems as well as other related products. The MedSurg segment includes surgical equipment and surgical navigation systems; endoscopic and communications systems; patient handling and emergency medical equipment; and other related products. The Neurotechnology and Spine segment includes neurovascular products, spinal implant systems and other related products.

We have business operations in over 100 countries, with 21 manufacturing facilities spread around the world, and we have approximately 20,036 employees.

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.

Stryker Corporation is a Michigan corporation. Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol SYK. Our principal executive offices are located at 2825 Airview Boulevard, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49002, and our telephone number is (269) 385-2600. Our Internet website address is www.stryker.com. The information contained on our website is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, and you should not consider it a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

Issuer	Stryker Corporation.
Securities Offered	\$ aggregate principal amount of % notes due 20 , which we refer to herein as the notes.
Maturity	The notes will mature on , 20 .
Interest	Interest on the notes will accrue from , 2011 and will be payable semi-annually in arrears on and of each year, commencing , 2012.
Optional Redemption	<p>We may redeem the notes at our option, any time in whole or from time to time in part, upon not less than 30 days notice by mail, at a redemption price equal to the greater of:</p> <p>100% of the principal amount of the notes being redeemed; and</p> <p>the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest thereon (not including any portion of such payments of interest accrued as of the date of redemption), discounted to the date of redemption on a semi-annual basis (assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months) at the Treasury Rate (as defined in this prospectus supplement), plus basis points.</p> <p>We will also pay the accrued and unpaid interest on the notes to the redemption date.</p>
Repurchase at the Option of Holders Upon Change of Control Repurchase Event	If we experience a Change of Control Repurchase Event (as defined in this prospectus supplement), we will be required to offer to purchase the notes at a purchase price equal to 101% of their principal amount, plus accrued and unpaid interest. See Description of the Notes Repurchase at the Option of Holders Upon Change of Control Repurchase Event.
Ranking	The notes will be senior unsecured obligations of the Company and will rank equally with our other existing and future senior unsecured indebtedness. At June 30, 2011, we had approximately \$24.4 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally senior to the notes and approximately \$996.7 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally equivalent to the notes.
Certain Covenants	The Indenture governing the notes will contain certain restrictions, including a limitation that restricts our ability and the ability of certain of our subsidiaries to create

or incur secured indebtedness. Certain sale and leaseback transactions are similarly limited. See Description of the Notes Certain Covenants.

S-2

Table of Contents

Use of Proceeds	We estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$ million after deducting the underwriting discount and our estimated expenses related to the offering. We intend to use the net proceeds for working capital and other general corporate purposes, including acquisitions, stock repurchases and other business opportunities.
Further Issues	We may from time to time, without notice to or the consent of the holders of the notes, create and issue additional debt securities having the same terms (except for the issue date, the public offering price and, in some cases, the first interest payment date) and ranking equally and ratably with the notes in all respects, as described under Description of the Notes General. Any additional debt securities having such similar terms, together with the notes, will constitute a single series of securities under the Indenture.
Denomination and Form	We will issue the notes in the form of one or more fully registered global notes registered in the name of the nominee of The Depository Trust Company, or DTC. Beneficial interests in the notes will be represented through book-entry accounts of financial institutions acting on behalf of beneficial owners as direct and indirect participants in DTC. Clearstream Banking, société anonyme and Euroclear Bank, S.A./N.V., as operator of the Euroclear System, will hold interests on behalf of their participants through their respective U.S. depositaries, which in turn will hold such interests in accounts as participants of DTC. Except in the limited circumstances described in this prospectus supplement, owners of beneficial interests in the notes will not be entitled to have notes registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive notes in definitive form and will not be considered holders of notes under the Indenture. The notes will be issued only in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount.
Risk Factors	Investing in the notes involves risks. See Risk Factors for a description of certain risks you should particularly consider before investing in the notes.
Trustee	U.S. Bank National Association.
Governing Law	New York.

Table of Contents**SUMMARY CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The following table sets forth our summary consolidated financial information as of and for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007 and 2006 and as of and for the six months ended June 30, 2011 and 2010. The information as of and for the fiscal years ended December 31, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007 and 2006 was derived from our audited annual consolidated financial statements. The information as of and for the six months ended June 30, 2011 and 2010 was derived from our unaudited interim consolidated financial statements that include, in the opinion of management, all normal and recurring adjustments necessary to present fairly the information for the periods and at the dates presented. The results of operations for the six months ended June 30, 2011 are not necessarily indicative of the results to be expected for the full year ending December 31, 2011. You should read the following summary consolidated financial information together with Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and our historical consolidated financial statements, including the related notes, in each case, in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 and our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2011, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

	For the Six Months Ended June 30,		For The Year Ended December 31,				
	2011	2010	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
	(In millions)						
Statement of Earnings:							
Net sales	\$ 4,060.7	\$ 3,557.3	\$ 7,320.0	\$ 6,723.1	\$ 6,718.2	\$ 6,000.5	\$ 5,147.2
Cost of sales	1,401.7	1,120.7	2,285.7	2,183.7	2,131.4	1,865.2	1,616.6
Gross profit	2,659.0	2,436.6	5,034.3	4,539.4	4,586.8	4,135.3	3,530.6
Research, development and engineering expenses	225.4	184.6	393.9	336.2	367.8	375.3	324.6
Selling, general and administrative expenses	1,551.0	1,329.6	2,707.3	2,506.3	2,625.1	2,391.5	2,047.0
Intangibles amortization	58.8	27.9	58.2	35.5	40.0	41.4	42.7
Property, plant and equipment impairment			123.5				
Other(1)				67.0	34.9	19.8	52.7
Total operating expenses	1,835.2	1,542.1	3,282.9	2,945.0	3,067.8	2,828.0	2,467.0
Operating income	823.8	894.5	1,751.4	1,594.4	1,519.0	1,307.3	1,063.6
Other income (expense)	(2.0)	(6.1)	(21.8)	29.5	61.2	62.8	30.2
Earnings from continuing operations before income taxes	821.8	888.4	1,729.6	1,623.9	1,580.2	1,370.1	1,093.8
Income taxes	205.3	247.7	456.2	516.5	432.4	383.4	322.4
Net earnings from continuing operations	616.5	640.7	1,273.4	1,107.4	1,147.8	986.7	771.4
Net earnings and gain on sale of discontinued operations						30.7	6.3
Net earnings	616.5	640.7	1,273.4	1,107.4	1,147.8	1,017.4	777.7
Financial and Statistical Data (end of period):							
Cash and marketable securities	2,675.0	4,028.5	4,380.1	2,954.8	2,195.5	2,410.8	1,414.8
Property, plant and equipment, net	886.0	898.7	798.3	947.6	963.8	991.6	914.9
Total assets	11,596.4	10,060.1	10,895.1	9,071.3	7,603.3	7,354.0	5,873.8
Long-term debt, including current maturities	1,021.1	1,015.2	1,021.8	18.0	20.5	16.8	14.8
Shareholders' equity	7,778.0	6,745.5	7,173.6	6,595.1	5,406.7	5,378.5	4,191.0

Edgar Filing: STRYKER CORP - Form 424B5

(1) Includes restructuring, intangible asset impairment and purchased in-process research and development charges.

S-4

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

*An investment in the notes involves a high degree of risk. Before deciding to purchase any notes, you should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties set forth below and the risks and uncertainties incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the information included under **Risk Factors** in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010, and in other documents that we subsequently file with the SEC.*

These risks and uncertainties are not the only ones facing us. There may be other risks that a prospective investor should consider that are relevant to that investor's own particular circumstances or generally.

