

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

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration Statement No. 333-173295

Subject to Completion, Dated November 14, 2011

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To Prospectus dated May 5, 2011)



\$75,000,000 Common Stock

We are offering _____ shares of our common stock at a price of \$ _____ per share.

Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "CADX." The last reported sales price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market on November 11, 2011 was \$5.06 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. See "[Risk Factors](#)" beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement.

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.

	Per Share	Total
Public offering price	\$ _____	\$ _____
Underwriting discounts and commissions	\$ _____	\$ _____
Proceeds, before expenses, to us	\$ _____	\$ _____

We have granted the underwriters an option for a period of 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement to purchase up to an additional _____ shares of our common stock on the same terms and conditions set forth above to cover over-allotments of shares, if any.

The underwriters expect to deliver the common stock on or about November _____, 2011.

Deutsche Bank Securities

Sole Book-Running Manager

Leerink Swann

The date of this prospectus supplement is November _____, 2011.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This prospectus is a part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the Commission, utilizing a “shelf” registration process. Both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus include or incorporate by reference important information about us, our common stock and other information you should know before investing. You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, as well as the additional information described under “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Information Incorporated by Reference.”

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 or in any document incorporated herein by reference that was filed with the Commission before the date of this prospectus supplement, this prospectus supplement will apply and will supersede that information contained or incorporated by reference in the accompanying prospectus.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, references in this prospectus supplement to “Cadence Pharmaceuticals,” “we,” “us,” “our” and “the company” refer to Cadence Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights information contained elsewhere or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. This summary does not contain all of the information that you should consider before deciding to invest in our common stock. You should read carefully this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, including the "Risk Factors" section contained in this prospectus supplement and our financial statements and the related notes and the other documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

The Company

We are a biopharmaceutical company focused on in-licensing, developing and commercializing product candidates principally for use in the hospital setting. We intend to build a leading franchise in the hospital setting, continuing to focus on products that are in late-stages of development, currently commercialized outside the U.S., or approved in the U.S. but with significant commercial potential for proprietary new uses or formulations.

OFIRMEV® (Acetaminophen) Injection

In March 2006, we in-licensed the exclusive U.S. and Canadian rights to OFIRMEV® (acetaminophen) injection, an intravenous formulation of acetaminophen, from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, which currently markets the product in Europe and several other markets under the brand name Perfalgan®. In November 2010, OFIRMEV was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the management of mild to moderate pain, the management of moderate to severe pain with adjunctive opioid analgesics, and the reduction of fever in adults and children two years of age and older. We commercially launched OFIRMEV in the U.S. in January 2011. As of October 31, 2011, OFIRMEV had been approved on over 1,400 hospital formularies.

We believe that OFIRMEV may fulfill significant unmet needs in the hospital setting. We also believe that the hospital pharmaceuticals market is both concentrated and underserved and intend to focus our sales and marketing efforts primarily on hospital-based physicians who treat patients with mild to severe pain.

Our Business Strategy

Our goal is to become a leading biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of proprietary pharmaceuticals principally for use in the hospital setting. Our near-term strategy is to work directly with physicians and hospitals to ensure hospital formulary adoption and increase demand for OFIRMEV. Longer-term, our strategy is to in-license, acquire, develop and commercialize additional product candidates that are in late-stages of development, currently commercialized outside the U.S. or approved in the U.S. but with significant commercial potential for proprietary new uses or formulations. Specifically, we intend to:

- *Successfully expand the sales of OFIRMEV.* We are working to ensure the broad market adoption of OFIRMEV at hospitals throughout the U.S. as the foundation for multi-modal analgesic therapy for a broad range of patients experiencing pain and fever. Our sales force is equipped with promotional materials and our medical science liaisons with medical education materials to inform and educate hospital-based physicians who treat patients with mild to severe pain and fever. We have entered into agreements with the three major pharmaceutical wholesalers to supply OFIRMEV across the U.S. through their distribution centers.
- *Build a highly leverageable sales organization targeting hospitals.* As of September 30, 2011, we had established a sales force of approximately 150 hospital sales specialists that is focused on promoting OFIRMEV to hospitals throughout the U.S. Because the number of institutions comprising the hospital marketplace is relatively limited, we believe that we can successfully promote OFIRMEV with our own sales force by focusing on the relatively small number of these institutions that account for a substantial portion of the prescribing activity. The concentrated nature of this market creates the opportunity for significant marketing synergies, and we intend to ultimately leverage our sales force with products across multiple therapeutic categories in the hospital. Outside the U.S., we intend to establish strategic partnerships for the commercialization of any product candidates we may acquire in the future, in areas where we have commercialization rights.
- *Expand our product portfolio through acquiring or in-licensing additional late-stage, hospital-focused products with well-understood risk profiles.* In June 2010, we entered into an option agreement that granted us an exclusive, irrevocable option to purchase Incline Therapeutics, Inc., or Incline, which is developing IONSYS™ (fentanyl iontophoretic transdermal system), an investigational product candidate intended to provide patient-controlled analgesia for adult inpatients requiring opioids following surgery. We will seek additional opportunities to acquire or in-license products to continue to exploit our commercial and development capabilities. We believe that our focus on the hospital market enables us to evaluate a broad range of products across multiple therapeutic areas for possible acquisition. To reduce the time to market and the risks and costs of clinical development, we will continue to focus on products that are in late-stages of development, currently commercialized outside the U.S., or approved in the U.S. but with significant commercial potential for proprietary new uses or formulations.

