



Media Release

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**SANDOZ TO LAUNCH GENERIC CEFTRIAXONE INJECTION®
- Generic Treatment for Infections Provides Lower-Cost Alternative for Patients -**

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, July 19, 2005. Sandoz Inc., a Novartis company and one of the leading generic pharmaceutical companies in the world, announced today it will launch its version of generic Ceftriaxone Injection.

On May 17, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Sandoz Ceftriaxone Injection, a generic form of the patented brand, Rocephin®. Sandoz will ship the generic product to wholesalers and distributors and managed care customers, as well as to hospitals and physician office supply and alternate care segments.

Sandoz will offer Ceftriaxone Injection in 250mg, 500mg, 1g, 2g and 10g vials in both NOVAPLUS private-label and Sandoz label. Sales of Rocephin® in 250mg, 500mg, 1g, 2g and 10g vials were approximately \$505 million in 2004, according to IMS data.

“Sandoz is pleased to be among the first companies to launch a generic version of Ceftriaxone,” said Eric Gorka, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sandoz in the United States. “Ceftriaxone is a great addition to our product line and offers our customers an important lower-cost alternative for their patients.”

Sandoz, a Novartis company, is a world leader in generic pharmaceuticals and develops, manufactures and markets these medicines as well as pharmaceutical and biotechnological active ingredients. Decades of experience and know-how make Sandoz a renowned partner in pharmaceuticals, biopharmaceuticals and anti-infectives. Sandoz employs approximately 13,000 people in over 110 countries and reported sales of USD 3.0 billion in 2004.

Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS) is a world leader in pharmaceuticals and consumer health. In 2004, the Group's businesses achieved sales of USD 28.2 billion and a pro forma net income of USD 5.6 billion. The Group invested approximately USD 4.2 billion in R&D. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 83,700 people and operate in over 140 countries around the world. Further information is available at www.novartis.com.

This release contains certain “forward-looking statements” relating to the Group’s business, which can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as “shipping to all classes of trade,” or similar expressions, or by express or implied discussions regarding potential availability of Ceftriaxone, or potential revenues from sales of Ceftriaxone. Such statements reflect the current plans or views of the Group with respect to future events and are subject to certain risks, uncertainties and assumptions. There can be no guarantee of the future availability of Ceftriaxone, or that Sandoz or the Novartis Group will attain any particular level of revenue from Ceftriaxone. In particular, management's expectations could be affected by, among other things, potential litigation with manufacturers of branded versions of Ceftriaxone, uncertainties regarding production, regulatory actions or delays or government regulation generally, pricing pressures, competition in general, and other risks referred to in Novartis AG’s Form 20-F on file with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those described herein as anticipated, believed, estimated or expected.

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Rocephin® is a registered trademark of Roche Pharmaceuticals.

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