Risks Related to the Notes

The notes are effectively junior to the existing and future liabilities of our subsidiaries.

The notes are our senior unsecured obligations and will rank equally in right of payment with our other existing and future senior unsecured obligations. The notes are not secured by any of our assets. Any future claims of secured lenders with respect to assets securing their loans will be prior to any claim of the holders of the notes with respect to those assets.

Our operations are partially conducted through our subsidiaries and our subsidiaries are separate and distinct legal entities from us. Our subsidiaries have no obligation to pay any amounts due on the notes or to provide us with funds to meet our payment obligations on the notes, whether in the form of dividends, distributions, loans or other payments. In addition, any payment of dividends, loans or advances by our subsidiaries could be subject to statutory or contractual restrictions. Payments to us by our subsidiaries will also be contingent upon the subsidiaries' earnings, cash flow and other business considerations. Our right to receive any assets of any of our subsidiaries upon their bankruptcy, liquidation or reorganization, and therefore the right of the holders of the notes to participate in those assets, will be effectively subordinated to the claims of that subsidiary's creditors, including trade creditors. In addition, even if we are a creditor of any of our subsidiaries, our right as a creditor would be subordinate to any security interest in such assets of our subsidiaries and any indebtedness of our subsidiaries senior in right of payment to that held by us. At June 30, 2011, we had approximately \$24.4 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally senior to the notes and approximately \$996.7 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally equivalent to the notes.

The notes will be effectively junior to secured indebtedness that we may issue in the future.

The notes are unsecured. Holders of secured debt that we have now or may issue in the future may foreclose on the assets securing such debt, reducing the cash flow from the foreclosed property available for payment of unsecured debt, including the notes. Holders of our secured debt also would have priority over unsecured creditors in the event of our bankruptcy, liquidation or similar proceeding. As a result, the notes will be effectively junior to any secured debt that we may issue in the future.

We may issue additional notes.

Under the terms of the Indenture that governs the notes, we may from time to time without notice to, or the consent of, the holders of the notes, create and issue additional notes of a new or existing series, which notes, if of an existing series, will be equal in rank to the notes of that series in all material respects so that the new notes may be consolidated and form a single series with such notes and have the same terms as to status, redemption or otherwise as such notes.

Redemption may adversely affect your return on the notes.

The notes are redeemable at our option, and therefore we may choose to redeem the notes at times when prevailing interest rates are relatively low. As a result, you may not be able to reinvest the proceeds you receive from the redemption in a comparable security at an effective interest rate as high as the interest rate on your notes being redeemed.

Table of Contents

If active trading markets do not develop for the notes, you may be unable to sell your notes or to sell your notes at prices that you deem sufficient.

The notes are new issues of securities for which there currently is no established trading market. We do not intend to list the notes on a national securities exchange. While the underwriters of the notes have advised us that they intend to make a market in the notes, the underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may stop their market making at any time. No assurance can be given:

that a market for the notes will develop or continue;

as to the liquidity of any market that does develop; or

as to your ability to sell your notes or the prices at which you may be able to sell your notes.

We may not be able to repurchase the notes upon a change of control.

Upon the occurrence of a Change of Control Repurchase Event, each holder of notes will have the right to require us to repurchase all or any part of such holder's notes at a price equal to 101% of their principal amount, plus accrued and unpaid interest, if any, to the date of repurchase. If we experience a Change of Control Repurchase Event, there can be no assurance that we would have sufficient financial resources available to satisfy our obligations to repurchase the notes or that the terms of other indebtedness will not preclude us from doing so. Our failure to repurchase the notes as required under the Indenture governing the notes would result in a default under the Indenture, which could have material adverse consequences for us and the holders of the notes. See Description of the Notes Repurchase at the Option of Holders Upon Change of Control Repurchase Event.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$ million after deducting the underwriting discount and our estimated expenses related to the offering. We intend to use the net proceeds for working capital and other general corporate purposes, including acquisitions, stock repurchases and other business opportunities.

S-7

Table of Contents**CAPITALIZATION**

The following table sets forth, as of June 30, 2011, our consolidated cash and cash equivalents and capitalization on an actual basis and as adjusted to give effect to the sale of the notes. See Use of Proceeds. You should read this table in conjunction with our consolidated financial statements and the notes thereto, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

	At June 30, 2011	
	Actual	As Adjusted(1)
	(In millions)	
Cash and marketable securities	\$ 2,675.0	\$
Total current liabilities	\$ 1,603.5	\$
Long-term debt:		
Long-term debt, excluding current maturities	996.7	
Notes offered hereby		
Total long-term debt	996.7	
Other liabilities	1,218.2	
Total liabilities	3,818.4	
Shareholders' equity:		
Common stock, \$.10 par value		
Authorized 1,000 shares		
Outstanding 388.3 shares	38.8	
Additional paid-in capital	1,000.8	
Retained earnings	6,254.1	
Accumulated other comprehensive gain	484.3	
Total shareholders' equity	7,778.0	
Total capitalization	\$ 11,596.4	\$

(1) Adjusted for the sale of the notes, after deducting the underwriting discount and our estimated expenses related to the offering.

Table of Contents**RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

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

	Six Months Ended		Year Ended December 31,			
	June 30,					
	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	27.0x	17.5x	34.5x	29.1x	31.4x	37.6x

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 THE NOTES

The following description of the particular terms of the notes supplements the description of the general terms and provisions of the debt securities set forth in the accompanying prospectus. References in this section to the Company, we, us and our refer to Stryker Corporation, the issuer of the notes, and not to its subsidiaries.

The notes will be issued under the Indenture, dated as of January 15, 2010 and a supplemental indenture, or the Third Supplemental Indenture, to be entered into, (as so supplemented, the Indenture) between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee. The terms of the notes include those provisions contained in the Indenture and those made part of the Indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended. We have summarized selected terms and provisions of the Indenture below and in the accompanying prospectus. These summaries are not complete and are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, the actual provisions of the Indenture, including the definitions contained in the Indenture of some of the terms used below, and the notes. The Indenture is filed as an exhibit to the registration statement under which the notes are being offered and sold. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

General

The notes will be senior unsecured obligations of the Company and will rank equally in right of payment with our other existing and future senior unsecured indebtedness. The notes will be effectively subordinated to all liabilities of our subsidiaries, including trade payables. Since we conduct many of our operations through our subsidiaries, our right to participate in any distribution of the assets of a subsidiary when it winds up its business is subject to the prior claims of the creditors of the subsidiary. This means that your right as a holder of our notes will also be subject to the prior claims of these creditors if a subsidiary liquidates or reorganizes or otherwise winds up its business. If we are a creditor of any of our subsidiaries, our right as a creditor would be subordinate to any security interest in such assets of our subsidiaries and any indebtedness of our subsidiaries senior in right of payment to that held by us. At June 30, 2011, we had approximately \$24.4 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally senior to the notes. See [Risk Factors](#) [Risks Related to the Notes](#). The notes are effectively junior to the existing and future liabilities of our subsidiaries.

The Indenture does not limit the amount of notes, unsecured debentures or other evidences of indebtedness that we may issue under the Indenture and provides that notes, unsecured debentures or other evidences of indebtedness may be issued from time to time in one or more series. We may from time to time, without giving notice to or seeking the consent of the holders of the notes, issue notes having the same ranking and the same interest rate, maturity and other terms (except for the issue date, the public offering price and in some cases the first interest payment date) as and ranking equally and ratably with the notes. Any additional notes having such similar terms, together with the notes, will constitute a single series of securities under the Indenture. At June 30, 2011, we had approximately \$996.7 million of indebtedness outstanding on a consolidated basis, which would be structurally equivalent to the notes.