- *Pursue additional indications and commercial opportunities for OFIRMEV and future product candidates.* We will seek to maximize the value of OFIRMEV and any other product candidates we may in-license, acquire or develop. These activities may include pursuing additional indications and commercial opportunities for OFIRMEV and any other product candidates we may acquire.

Corporate Information

We were incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in May 2004. Our principal executive offices are located at 12481 High Bluff Drive, Suite 200, San Diego, California 92130 and our telephone number is (858) 436-1400. Information about the company is also available at our website at www.cadencepharm.com, which includes links to reports we have filed with the Commission which are available free of charge. The contents of our website are not incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. You may read and copy the materials we have filed with the Commission and other information at the Commission's public reference facilities at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. You can request copies of these documents by writing to the Commission and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the Commission at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference facilities. Commission filings are also available at the Commission's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

We own or have rights to various trademarks, copyrights and trade names used in our business, including the following: Cadence®, OFIRMEV® and the OFIRMEV™ logo. This prospectus supplement also contains trademarks of other companies, including IONSYS™, a registered trademark of Incline and Perfalgan®, a registered trademark of Bristol Myers Squibb Company.

The Offering

Common stock we are offering \$75.0 million of common stock, or shares

Common stock to be outstanding after this offering shares

Use of proceeds We expect to receive net proceeds of approximately \$ million from the sale of the shares of our common stock in this offering, or \$ million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, after deducting the underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated expenses related to this offering payable by us.

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to fund the ongoing commercialization of OFIRMEV, for working capital and for general corporate purposes, including for intellectual property protection and enforcement matters. We may also use a portion of the net proceeds to acquire or invest in complementary businesses, technologies, product candidates or other intellectual property, although we have no present commitments to do so.

Risk factors Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. See the information under the caption "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-5 and other information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement for a discussion of factors you should carefully consider before deciding to invest in shares of our common stock.

Nasdaq Global Market symbol CADX

The number of shares of our common stock outstanding after this offering is based on 63,615,530 shares of our common stock outstanding as of September 30, 2011. Unless otherwise indicated, the number of shares of common stock presented in this prospectus supplement excludes the following as of September 30, 2011:

- 8,140,416 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding options, at a weighted average exercise price of \$8.23 per share;
- 127,875 shares of common stock reserved for the vesting of outstanding restricted stock units, of which 121,125 shares vested on November 2, 2011; and
- 6,325,021 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants, at a weighted average exercise price of \$7.85 per share.

Except as otherwise indicated, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise by the underwriters of their over-allotment option.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks described below and discussed under the section captioned "Risk Factors" contained in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2011, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, and all other information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus before purchasing our common stock. These risks and uncertainties are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks and uncertainties that we are unaware of, or that we currently deem immaterial, also may become important factors that affect us. If any of such risks or the risks described below or in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2011 occur, our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. In that case, the trading price of our common stock could decline, and you may lose some or all of your investment.

Risks Related to this Offering of Our Common Stock

Management will have broad discretion as to the use of proceeds from this offering, and we may use the proceeds in ways that you and other stockholders may not approve.

Our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds from this offering and investors will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding the use of these proceeds. Our management could spend the net proceeds in ways that you and other stockholders may not approve or in ways that do not improve our results of operations or enhance the value of our common stock. Our failure to apply these funds effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business and cause the price of our common stock to decline.

You will experience immediate and substantial dilution in the book value per share of the common stock you purchase.