The notes will be issued only in fully registered form without coupons and in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount.

Principal and interest will be payable, and the notes will be transferable or exchangeable, at the office or offices or agency maintained by us for these purposes. Payment of interest on the notes may be made at our option by check mailed to the registered holders.

No service charge will be made for any transfer or exchange of the notes, but we may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with a transfer or exchange.

The notes will be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a nominee of DTC. Except as described under [Delivery and Form](#) [Exchange of Book-Entry Notes for Certificated Notes](#), the notes will not be issuable in certificated form.

Table of Contents

Principal Amount; Maturity and Interest

The notes will initially be limited to \$ million in aggregate principal amount and will mature on , 20 . The notes will bear interest at the rate of % per annum from the date of original issuance, or from the most recent interest payment date to which interest has been paid or provided for.

We will make interest payments on the notes semi-annually in arrears on and of each year, commencing , 2012, to the holders of record at the close of business (whether or not a business day) on the immediately preceding and , respectively. Interest on the notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months.

If an interest payment date or the maturity date with respect to the notes falls on a day that is not a business day, the payment will be made on the next business day as if it were made on the date the payment was due, and no interest will accrue on the amount so payable for the period from and after that interest payment date or the maturity date, as the case may be, to the date the payment is made. Interest payments will include accrued interest from and including the date of issue or from and including the last date in respect of which interest has been paid, as the case may be, to, but excluding, the interest payment date or the date of maturity, as the case may be.

As used in this prospectus supplement, a business day means any day, other than a Saturday or Sunday, that is neither a legal holiday nor a day on which the trustee or banking institutions in The City of New York are authorized or required by law or regulation to close.

Optional Redemption

The notes will be redeemable, any time in whole or from time to time in part, at our option at a redemption price equal to the greater of:

(i) 100% of the principal amount of the notes to be redeemed; and

(ii) the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest thereon (not including any portion of such payments of interest accrued as of the date of redemption), discounted to the date of redemption on a semi-annual basis (assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months) at the Treasury Rate (as defined below), plus basis points,

plus, in each case, accrued and unpaid interest thereon to the date of redemption. Notwithstanding the foregoing, installments of interest on the notes that are due and payable on interest payment dates falling on or prior to a redemption date will be payable on the interest payment date to the registered holders as of the close of business on the relevant record date according to the notes and the Indenture.

Comparable Treasury Issue means the United States Treasury security selected by a Reference Treasury Dealer as having a maturity comparable to the remaining term (as measured from the date of redemption) of the notes to be redeemed that would be utilized, at the time of selection and in accordance with customary financial practice, in pricing new issues of corporate debt securities of comparable maturity to the remaining term of such notes.

Comparable Treasury Price means, with respect to any redemption date, (1) the average of the Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations for such redemption date, after excluding the highest and lowest such Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations, (2) if we can only obtain less than four such Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations, the average of all such quotations or (3) if we can only obtain one Reference Treasury Dealer Quotation, such quotation.

Reference Treasury Dealer means (1) each of Citigroup Global Markets Inc., Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC and a Primary Treasury Dealer (as defined herein) selected by Wells Fargo Securities, LLC and their respective successors or their respective affiliates that are Primary Treasury Dealers; provided, however, that if any of the foregoing shall cease to be a primary U.S. government securities dealer in New York City (a

Primary Treasury Dealer), we will substitute therefor another Primary Treasury Dealer, and (2) any other Primary Treasury Dealer(s) selected by us.

Table of Contents

Reference Treasury Dealer Quotation means, with respect to each Reference Treasury Dealer and any redemption date, the average of the bid and asked prices for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed in each case as a percentage of its principal amount) quoted in writing to us by such Reference Treasury Dealer at 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the third business day preceding such redemption date.

Treasury Rate means, with respect to any redemption date, the rate per annum equal to the semi-annual equivalent yield to maturity of the Comparable Treasury Issue, assuming a price for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed as a percentage of its principal amount) equal to the Comparable Treasury Price for such redemption date.

Notice of any redemption will be mailed at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of the notes to be redeemed. We will calculate the redemption price as described in the terms of the notes to be redeemed and will deliver an officer's certificate to the trustee setting forth the redemption price no later than two business days prior to the redemption date. Unless we default in payment of the redemption price, on and after the redemption date, interest will cease to accrue on the notes or portions thereof called for redemption. If less than all of the notes are to be redeemed, the notes to be redeemed shall be selected by lot by DTC, in the case of notes represented by a global security, or by the trustee by a method the trustee deems to be fair and appropriate, in the case of notes that are not represented by a global security.

Sinking Fund

The notes will not be entitled to any sinking fund.

Repurchase at the Option of Holders Upon Change of Control Repurchase Event

If a Change of Control Repurchase Event (as defined below) occurs, unless we have exercised our right to redeem the notes as described above, we will be required to make an offer to each holder of notes to repurchase all or any part (in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount) of that holder's notes at a repurchase price in cash equal to 101% of the aggregate principal amount of notes repurchased plus any accrued and unpaid interest on the notes repurchased to the date of purchase. Within 30 days following any Change of Control Repurchase Event or, at our option, prior to any Change of Control (as defined below), but after the public announcement of an impending Change of Control, we will mail a notice to each holder, with a copy to the trustee, describing the transaction or transactions that constitute or may constitute the Change of Control Repurchase Event and offering to repurchase notes on the payment date specified in the notice, which date will be no earlier than 30 days and no later than 60 days from the date such notice is mailed. The notice shall, if mailed prior to the date of consummation of the Change of Control, state that the offer to purchase is conditioned on the Change of Control Repurchase Event occurring on or prior to the payment date specified in the notice.

We will comply with the requirements of Rule 14e-1 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, and any other securities laws and regulations thereunder, to the extent those laws and regulations are applicable in connection with the repurchase of the notes as a result of a Change of Control Repurchase Event. To the extent that the provisions of any securities laws or regulations conflict with the Change of Control Repurchase Event provisions of the notes, we will comply with the applicable securities laws and regulations and will not be deemed to have breached our obligations under the Change of Control Repurchase Event provisions of the notes by virtue of such conflict.

On the Change of Control Repurchase Event payment date, we will, to the extent lawful:

accept for payment all notes or portions of notes (in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount) properly tendered pursuant to our offer;

deposit with the paying agent an amount equal to the aggregate purchase price in respect of all notes or portions of notes properly tendered; and

Table of Contents

deliver or cause to be delivered to the trustee for cancellation the notes properly accepted, together with an officers' certificate stating the aggregate principal amount of notes being repurchased by us.

The paying agent will promptly mail to each holder of notes properly tendered the purchase price for the notes, and the trustee will promptly authenticate and mail (or cause to be transferred by book-entry) to each holder a new note equal in principal amount to any unpurchased portion of any notes surrendered; provided, that each new note will be in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 above that amount.

We will not be required to make an offer to repurchase the notes upon a Change of Control Repurchase Event if a third party makes such an offer in the manner, at the times and otherwise in compliance with the requirements for an offer made by us and such third party purchases all notes properly tendered and not withdrawn under its offer.

We have no present intention to engage in a transaction involving a Change of Control, although it is possible that we would decide to do so in the future. We could, in the future, enter into certain transactions, including acquisitions, refinancings or other recapitalizations, that would not constitute a Change of Control but that could increase the amount of debt outstanding at such time or otherwise affect our capital structure or credit ratings.

Definitions

Below Investment Grade Rating Event means the notes are rated below Investment Grade by each of the Rating Agencies on any date during the period commencing upon the first public notice of the occurrence of a Change of Control or our intention to effect a Change of Control and ending 60 days following public notice of the occurrence of the related Change of Control (which period shall be extended so long as the rating of the notes is under publicly announced consideration for possible downgrade by any of the Rating Agencies); *provided* that a Below Investment Grade Rating Event otherwise arising by virtue of a particular reduction in rating shall not be deemed to have occurred in respect of a particular Change of Control (and thus shall not be deemed a Below Investment Grade Rating Event for purposes of the definition of Change of Control Repurchase Event hereunder) if the Rating Agencies making the reduction in rating to which this definition would otherwise apply do not announce or publicly confirm or inform the trustee in writing at its request that the reduction was the result, in whole or in part, of any event or circumstance comprised of or arising as a result of, or in respect of, the applicable Change of Control (whether or not the applicable Change of Control shall have occurred at the time of the Below Investment Grade Rating Event).

Change of Control means the occurrence of any of the following:

- (1) the direct or indirect sale, transfer, conveyance or other disposition (other than by way of merger or consolidation), in one or a series of related transactions, of all or substantially all of our assets and those of our subsidiaries taken as a whole to any person (as that term is used in Section 13(d)(3) of the Exchange Act), other than us or one of our subsidiaries;
- (2) the adoption of a plan relating to our liquidation or dissolution;
- (3) the first day on which a majority of the members of our Board of Directors are not Continuing Directors; or
- (4) the consummation of any transaction (including, without limitation, any merger or consolidation) the result of which is that any person (as that term is used in Section 13(d)(3) of the Exchange Act), other than us or one or more of our subsidiaries, becomes the beneficial owner (as defined in Rule 13d-3 of the Exchange Act), directly or indirectly, of more than 50% of the then outstanding number of shares of our Voting Stock.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a transaction will not be considered to be a Change of Control if (a) we become a direct or indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of a holding company and (b)(i) immediately following

Table of Contents

that transaction, the direct or indirect holders of the Voting Stock of the holding company are substantially the same as the holders of our Voting Stock immediately prior to that transaction or (ii) immediately following that transaction, no person is the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of more than 50% of the Voting Stock of such holding company.

Change of Control Repurchase Event means the occurrence of both a Change of Control and a Below Investment Grade Rating Event.

Continuing Directors means, as of any date of determination, any member of our Board of Directors who (1) was a member of such Board of Directors on the date of the issuance of the notes; or (2) was nominated for election, elected or appointed to such Board of Directors with the approval of a majority of the Continuing Directors who were members of such Board of Directors at the time of such nomination, election or appointment (either by a specific vote or by approval of our proxy statement in which such member was named as a nominee for election as a director).

Investment Grade means a rating of Baa3 or better by Moody's (or its equivalent under any successor rating categories of Moody's) and a rating of BBB- or better by S&P (or its equivalent under any successor rating categories of S&P) or the equivalent investment grade credit rating from any additional Rating Agency or Rating Agencies selected by us.

Moody's means Moody's Investors Service Inc., a subsidiary of Moody's Corporation, and its successors.

Rating Agency means (1) each of Moody's and S&P; and (2) if any of Moody's or S&P ceases to rate the notes or fails to make a rating of the notes publicly available for reasons outside of our control, a nationally recognized statistical rating organization within the meaning of Rule 15c3-1(c)(2)(vi)(F) under the Exchange Act, selected by us as a replacement agency for Moody's or S&P, or both of them, as the case may be.

S&P means Standard & Poor's Ratings Services, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. and its successors.

Voting Stock of any specified person as of any date means the capital stock of such person that is at the time entitled to vote generally in the election of the board of directors of such person.

The definition of **Change of Control** includes a phrase relating to the direct or indirect sale, transfer, conveyance or other disposition of all or substantially all of our assets and those of our subsidiaries, taken as a whole. Although there is a limited body of case law interpreting the phrase substantially all, there is no precise established definition of the phrase under applicable law. Accordingly, the ability of a holder of notes to require us to repurchase the notes as a result of a sale, transfer, conveyance or other disposition of less than all of our assets and the assets of our subsidiaries, taken as a whole, to another person or group may be uncertain.

Certain Covenants

Limitation on Liens

The Indenture contains a covenant that we will not, and we will not permit any of our Restricted Subsidiaries to, issue, assume or guarantee any Indebtedness secured by any Mortgage upon any of our Principal Properties or those of any of our Restricted Subsidiaries without equally and ratably securing the notes (and, if we so determine, any other Indebtedness ranking equally with the notes) with such Indebtedness.

This covenant will not prevent us or any of our Restricted Subsidiaries from issuing, assuming or guaranteeing:

any purchase money mortgage on such Principal Property prior to, simultaneously with or within 180 days after the later of (1) the acquisition or completion of construction or completion of substantial reconstruction, renovation, remodeling, expansion or improvement (each, a substantial

Table of Contents

improvement) of such Principal Property or (2) the placing in operation of such property after the acquisition or completion of any such construction or substantial improvement;

Mortgages on a Principal Property existing at the time of acquisition, including acquisition through merger or consolidation;

Mortgages existing on the date of the Third Supplemental Indenture, Mortgages on assets of a corporation or other business entity existing on the date it becomes a Restricted Subsidiary or is merged or consolidated with us or a Restricted Subsidiary or at the time the corporation or other business entity sells, leases or otherwise disposes of its property as an entirety or substantially as an entirety to us or a Restricted Subsidiary or Mortgages on the assets of a Subsidiary that is newly designated as a Restricted Subsidiary if the Mortgage would have been permitted under the provisions of this paragraph if such Mortgage was created while the Subsidiary was a Restricted Subsidiary;

Mortgages in favor of us or a Restricted Subsidiary;

Mortgages for taxes, assessments or governmental charges or levies which are not delinquent or which are being contested in good faith;

Carriers , warehousemen s, materialmen s, repairmen s, mechanic s, landlords and other similar Mortgages arising in ordinary course of business which are not delinquent or remain payable without penalty or which are being contested in good faith;

Mortgages (other than any Mortgage imposed by ERISA) consisting of pledges or deposits required in the ordinary course of business in connection with workers compensation, unemployment insurance and other social security legislation;

Easements, rights-of-way, restrictions, encroachments, imperfections and other similar encumbrances affecting real property which, in the aggregate, are not substantial in amount, and which do not in any case materially detract from the value of the Principal Property subject thereto or materially interfere with the ordinary conduct of our and our Subsidiaries business, taken as a whole;

Mortgages arising by reason of deposits with, or the giving of any form of security to, any governmental agency or any body created or approved by law or governmental regulation, including any zoning or similar law or right reserved to or vested in any governmental office or agency to control or regulate the use of any real property;

Mortgages arising from filing UCC financing statements relating solely to leases; and

Mortgages to secure Indebtedness incurred to extend, renew, refinance or replace Indebtedness secured by any Mortgages referred to above, provided that the principal amount of the extended, renewed, refinanced or replaced Indebtedness does not exceed the principal amount of Indebtedness so extended, renewed, refinanced or replaced, plus transaction costs and fees, and that any such Mortgage applies only to the same property or assets subject to the prior permitted Mortgage (and, in the case of real property, improvements).