Because the price per share of our common stock being offered is substantially higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock, you will suffer substantial dilution in the net tangible book value of the common stock you purchase in this offering. After giving effect to the sale by us of _____ shares of common stock in this offering, and based on a public offering price of \$ _____ per share in this offering and a net tangible book value per share of our common stock of \$0.84 as of September 30, 2011, if you purchase shares of common stock in this offering, you will suffer immediate and substantial dilution of \$ _____ per share in the net tangible book value of the common stock. If the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option, you will experience additional dilution. See "Dilution" on page S-10 for a more detailed discussion of the dilution you will incur in connection with this offering.

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You may experience future dilution as a result of future equity offerings and other issuances of our common stock or other securities. In addition, this offering and future equity offerings and other issuances of our common stock or other securities may adversely affect our common stock price.

In order to raise additional capital, we may in the future offer additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, including convertible debt. We cannot assure you that we will be able to sell shares or other securities in any other offering at a price per share that is equal to or greater than the price per share paid by investors in this offering, and investors purchasing shares or other securities in the future could have rights superior to existing stockholders. The price per share at which we sell additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock in future transactions may be higher or lower than the price per share in this offering. As of September 30, 2011, 127,875 shares of common stock were reserved for the vesting of outstanding restricted stock units, of which 121,125 shares vested on November 2, 2011. As of September 30, 2011, there were also options outstanding to purchase 8,140,416 shares of our common stock and warrants outstanding to purchase 6,325,021 shares of our common stock. You will incur dilution upon vesting of any outstanding restricted stock units or upon exercise of any outstanding stock options or warrants.

In addition, the sale of shares in this offering and any future sales of a substantial number of shares of our common stock in the public market, or the perception that such sales may occur, could adversely affect the price of our common stock. We cannot predict the effect, if any, that market sales of those shares of common stock or the availability of those shares of common stock for sale will have on the market price of our common stock. After completion of this offering, and assuming the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, we will have a limited number of unreserved shares of common stock remaining for future issuances. Our ability to issue shares, including in connection with financing activities, will be limited until such time, if ever, that we are able to amend our certificate of incorporation to further increase our authorized shares of common stock or shares currently reserved for issuance otherwise become available.

Any sale of a substantial number of shares of our common stock into the public market following this offering, or the perception that such sales could occur, could also adversely affect the prevailing market price of our common stock.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. All statements, other than statements of historical fact, included in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering regarding our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenue, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management are forward-looking statements.

The words “anticipate,” “believe,” “estimate,” “expect,” “hope,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “project,” “will,” “would” and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. We may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations disclosed in our forward-looking statements and you should not place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those set forth in this prospectus supplement, including the information we incorporate by reference, due to the risks and uncertainties inherent in our business, including, without limitation, the following risks:

- our dependence on the successful commercialization of OFIRMEV, which is our only product;
- our ability to achieve broad market acceptance and generate revenues from sales of OFIRMEV;
- the potential that delays in achieving formulary acceptance for OFIRMEV may enable competitors to further entrench their products and decrease the market potential for OFIRMEV;
- our ability to successfully enforce our marketing exclusivities and intellectual property rights, and to defend the patents covering OFIRMEV, including in our current patent litigation with the parties that have submitted abbreviated new drug applications, or ANDAs, for generic versions of OFIRMEV;
- the potential that we may be required to continue patent litigation for substantial lengths of time or file additional lawsuits to defend our patent rights from challenges by companies that have submitted ANDAs for generic versions of OFIRMEV, and the substantial costs associated with such lawsuits;
- the potential introduction of generic competition to OFIRMEV in the event we are unsuccessful in current or future patent litigation;
- our dependence on our licensors for the maintenance and enforcement of our intellectual property rights;
- the potential product liability exposure associated with pharmaceutical products such as OFIRMEV and other products we may in-license or acquire;

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- our ability to fully comply with numerous federal, state and local laws and regulatory requirements that apply to our commercial activities;
- public concern regarding the safety of drug products such as OFIRMEV, which could result in the potential that regulatory agencies may implement new requirements to include unfavorable information in our labeling for OFIRMEV;
- our ability to ensure an adequate and continued supply of OFIRMEV to meet anticipated market demand; and
- the risk that we may not be able to raise sufficient capital when needed, or at all.

These and other risks are described in detail in the “Risk Factors” section and in other sections of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, including our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2011.

For our forward-looking statements, we claim the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in Section 21E of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. You should not rely unduly on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date on which they were made. We undertake no obligation to update publicly or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless required by law.