Limitations on Sale and Leaseback Transactions

The Indenture contains a covenant that we will not, and will not permit our Restricted Subsidiaries to, enter into any arrangement with any person providing for the leasing by us or any Restricted Subsidiary of any Principal Property owned or acquired thereafter that has been or is to be sold or transferred by us or such Restricted Subsidiary to such person with the intention of taking back a lease of such Principal Property, a sale and leaseback transaction, without equally and ratably securing the notes (and, if we shall so determine, any other Indebtedness ranking equally with the notes), unless:

within 180 days after the receipt of the proceeds of the sale or transfer, we or any Restricted Subsidiary apply an amount equal to the greater of the net proceeds of the sale or transfer or the fair

S-15

Table of Contents

value of such Principal Property at the time of such sale or transfer to any (or a combination) of (1) the prepayment or retirement (other than any mandatory prepayment or retirement) of our Senior Funded Debt or (2) the purchase, construction, development, expansion or improvement of other comparable property, subject in each case to credits for voluntary retirements of Senior Funded Debt; or

we or such Restricted Subsidiary would be entitled, at the effective date of the sale or transfer, to incur Indebtedness secured by a Mortgage on such Principal Property, in an amount at least equal to the Attributable Debt in respect of the sale and leaseback transaction, without equally and ratably securing the notes pursuant to Limitation on Liens described above.

The foregoing restriction will not apply to:

any sale and leaseback transaction for a term of not more than three years including renewals;

any sale and leaseback transaction with respect to a Principal Property if a binding commitment with respect thereto is entered into within three years after the later of (1) the date of issuance of the first series of debt securities issued under the Indenture, or (2) the date such Principal Property was acquired;

any sale and leaseback transaction with respect to a Principal Property if a binding commitment with respect thereto is entered into within 180 days after the later of the date such property was acquired and, if applicable, the date such property was first placed in operation; or

any sale and leaseback transaction between us and a Restricted Subsidiary or between Restricted Subsidiaries.

Exception to Limitations for Exempted Debt

Notwithstanding the limitations in the Indenture on liens and sale and leaseback transactions, we or our Restricted Subsidiaries may, in addition to amounts permitted under such restrictions and without equally and ratably securing the notes, create or assume and renew, extend or replace Mortgages, or enter into sale and leaseback transactions without any obligation to retire any Senior Funded Debt of us or any Restricted Subsidiary, provided that at the time of such creation, assumption, renewal, extension or replacement of a Mortgage or at the time of entering into such sale and leaseback transactions, and after giving effect thereto, Exempted Debt does not exceed 15% of our Consolidated Net Tangible Assets.

Definitions

For purposes of the Indenture:

Attributable Debt in respect of a sale and leaseback transaction means, at the time of determination, the present value (discounted at the imputed rate of interest of such transaction as determined in good faith by us) of the obligation of the lessee for net rental payments during the remaining term of the lease included in such sale and leaseback transaction (including any period for which such lease has been extended or may, at the option of the lessor, be extended). The term net rental payments under any lease for any period means the sum of the rental and other payments required to be paid in such period by the lessee thereunder, not including any amounts required to be paid by such lessee (whether or not designated as rental or additional rent) on account of maintenance and repairs, insurance, taxes, assessments, water rates or similar charges required to be paid by such lessee thereunder or any amount required to be paid by lessee thereunder contingent upon the amount of maintenance and repairs, insurance, taxes, assessments, water rates or similar charges. In the case of any lease which is terminable by the lessee upon the payment of a penalty, such net amount shall be the lesser of (x) the net amount determined assuming termination upon the first date such lease may be terminated (in which case the net amount shall also include the amount of the penalty, but shall not include any rent that would be required to be paid under such lease subsequent to the first date upon which it may be so terminated) or (y) the net amount determined assuming no such termination.

Table of Contents

Consolidated Net Tangible Assets means the total amounts of assets (less depreciation and valuation reserves and other reserves and items deductible from gross book value of specific asset accounts under generally accepted accounting principles) which under generally accepted accounting principles would be included on a consolidated balance sheet of us and our consolidated Restricted Subsidiaries after deducting (1) all current liabilities, excluding current liabilities that could be classified as long-term debt under generally accepted accounting principles and current liabilities that are by their terms extendable or renewable at the obligor's option to a time more than 12 months after the time as of which the amount of current liabilities is being computed; (2) investments in Unrestricted Subsidiaries; and (3) all trade names, trademarks, licenses, patents, copyrights and goodwill, organizational and development costs, deferred charges, other than prepaid items such as insurance, taxes, interest, commissions, rents and similar items and tangible assets being amortized, and amortized debt discount and expense, less unamortized premium.

Exempted Debt means the sum of the following items outstanding as of the date Exempted Debt is being determined (1) Indebtedness of us and our Restricted Subsidiaries secured by a Mortgage and not permitted to exist under the Indenture and (2) Attributable Debt of us and our Restricted Subsidiaries in respect of all sale and leaseback transactions not permitted under the Indenture.

Funded Debt means Indebtedness that matures more than one year from the date of creation, or that is extendable or renewable at the sole option of the obligor so that it may become payable more than one year from such date. Funded Debt does not include (1) obligations created pursuant to leases, (2) any Indebtedness or portion thereof maturing by its terms within one year from the time of any computation of the amount of outstanding Funded Debt unless such Indebtedness shall be extendable or renewable at the sole option of the obligor in such manner that it may become payable more than one year from such time, or (3) any Indebtedness for the payment or redemption of which money in the necessary amount shall have been deposited in trust either at or before the maturity date thereof.

Indebtedness means any and all of the obligations of a person for money borrowed which in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles would be reflected on the balance sheet of such person as a liability as of the date of which the Indebtedness is to be determined.

Investment means any investment in stock, evidences of Indebtedness, loans or advances, however made or acquired, but does not include our account receivable or the accounts receivable of any Restricted Subsidiary arising from transactions in the ordinary course of business, or any evidences of Indebtedness, loans or advance made in connection with the sale to any Subsidiary of our accounts receivable or the accounts receivable of any Restricted Subsidiary arising from transactions in the ordinary course of business.

Mortgage means any mortgage, security interest, pledge, lien or other encumbrance.

Principal Property means all real property and improvements thereon owned by us or a Restricted Subsidiary, including, without limitation, any manufacturing, warehouse, distribution or research facility, and improvements therein, having a net book value in excess of 2% of Consolidated Net Tangible Assets that is located within the United States, excluding its territories and possessions and Puerto Rico. This term does not include any real property and improvements thereon that our Board of Directors declares by resolution not to be of material importance to the total business conducted by us and our Restricted Subsidiaries taken as a whole.

Restricted Subsidiary means a Subsidiary that owns a Principal Property.

Senior Funded Debt means all Funded Debt (except Funded Debt, the payment of which is subordinated to the payment of the notes).

Subsidiary means a corporation, partnership or other legal entity of which, in the case of a corporation, more than 50% of the outstanding voting stock is owned, directly or indirectly, by us or by one or more other Subsidiaries, or by us and one or more other Subsidiaries or, in the case of any partnership or other legal entity, more than 50% of the ordinary capital interests is, at the time, directly or indirectly owned

Table of Contents

or controlled by us or by one or more other Subsidiaries. For the purposes of this definition, *voting stock* means the equity interest that ordinarily has voting power for the election of directors, managers or trustees of an entity, or persons performing similar functions, whether at all times or only so long as no senior class of equity interest has such voting power by reason of any contingency.

Unrestricted Subsidiary means any Subsidiary other than a Restricted Subsidiary.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

The consolidation, merger and sale of assets provisions with respect to the notes are described in the accompanying prospectus under *Description of Debt Securities Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets*.

Events of Default

The events of default with respect to the notes are described in the accompanying prospectus under *Description of Debt Securities Events of Default*.

Delivery and Form

The notes will be represented by one or more permanent notes in registered, global form without interest coupons, or the global notes. These global notes will be deposited upon issuance with the trustee as custodian for DTC, or the depositary, and registered in the name of the depositary or its nominee, in each case for credit to an account of a direct or indirect participant as described below. Except as set forth below, the global notes may be transferred, in whole and not in part, only to the depositary, a nominee of the depositary or to a successor of the depositary or its nominee. Beneficial interests in the global notes may not be exchanged for notes in certificated form except in the limited circumstances described below under *Exchange of Book-Entry Notes for Certificated Notes*. The trustee will act as registrar.