USE OF PROCEEDS

We expect to receive net proceeds of approximately \$ million from the sale of shares of our common stock in this offering, or \$ million if the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, after deducting the underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated expenses related to this offering payable by us. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to fund the ongoing commercialization of OFIRMEV, for working capital and for general corporate purposes, including for intellectual property protection and enforcement matters. We may also use a portion of the net proceeds from this offering to acquire or invest in complementary businesses, technologies, product candidates or other intellectual property, although we have no present commitments to do so.

We have not determined the amounts we plan to spend on any of the areas listed above or the timing of these expenditures. The occurrence of unforeseen events or changed business conditions, however, could result in the application of the net proceeds from this offering in a manner other than as described in this prospectus supplement. As a result, our management will have broad discretion to allocate the net proceeds from this offering. Pending the uses described above, we plan to invest the net proceeds from this offering in short-and medium-term, interest-bearing obligations, investment-grade instruments, certificates of deposit or direct or guaranteed obligations of the U.S. government.

DILUTION

If you purchase our common stock in this offering, your interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the public offering price per share and the net tangible book value per share of our common stock after this offering. We calculate net tangible book value per share by subtracting our total liabilities from our total tangible assets and dividing the difference by the number of outstanding shares of our common stock.

Our net tangible book value at September 30, 2011 was approximately \$53.3 million, or \$0.84 per share. After giving effect to the sale of shares of common stock by us at a public offering price of \$ per share, less our estimated offering expenses, our net tangible book value at September 30, 2011 would have been approximately \$ million, or \$ per share. This represents an immediate increase in net tangible book value of approximately \$ per share to existing stockholders and an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of approximately \$ per share to the investors in this offering. The following table illustrates this per share dilution:

Public offering price per share		\$
Net tangible book value per share as of September 30, 2011	\$ 0.84	
Increase per share attributable to this offering	\$	
As adjusted net tangible book value per share after this offering		\$
Dilution per share to new investors		\$

If the underwriters exercise their over-allotment option in full, the as adjusted net tangible book value would increase to approximately \$ per share, representing an increase to existing stockholders of approximately \$ per share, and there would be an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of approximately \$ per share to the investors in this offering.

The above discussion and table are based on 63,615,530 shares outstanding as of September 30, 2011, and exclude as of such date:

- 8,140,416 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding options, at a weighted average exercise price of \$8.23 per share;
- 127,875 shares of common stock reserved for the vesting of outstanding restricted stock units, of which 121,125 shares vested on November 2, 2011; and
- 6,325,021 shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding warrants, at a weighted average exercise price of \$7.85 per share.

To the extent that outstanding options or warrants are exercised or upon vesting of any outstanding restricted stock units, investors purchasing our common stock in this offering will experience further dilution. In addition, we may choose to raise additional capital due to market conditions or strategic considerations even if we believe we have sufficient funds for our current or future operating plans. To the extent that additional capital is raised through the sale of equity or securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, including convertible debt, the issuance of these securities could result in further dilution to our stockholders.

UNDERWRITING

We have entered into an underwriting agreement with Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., as representative of the underwriters named below, with respect to the common stock subject to this offering. Subject to certain conditions, we have agreed to sell to the underwriters, and the underwriters have severally agreed to purchase from us, at the public offering price less the underwriting discounts and commissions set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement, the number of shares of common stock listed next to each underwriter's name below. Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "CADX".

Underwriters	Number of Shares
Deutsche Bank Securities Inc.	
Leerink Swann LLC.	
Total	

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the several underwriters to purchase the shares offered hereby are subject to certain conditions and that the underwriters are obligated to purchase all of the shares offered hereby (other than those covered by the over-allotment option described below) if any of the shares are purchased.

We have been advised by the representative of the underwriters that the underwriters propose to offer the shares of common stock to the public at the offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus supplement and to dealers at a price that represents a concession not in excess of \$ _____ per share under the offering price. The underwriters may allow, and these dealers may re-allow, a concession of not more than \$ _____ per share to other dealers.

We have granted the underwriters an over-allotment option. This option, which is exercisable for up to 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, permits the underwriters to purchase a maximum of _____ additional shares from us at the public offering price that appears on the cover page of this prospectus supplement, less the underwriting discounts and commissions, to cover over-allotments. If any shares are purchased with this over-allotment option, the underwriters will purchase shares in approximately the same proportion as shown in the table above.

The underwriters propose to offer to the public the common stock purchased pursuant to the underwriting agreement at the public offering price on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to selected dealers at such price less a concession of not more than \$ _____ per share. After the shares are released for sale to the public, the underwriters may change the offering price and other selling terms at various times.