Book-Entry Procedures

DTC. The depositary has advised us that it is a limited-purpose trust company created to hold securities for its participating organizations, or, collectively, the participants, and to facilitate the clearance and settlement of transactions in those securities between participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of participants. The participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations. Access to the depositary's system is also available to other entities such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a participant, either directly or indirectly, or, collectively, indirect participants. Persons who are not participants may beneficially own securities held by or on behalf of the depositary only through participants or indirect participants. The ownership interest and transfer of ownership interest of each actual purchaser of each security held by or on behalf of the depositary are recorded on the records of the participants and indirect participants.

The depositary also has advised us that pursuant to procedures established by it:

upon deposit of the global notes, the depositary will credit the accounts of participants designated by the underwriters with portions of the principal amount of global notes; and

ownership of interests in the global notes will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership thereof will be effected only through, records maintained by the depositary with respect to participants or by participants and the indirect participants with respect to other owners of beneficial interest in the global notes.

The laws of some states require that certain persons take physical delivery in definitive form of securities that they own. Consequently, the ability to transfer beneficial interest in a global note to such

Table of Contents

persons may be limited to that extent. Because the depositary can act only on behalf of participants, which in turn act on behalf of indirect participants and certain banks, the ability of a person having a beneficial interest in a global note to pledge such interest to persons or entities that do not participate in the depositary system, or otherwise take actions in respect of such interests, may be affected by the lack of a physical certificate evidencing such interests.

Except as described below, owners of interests in the global notes will not have notes registered in their names, will not receive physical delivery of notes in certificated form and will not be considered the registered owners or holders thereof under the Indenture for any purpose.

Payments in respect of the principal and premium and liquidated damages, if any, and interest on a global note registered in the name of the depositary or its nominee will be payable by the paying agent to the depositary or its nominee in its capacity as the registered holder of a global note under the Indenture. Under the terms of the Indenture, we and the trustee will treat the persons in whose names the global notes are registered as the owners thereof for the purpose of receiving such payments and for any and all other purposes whatsoever.

Consequently, neither we, the trustee nor any agent of us have or will have any responsibility or liability for:

any aspect of the depositary's records or any participant's or indirect participant's records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the global notes, or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any of the depositary's records or any participant's or indirect participant's records relating to the beneficial ownership interests in the global notes; or

any other matter relating to the actions and practices of the depositary or any of its participants or indirect participants.

The depositary has advised us that its current practice, upon receipt of any payment in respect of securities such as the notes (including principal and interest), is to credit the accounts of the relevant participants with the payment on the payment date, in amounts proportionate to their respective holdings in principal amount of beneficial interests in the relevant security such as the global notes as shown on the records of the depositary. Payments by participants and the indirect participants to the beneficial owners of notes will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices and will not be the responsibility of the depositary, the trustee or us. Neither we nor the trustee will be liable for any delay by the depositary or its participants in identifying the beneficial owners of the notes, and we and the trustee may rely conclusively on and will be protected in relying on instructions from the depositary or its nominee as the registered owner of the global notes for all purposes.

Interests in the global notes will trade in the depositary's same-day funds settlement system, and secondary market trading activity in such interest will, therefore, settle in immediately available funds, subject in all cases to the rules and procedures of the depositary and its participants. Transfers between participants in the depositary will be effective in accordance with the depositary's procedures and will be settled in same-day funds.

The depositary has advised us that it will take any action permitted to be taken by a holder of notes only at the direction of one or more participants to whose account the interests in the global notes are credited and only in respect of such portion of the aggregate principal amount of the notes as to which such participant or participants has or have given direction.

Clearstream. Clearstream Banking, *société anonyme*, or Clearstream, is incorporated under the laws of Luxembourg as a professional depositary. Clearstream holds securities for its participating organizations, or Clearstream Participants, and facilitates the clearance and settlement of securities transactions between Clearstream Participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of Clearstream Participants, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of certificates. Clearstream provides Clearstream Participants with, among other things, services for safekeeping, administration, clearance and establishment of internationally traded securities and securities lending and borrowing.

Table of Contents

Clearstream interfaces with domestic markets in several countries. As a professional depositary, Clearstream is subject to regulation by the Luxembourg Monetary Institute. Clearstream Participants are recognized financial institutions around the world, including underwriters, securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations, and may include the underwriters. Indirect access to Clearstream is also available to others, such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a Clearstream Participant either directly or indirectly.

Distributions with respect to notes held beneficially through Clearstream will be credited to cash accounts of Clearstream Participants in accordance with its rules and procedures to the extent received by the depositary for Clearstream.

Euroclear. Euroclear Bank S.A./N.V. , or Euroclear, was created in 1968 to hold securities for participants of Euroclear, or Euroclear Participants, and to clear and settle transactions between Euroclear Participants through simultaneous electronic book-entry delivery against payment, thereby eliminating the need for physical movement of certificates and any risk from lack of simultaneous transfers of securities and cash. Euroclear includes various other services, including securities lending and borrowing and interfaces with domestic markets in several markets in several countries. Euroclear operates its system under contract with Euroclear plc, a U.K. corporation. All operations are conducted by Euroclear, and all Euroclear securities clearance accounts and Euroclear cash accounts are accounts with Euroclear, not Euroclear plc. Euroclear plc establishes policy for Euroclear on behalf of Euroclear Participants. Euroclear Participants include banks (including central banks), securities brokers and dealers and other professional financial intermediaries and may include the underwriters. Indirect access to Euroclear is also available to other firms that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a Euroclear Participant, either directly or indirectly.

Euroclear is a Belgian bank. As such, it is regulated by the Belgian Banking and Finance Commission.

Links have been established among the depositary, Clearstream and Euroclear to facilitate the initial issuance of the notes sold outside the United States and cross-market transfers of the notes associated with secondary market trading.

Although the depositary, Clearstream and Euroclear have agreed to the procedures provided below in order to facilitate transfers, they are under no obligation to perform these procedures, and these procedures may be modified or discontinued at any time.

Clearstream and Euroclear will record the ownership interests of their participants in much the same way as the depositary, and the depositary will record the total ownership of each of the U.S. agents of Clearstream and Euroclear, as participants in the depositary. When notes are to be transferred from the account of a depositary participant to the account of a Clearstream Participant or a Euroclear Participant, the purchaser must send instructions to Clearstream or Euroclear through a participant at least one day prior to settlement. Clearstream or Euroclear, as the case may be, will instruct its U.S. agent to receive notes against payment. After settlement, Clearstream or Euroclear will credit its participant's account. Credit for the notes will appear on the next day (European time).

Because settlement is taking place during New York business hours, depositary participants will be able to employ their usual procedures for sending notes to the relevant U.S. agent acting for the benefit of Clearstream or Euroclear participants. The sale proceeds will be available to the depositary seller on the settlement date. As a result, to the depositary participant, a cross-market transaction will settle no differently than a trade between two depositary participants.

When a Clearstream or Euroclear participant wishes to transfer notes to a depositary participant, the seller will be required to send instructions to Clearstream or Euroclear through a participant at least one business day prior to settlement. In these cases, Clearstream or Euroclear will instruct its U.S. agent to transfer these notes against payment for them. The payment will then be reflected in the account of the Clearstream or Euroclear participant the following day, with the proceeds back valued to the value date,

Table of Contents

which would be the preceding day, when settlement occurs in New York, if settlement is not completed on the intended value date, that is, the trade fails, proceeds credited to the Clearstream or Euroclear participant's account will instead be valued as of the actual settlement date.

You should be aware that you will only be able to make and receive deliveries, payments and other communications involving the notes through Clearstream and Euroclear on the days when those clearing systems are open for business. Those systems may not be open for business on days when banks, brokers and other institutions are open for business in the United States. In addition, because of time zone differences there may be problems with completing transactions involving Clearstream and Euroclear on the same business day as in the United States.

The information in this section concerning the depositary, Clearstream and Euroclear and its book-entry systems has been obtained from sources that we believe to be reliable, but we take no responsibility for the accuracy thereof. Neither we nor the trustee will have any responsibility for the performance by the depositary, Clearstream and Euroclear or their respective participants or indirect participants of their respective obligations under the rules and procedures governing their operations.

Exchange of Book-Entry Notes for Certificated Notes

A global note is exchangeable for definitive notes in registered certificated form:

if the depositary:

notifies us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depositary for the global note and we thereupon fail to appoint a successor depositary within 90 days after this notice; or

has ceased to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act;

upon the continuance of an event of default under the Indenture; or

if we, at our option and subject to the procedures of the depositary, notify the trustee in writing that we elect to cause issuance of the notes in certificated form.

In addition, beneficial interests in a global note may be exchanged for certificated notes upon request by the depositary but only upon at least 30 days' prior written notice given to the trustee by or on behalf of the depositary in accordance with customary procedures. In all cases, certificated notes delivered in exchange for any global note or beneficial interest therein will be registered in names, and issued in any approved denominations, requested by or on behalf of the depositary (in accordance with its customary procedures).

Table of Contents

CERTAIN UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

General

The following discussion is a summary of certain U.S. federal income tax consequences of an investment in the notes. This discussion does not address all aspects of U.S. federal income taxation that may be relevant to particular taxpayers in light of their special circumstances or taxpayers subject to special treatment under U.S. federal income tax laws (including dealers in securities or currencies, financial institutions, cooperatives, regulated investment companies, real estate investment trusts, tax-exempt organizations, insurance companies, persons who hold notes as part of a hedging, integrated, straddle, conversion or constructive sale transaction, persons subject to the alternative minimum tax, U.S. Holders (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar, U.S. expatriates, controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies, and partnerships (including entities treated as partnerships (or other pass-through entities) for U.S. federal income tax purposes)). This discussion does not address any aspect of U.S. federal taxation other than U.S. federal income taxation or any aspect of state, local or non-U.S. taxation. In addition, this discussion deals only with certain U.S. federal income tax consequences to a holder that acquires the notes in the initial offering at their issue price and holds the notes as capital assets.

This summary is based on the U.S. federal income tax law in effect as of the date of this prospectus supplement, which is subject to differing interpretations or change, possibly with retroactive effect.

EACH PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER OF THE NOTES SHOULD CONSULT ITS TAX ADVISOR CONCERNING THE U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL AND NON-U.S. TAX CONSEQUENCES OF AN INVESTMENT IN THE NOTES.

A U.S. Holder is a beneficial owner of a note that is, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

an individual citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (or other entity treated as a corporation) created or organized (or treated as created or organized) in or under the laws of the United States or any State thereof (including the District of Columbia);

an estate, the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

a trust, (i) the administration of which is subject to the primary supervision of a court within the United States and for which one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions, or (ii) that has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury Regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

A Non-U.S. Holder is a beneficial owner of a note that is not a U.S. Holder or a partnership. If a partnership (or any other entity treated as a partnership or other pass-through entity for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds a note, the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a partner generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partners and partnerships holding the notes should consult their tax advisors concerning the U.S. federal income and other tax consequences of an investment in the notes.

This discussion assumes that the notes will not be issued with more than a de minimis amount of original issue discount, as determined for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Original issue discount is de minimis if it is less than 0.25% of a note's stated redemption price at maturity multiplied by the number of complete years from issue date to maturity. If the notes are issued with more than a de minimis amount of original issue discount, superseding U.S. federal income tax information will be provided with any term sheet that supplements this prospectus supplement.

Tax Consequences to U.S. Holders

Interest. Payments of stated interest on the notes will be taxable to a U.S. holder as ordinary interest income at the time such holder receives or accrues such amounts, in accordance with its regular method of accounting.

Table of Contents

Sale, Exchange, Retirement or Other Disposition of a Note. A U.S. Holder will generally recognize capital gain or loss upon the sale, exchange, retirement or other taxable disposition of a note in an amount equal to the difference between (i) the amount realized (except to the extent such amount is attributable to accrued interest, which will be taxable as ordinary interest income to the extent such interest has not been previously included in income) and (ii) such U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in the note. A U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in a note will generally equal the cost of the note to such holder. Such capital gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss if the note was held for more than one year at the time of disposition. Long-term capital gains generally are subject to preferential rates of U.S. federal income tax for certain non-corporate U.S. Holders (including individuals). The deductibility of capital losses is subject to significant limitations.

Tax Consequences to Non-U.S. Holders

Interest. Subject to the discussion below concerning backup withholding, no U.S. federal income or withholding tax generally will apply to a payment of interest on a note to a Non-U.S. Holder, provided that

such interest is not effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States by the Non-U.S. Holder;

such Non-U.S. Holder does not actually or constructively own 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our stock entitled to vote;

such Non-U.S. Holder is not a controlled foreign corporation directly or indirectly related to us through stock ownership;

such Non-U.S. Holder is not a bank whose receipt of interest on the notes is described in Section 881(c)(3)(A) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended;

either (A) such Non-U.S. Holder provides its name and address, and certifies on IRS Form W-8BEN (or a substantially similar form), under penalties of perjury, that it is not a U.S. person or (B) a securities clearing organization or certain other financial institutions holding the note on behalf of the Non-U.S. Holder certifies on IRS Form W-8IMY, under penalties of perjury, that such certification has been received by it and furnishes us or our paying agent with a copy thereof; and

we or our paying agent do not have actual knowledge or reason to know that the beneficial owner of the note is a U.S. person. If all of the foregoing requirements are not met, payments of interest on a note generally will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at a 30% rate (or a lower applicable treaty rate, provided certain certification requirements are met), subject to the discussion below concerning interest that is effectively connected with a Non-U.S. Holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States.

Sale, Exchange, Retirement or Other Disposition of a Note. Subject to the discussion below concerning backup withholding, a Non-U.S. Holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income or withholding tax on the receipt of payments of principal on a note, or on any gain recognized upon the sale, exchange, retirement or other disposition of a note (except to the extent such amount is attributable to accrued interest, which will be taxable as described above), unless in the case of gain (i) such gain is effectively connected with the conduct by such Non-U.S. Holder of a trade or business within the United States and, if a treaty applies (and the holder complies with applicable certification and other requirements to claim treaty benefits), is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the Non-U.S. Holder within the United States or (ii) such Non-U.S. Holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of disposition, and certain other conditions are met.

United States Trade or Business. If a Non-U.S. Holder is engaged in a trade or business in the United States, and if interest or gain on a note is effectively connected with the conduct of such trade or business and, if a treaty applies (and the holder complies with applicable certification and other requirements to claim treaty benefits), is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the

Table of Contents

Non-U.S. Holder within the United States, the Non-U.S. Holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the receipt or accrual of such interest or the recognition of gain on the sale or other taxable disposition of the note in the same manner as if such holder were a U.S. person. Such interest or gain recognized by a corporate Non-U.S. Holder may also be subject to an additional U.S. federal branch profits tax at a 30% rate (or, if applicable, a lower treaty rate). In addition, any such gain will not be subject to withholding tax and any such interest will not be subject to withholding tax if the Non-U.S. Holder delivers to us a properly executed IRS Form W-8ECI in order to claim an exemption from withholding tax. Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors with respect to other U.S. tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of notes.