The following table provides information regarding the amount of the discounts and commissions to be paid to the underwriters by us:

	Without Exercise of Over-Allotment Option	With Full Exercise of Over-Allotment Option
Per Share	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

We estimate that total expenses payable by us with respect to this offering, excluding underwriting discounts and commissions, will be approximately \$300,000.

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We and our officers and directors have entered into lock-up agreements with the underwriters. Under these lock-up agreements, subject to exceptions, these parties may not, directly or indirectly, offer, pledge, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant for the sale of, or otherwise dispose of, or enter into any swap or any other agreement or any transaction that transfers, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, the economic consequence of ownership of, any common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for common stock, without the prior written consent of Deutsche Bank Securities Inc., for a period of 45 days, subject to an 18-day extension under certain circumstances, from the date of this prospectus supplement. This consent may be given at any time without public notice.

Pursuant to the underwriting agreement, we have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments which the underwriters or such other indemnified parties may be required to make in respect of any such liabilities.

The underwriters and their affiliates have either provided, or may in the future provide, various investment banking, commercial banking and other financial services for us for which services they either have received, or may receive in the future, customary fees.

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may engage in stabilizing transactions, over-allotment transactions, syndicate covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act.

Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum.

- Over-allotment involves sales by the underwriters of shares in excess of the number of shares the underwriters are obligated to purchase, which creates a syndicate short position. The short position may be either a covered short position or a naked short position. In a covered short position, the number of shares over-allotted by the underwriters is not greater than the number of shares that they may purchase in the over-allotment option. In a naked short position, the number of shares involved is greater than the number of shares in the over-allotment option. The underwriters may close out any covered short position by either exercising their over-allotment option and/or purchasing shares in the open market.
- Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the common stock in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover syndicate short positions. In determining the source of shares to close out the short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase shares through the over-allotment option. A naked short position occurs if the underwriters sell more shares than could be covered by the over-allotment option. This position can only be closed out by buying shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there could be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering.

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- Penalty bids permit the representative to reclaim a selling concession from a syndicate member when the common stock originally sold by the syndicate member is purchased in a stabilizing or syndicate covering transaction to cover syndicate short positions.

These stabilizing transactions, syndicate covering transactions and penalty bids may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of our common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common stock. As a result, the price of our common stock may be higher than the price that might otherwise exist in the open market. These transactions may be discontinued at any time. Neither we, nor the underwriters, make any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of the common stock. In addition, neither we, nor the underwriters, make any representation that the underwriters will engage in these stabilizing transactions or that any transaction, once commenced, will not be discontinued without notice.

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may be made available in electronic format on the Internet sites or through other online services maintained by the underwriters participating in the offering or by their affiliates. In those cases, prospective investors may view offering terms online and prospective investors may be allowed to place orders online. Other than the prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format, the information on the underwriters' or our website and any information contained in any other website maintained by the underwriters or by us is not part of the prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus form a part, has not been approved and/or endorsed by us or the underwriters in their capacity as underwriters and should not be relied upon by investors.

Some of the underwriters or their affiliates have provided investment banking services to us in the past and may do so in the future. They receive customary fees and commissions for these services.

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 shares to the public in that Relevant Member State prior to the publication of a prospectus in relation to the shares which has been approved by the competent authority in that Relevant Member State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant Member State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant Member State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Directive, except that it may, with effect from and including the Relevant Implementation Date, make an offer of shares to the public in that Relevant Member State at any time:

- (a) to legal entities which are authorized or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorized or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities;

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- (b) to any legal entity which has two or more of (1) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (2) a total balance sheet of more than €43,000,000 and (3) an annual net turnover of more than €50,000,000, as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts;
- (c) to fewer than 100 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive) subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (d) in any other circumstances which do not require the publication by us of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive.

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an “offer of shares to the public” in relation to any shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of this offering and the shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase or subscribe for the shares, as the same may be varied in that Relevant Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Relevant Member State and the expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State.

United Kingdom

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 Financial Services and Markets Act (“FSMA”)) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the shares in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to the Issuer; 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 shares in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

Germany

Any offer or solicitation of securities within Germany must be in full compliance with the German Securities Prospectus Act (Wertpapierprospektgesetz—WpPG). The offer and solicitation of securities to the public in Germany requires the publication of a prospectus that has to be filed with and approved by the German Federal Financial Services Supervisory Authority (Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht—BaFin). This prospectus supplement has not been and will not be submitted for filing and approval to the BaFin and, consequently, will not be published. Therefore, this prospectus supplement does not constitute a public offer under the German Securities Prospectus Act (Wertpapierprospektgesetz). This prospectus supplement and any other document relating to our common stock, as well as any information contained therein, must therefore not be supplied to the public in Germany or used in connection with any offer for subscription of our common stock to the public in Germany, any public marketing of our common stock or any public solicitation for offers to subscribe for or otherwise acquire our common stock. This prospectus supplement and other offering materials relating to the offer of our common stock are strictly confidential and may not be distributed to any person or entity other than the designated recipients hereof.

France

This prospectus supplement has not been prepared in the context of a public offering of financial securities in France within the meaning of Article L.411-1 of the French Code Monétaire et Financier and Title I of Book II of the Règlement Général of the Autorité des marchés financiers (the “AMF”) and therefore has not been and will not be filed with the AMF for prior approval or submitted for clearance to the AMF. Consequently, the shares of our common stock may not be, directly or indirectly, offered or sold to the public in France and offers and sales of the shares of our common stock may only be made in France to qualified investors (investisseurs qualifiés) acting for their own, as defined in and in accordance with Articles L.411-2 and D.411-1 to D.411-4, D.734-1, D.744-1, D.754-1 and D.764-1 of the French Code Monétaire et Financier. Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering material may be released, issued or distributed to the public in France or used in connection with any offer for subscription or sale of the shares of our common stock to the public in France. The subsequent direct or indirect retransfer of the shares of our common stock to the public in France may only be made in compliance with Articles L.411-1, L.411-2, L.412-1 and L.621-8 through L.621-8-3 of the French Code Monétaire et Financier.

Sweden

This is not a prospectus under, and has not been prepared in accordance with the prospectus requirements provided for in, the Swedish Financial Instruments Trading Act [lagen (1991:980) om handel med finansiella instrument] nor any other Swedish enactment. Neither the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority nor any other Swedish public body has examined, approved, or registered this document.

Hong Kong

The shares may not be offered or sold by means of any document other than (i) in circumstances which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), or (ii) to “professional investors” within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder, or (iii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a “prospectus” within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), and no advertisement, invitation or document relating to the shares may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to shares which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to “professional investors” within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

Singapore

This prospectus supplement has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to

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persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the "SFA"), (ii) to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

Where the shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 by a relevant person which is: (a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or (b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of which is an accredited investor, shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest in that trust shall not be transferable for 6 months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the shares under Section 275 except: (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA; (2) where no consideration is given for the transfer; or (3) by operation of law.

Japan

The securities have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and each underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any securities, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS TO NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF OUR COMMON STOCK

The following is a summary of certain material U.S. federal income tax considerations to non-U.S. holders (as defined below) of the ownership and disposition of shares of our common stock, but does not purport to be a complete analysis of all the potential tax considerations relating thereto. This summary is based upon the provisions of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, Treasury Regulations promulgated thereunder, and administrative rulings and judicial decisions, each as of the date hereof. These authorities may be changed, perhaps retroactively, so as to result in U.S. federal income tax consequences different from those set forth below. We have not sought any ruling from the Internal Revenue Service, or IRS, or an opinion of counsel with respect to the statements made and the conclusions reached in the following summary, and there can be no assurance the IRS will agree with such statements and conclusions.

This summary is limited to non-U.S. holders who purchase shares of our common stock issued pursuant to this offering and who hold shares of our common stock as “capital assets” within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code (generally, property held for investment). This summary also does not address U.S. federal estate or gift tax laws, the Medicare tax on unearned income or the tax considerations arising under the laws of any non-U.S., state or local jurisdiction. In addition, this discussion does not address all tax considerations that may be applicable to a holder’s particular circumstances or to holders that may be subject to special tax rules, including, without limitation:

- holders subject to the alternative minimum tax;
- banks, insurance companies or other financial institutions;
- tax-exempt organizations;
- regulated investment companies or real estate investment trusts;
- dealers in securities or commodities;
- traders in securities that elect to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for their securities holdings;
- S-corporations, partnerships or other pass-through entities;
- expatriates and certain former citizens or long-term residents of the United States;
- persons who hold shares of our common stock as a position in a hedging transaction, “straddle,” “conversion transaction” or other risk reduction transaction;
- persons deemed to sell shares of our common stock under the constructive sale provisions of the Code;
- “controlled foreign corporations,” “passive foreign investment companies” or corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax; or
- persons that own, or are deemed to own, more than five percent (5%) of our outstanding common stock.