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

U.S. Holders. Payments of interest and principal on, or the proceeds of the sale or other disposition of, a note are generally subject to information reporting unless the U.S. Holder is an exempt recipient (such as a corporation). Such payments may also be subject to U.S. federal backup withholding tax at the applicable rate if the recipient of such payment fails to supply a taxpayer identification number, certified under penalties of perjury, as well as certain other information or otherwise fails to establish an exemption from backup withholding. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules will be allowed as a refund or a credit against that U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability provided the required information is timely furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.

Non-U.S. Holders. A Non-U.S. Holder may be required to comply with certain certification procedures to establish that the holder is not a U.S. person in order to avoid information reporting and backup withholding tax with respect to our payment of principal and interest on, or the proceeds of the sale or other disposition of, a note. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules will be allowed as a refund or a credit against that Non-U.S. Holder's U.S. federal income tax liability provided the required information is timely furnished to the Internal Revenue Service. In certain circumstances, the name and address of the beneficial owner and the amount of interest paid on a note, as well as the amount, if any, of tax withheld may be reported to the Internal Revenue Service. Copies of these information returns may also be made available under the provisions of a specific treaty or agreement to the tax authorities of the country in which the Non-U.S. Holder resides.

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Citigroup Global Markets Inc., Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC and Wells Fargo Securities, LLC are acting as joint book-running managers of the offering and as representatives of the underwriters named below. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, each underwriter named below has severally agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to that underwriter, the principal amount of notes set forth opposite the underwriter's name.

Underwriters	Principal Amount of Notes
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.	\$
Morgan Stanley & Co. LLC	
Wells Fargo Securities, LLC	
 Total	 \$

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the notes included in this offering are subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the notes if they purchase any of the notes. The offering of the notes by the underwriters is subject to receipt and acceptance and subject to the underwriters' right to reject any order in whole or in part.

The underwriters propose to offer the notes directly to the public at the public offering prices set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and may offer the notes to dealers at the public offering prices less a concession not to exceed % of the principal amount of the notes. The underwriters may allow, and dealers may reallow, a concession not to exceed % of the principal amount of the notes on sales to other dealers. After the initial offering of the notes to the public, the representatives may change the public offering prices and other selling terms.

The following table shows the underwriting discount that we are to pay to the underwriters in connection with this offering (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount of the notes).

Per note	Paid by Us %
In connection with the offering, the representatives, on behalf of the underwriters, may purchase and sell notes in the open market. These transactions may include over-allotment, syndicate covering transactions and stabilizing transactions. Over-allotment involves syndicate sales of notes in excess of the principal amount of notes to be purchased by the underwriters in the offering, which creates a syndicate short position. Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the notes in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. Stabilizing transactions consist of certain bids or purchases of notes made for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the market prices of the notes while the offering is in progress.	

The underwriters also may impose a penalty bid. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a syndicate member when the representatives, in covering syndicate short positions or making stabilizing purchases, repurchase notes originally sold by that syndicate member.

Any of these activities may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline in the market prices of the notes. They may also cause the prices of the notes to be higher than the prices that otherwise would exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. The underwriters may conduct these transactions in the over-the-counter market or otherwise. If the underwriters commence any of these transactions, they may discontinue them at any time without notice.

We estimate that our total expenses for this offering will be \$ million, excluding the underwriting discount.

Table of Contents

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make because of any of those liabilities.

The underwriters and their affiliates have provided various investment and commercial banking services for us from time to time for which they have received customary fees and commissions, including participating as lenders under our revolving credit facilities. The underwriters and their affiliates may, from time to time, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of their business for which they have received or will receive customary fees and commissions.

Selling Restrictions

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State), each underwriter has represented and agreed that with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State (the Relevant Implementation Date) it has not made and will not make an offer of notes which are the subject of the offering contemplated by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus to the public in that Relevant Member State other than:

- (a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive;
- (b) to fewer than 100 or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provision of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), as permitted under the Prospectus Directive, subject to obtaining the prior consent of the Representatives for any such offer; or
- (c) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive,

provided that no such offer of notes shall require the Company or any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive. For the purposes of this provision, the expression an offer of notes to the public in relation to any notes in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the notes to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe the notes, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State.

This prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus have been prepared on the basis that any offer of notes in any Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State) will be made pursuant to an exemption under the Prospectus Directive from the requirement to publish a prospectus for offers of notes. Accordingly any person making or intending to make an offer in that Relevant Member State of notes which are the subject of the placement contemplated in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may only do so in circumstances in which no obligation arises for the Company or any of the underwriters to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive, in each case, in relation to such offer. Neither the Company nor the underwriters have authorised, nor do they authorise, the making of any offer of notes in circumstances in which an obligation arises for the Company or the underwriters to publish a prospectus for such offer.

The expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the Relevant Member State), and includes any relevant implementing measure in the Relevant Member State and the expression 2010 PD Amending Directive means Directive 2010/73/EU.

Table of Contents

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are only being distributed to, and are only directed at, (1) persons who are outside the United Kingdom or (2) investment professionals falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005 (the "Order") or (3) high net worth entities, and other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated, falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order (each such person being referred to as a "relevant person"). The notes are only available to, and any invitation, offer or agreement to subscribe, purchase or otherwise acquire the notes will be engaged in only with, relevant persons. Any person who is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or any of their contents.

Each underwriter has represented and agreed that:

- (a) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Finance Service and Market Act 2000 ("FSMA")) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the notes in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to the Company; and
- (b) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the notes in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

S-27

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the notes will be passed upon for us by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and Warner Norcross & Judd LLP and for the underwriters by Winston & Strawn LLP. Winston & Strawn LLP provides certain legal services for us.

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, 2010 (including the schedule appearing therein), and the effectiveness of Stryker's internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2010 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 are subject to the informational reporting requirements of the Exchange Act. You may read and copy any document that we file at the public reference facilities of the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Information on the operation of the public reference facilities may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. You may also inspect our annual, quarterly and current reports, any proxy statements and other information over the Internet at the SEC's home page at <http://www.sec.gov>.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document that we have filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Information that we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus supplement will automatically modify and supersede the information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus to the extent that the subsequently filed information modifies or supersedes the existing information. Nothing in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus shall be deemed to incorporate by reference information furnished to, but not filed with, the SEC, unless specifically stated otherwise. We incorporate by reference:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 (including portions of our definitive Proxy Statement for the 2011 Annual Meeting of Shareholders incorporated therein by reference);

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2011;

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2011; and

Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on February 11, 2011, April 29, 2011, May 16, 2011, May 31, 2011, June 28, 2011, and August 19, 2011.

We will provide to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom this prospectus supplement is delivered a copy of any or all of the information that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus but not delivered with this prospectus supplement, at no cost to the requestor. To receive a free copy of any of the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying 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

Edgar Filing: STRYKER CORP - Form 424B5

Attention: Corporate Secretary

Tel: (269) 385-2600

S-28

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 21.

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

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

Edgar Filing: STRYKER CORP - Form 424B5

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 depository for the relevant global securities or DTC ceases to maintain certain qualifications under the Exchange Act and no successor depository 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

\$

STRYKER CORPORATION

% Notes due 20

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Joint Book-Running Managers

Citigroup

Morgan Stanley
September , 2011

Wells Fargo Securities