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If a partnership (or other entity taxable as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes) holds shares of our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner in a partnership holding shares of our common stock, you should consult your tax advisor regarding the tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of such shares of our common stock.

THIS SUMMARY OF CERTAIN MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY AND IS NOT TAX ADVICE. YOU ARE URGED TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR WITH RESPECT TO THE APPLICATION OF U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS TO YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION AS WELL AS ANY TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF SHARES OF OUR COMMON STOCK ARISING UNDER U.S. FEDERAL ESTATE OR GIFT TAX RULES OR UNDER THE LAWS OF ANY STATE, LOCAL, NON-U.S. OR ANY OTHER TAXING JURISDICTION OR UNDER ANY APPLICABLE TAX TREATY.

Definition of Non-U.S. Holder

For purposes of this discussion, a non-U.S. holder is any beneficial owner of shares of our common stock that is not a “U.S. person” or a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. A U.S. person is any of the following:

- an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States;
- a corporation (or other entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized under the laws of the United States or any state thereof or the District of Columbia;
- an estate the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or
- a trust that (1) is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and the control of one or more U.S. persons or (2) has a valid election in effect under applicable Treasury Regulations to be treated as a U.S. person.

Distributions on Our Common Stock

If we make cash or other property distributions on our common stock, such distributions generally will constitute dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. Amounts not treated as dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes will constitute a return of capital and will first be applied against and reduce a non-U.S. holder’s tax basis in the common stock, but not below zero. Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits and in excess of a non-U.S. holder’s tax basis in its shares will be taxable as capital gain realized on the sale or other disposition of the common stock and will be treated as described under “—Dispositions of Shares of Our Common Stock” below.

Dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder of our common stock generally will be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax at a rate of 30% of the gross amount of the dividends, or such

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lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty. To receive the benefit of a reduced treaty rate, a non-U.S. holder generally must furnish to us or our paying agent a valid IRS Form W-8BEN (or applicable successor form establishing such holder's entitlement to the lower treaty rate in accordance with U.S. Treasury Regulations) certifying such holder's qualification for the reduced rate. This certification must be provided to us or our paying agent prior to the payment of dividends and must be updated periodically. Non-U.S. holders that do not timely provide us or our paying agent with the required certification, but that qualify for a reduced treaty rate, may obtain a refund of any excess amounts withheld by timely filing an appropriate claim for refund with the IRS. Non-U.S. holders should consult their tax advisors regarding their entitlement to benefits under an applicable income tax treaty.

Dividends paid on our common stock that are effectively connected with a non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, are attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States) will be exempt from U.S. federal withholding tax. To claim the exemption, the non-U.S. holder must generally furnish to us or our paying agent a properly executed IRS Form W-8ECI (or applicable successor form).

Any dividends paid on our common stock that are effectively connected with a non-U.S. holder's U.S. trade or business (and if required by an applicable income tax treaty, attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States) generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular graduated U.S. federal income tax rates generally in the same manner as if such holder were a U.S. person. A non-U.S. holder that is a corporation also may be subject to an additional branch profits tax equal to 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year, as adjusted for certain items. Non-U.S. holders should consult any applicable income tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Dispositions of Shares of Our Common Stock

Subject to the discussion below regarding backup withholding, a non-U.S. holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on any gain realized upon the sale or other disposition of shares of our common stock, unless:

- the gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States, and if required by an applicable income tax treaty, attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States;
- the non-U.S. holder is a nonresident alien individual present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year of the disposition, and certain other requirements are met; or
- our common stock constitutes a "United States real property interest" by reason of our status as a United States real property holding corporation, or USRPHC, for U.S. federal income tax purposes at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition or the non-U.S. holder's holding period for our common stock.

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Gain described in the first bullet point above will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis at the regular graduated U.S. federal income tax rates generally in the same manner as if such holder were a U.S. person. A non-U.S. holder that is a corporation also may be subject to an additional branch profits tax equal to 30% (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty) of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year, as adjusted for certain items. Non-U.S. holders should consult any applicable income tax treaties that may provide for different rules.

Gain described in the second bullet point above will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at a flat 30% rate (or such lower rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty), but may be offset by U.S. source capital losses (even though the individual is not considered a resident of the United States), provided that the non-U.S. holder has timely filed U.S. federal income tax returns with respect to such losses.

With respect to the third bullet point above, we believe we are not currently and do not anticipate becoming a USRPHC for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. holder the amount of distributions on our common stock paid to such holder and the amount, if any, of tax withheld with respect to those distributions. These information reporting requirements will apply in certain circumstances even if no withholding is required, such as where the distributions are effectively connected with the holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business or withholding is reduced or eliminated by an applicable income tax treaty. This information also may be made available under a specific treaty or agreement with the tax authorities in the country in which the non-U.S. holder resides or is established. Backup withholding, however, generally will not apply to distributions to a non-U.S. holder of our common stock provided the non-U.S. holder furnishes to us or our paying agent the required certification as to its non-U.S. status, such as by providing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or IRS Form W-8ECI, or certain other requirements are met. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding may apply if either we or our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the holder is a U.S. person that is not an exempt recipient.

Unless a non-U.S. holder complies with certification procedures to establish that it is not a U.S. person, information returns may be filed with the IRS in connection with, and the non-U.S. holder may be subject to backup withholding on the proceeds from, a sale or other disposition of our common stock. The certification procedures described in the above paragraph will satisfy these certification requirements as well.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be allowed as a refund or a credit against a non-U.S. holder's U.S. federal income tax liability, provided the required information is timely furnished to the IRS.

Additional Withholding Tax Relating to Foreign Accounts

An additional 30% withholding tax will apply to dividends on, or gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of, shares of our common stock paid to a foreign financial institution or to a foreign non-financial entity, unless (1) the foreign financial institution undertakes

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certain diligence and reporting obligations or (2) the foreign non-financial entity either certifies it does not have any substantial U.S. owners or furnishes identifying information regarding each substantial U.S. owner. If the payee is a foreign financial institution, it must enter into an agreement with the U.S. Treasury requiring, among other things, that it undertake to identify accounts held by certain U.S. persons or U.S.-owned foreign entities, annually report certain information about such accounts, and withhold 30% on payments to account holders whose actions prevent it from complying with these reporting and other requirements. Recent IRS guidance indicates that, under future regulations, this withholding will apply to payments of dividends on shares of our common stock made on or after January 1, 2014 and to payments of gross proceeds from a sale or other disposition of shares of our common stock made on or after January 1, 2015. Prospective investors should consult their tax advisors regarding this legislation.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Latham & Watkins LLP, San Diego, California. Cooley LLP, San Diego, California, will act as counsel to the underwriters.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2010, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements as of December 31, 2010, are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the reporting requirements of the Exchange Act, and file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the Commission. You may read and copy these reports, proxy statements and other information at the Commission's public reference facilities at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. You can request copies of these documents by writing to the Commission and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the Commission at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference facilities. Commission filings are also available at the Commission's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are only part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we have filed with the Commission under the Securities Act, and therefore omit certain information contained in the registration statement. We have also filed exhibits and schedules with the registration statement that are excluded from this prospectus supplement, and you should refer to the applicable exhibit or schedule for a complete description of any statement referring to any contract or other document. You may inspect a copy of the registration statement, including the exhibits and schedules, without charge, at the Commission's public reference facilities or obtain a copy from the Commission upon payment of the fees prescribed by the Commission.

We also maintain a website at www.cadencepharm.com through which you can access our filings with the Commission. The information contained in, or accessible through, our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement.

INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The Commission allows us to “incorporate by reference” information from other documents that we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information in this prospectus supplement by referring to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement, and information that we file later with the Commission will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus supplement. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future information filed (rather than furnished) with the Commission under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act between the date of this prospectus supplement and the termination of this offering, provided, however, that we are not incorporating any information furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of any current report on Form 8-K:

- our annual report on Form 10-K, for the year ended December 31, 2010, which was filed on March 4, 2011;
- our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2011, filed on May 5, 2011, the quarter ended June 30, 2011, filed on August 4, 2010 and the quarter ended September 30, 2011, filed on November 4, 2011;
- our definitive proxy statement on Schedule 14A (other than information furnished rather than filed), which was filed on April 27, 2011;
- our current reports on Form 8-K filed on January 18, 2011 (with respect to Item 8.01), February 2, 2011, March 22, 2011, June 17, 2011, June 30, 2011, July, 8, 2011 (with respect to Item 8.01), July 14, 2011 and August 19, 2011; and
- the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form S-1 (File No. 333-135821), filed on July 17, 2006, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating the description.

These documents may also be accessed on our website at www.cadencepharm.com. Information contained in, or accessible through, our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement.

We will furnish without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Cadence Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
12481 High Bluff Drive, Suite 200
San Diego, California 92130
(858) 436-1400
Attention: Investor Relations

PROSPECTUS



\$150,000,000

**Debt Securities
Preferred Stock
Common Stock
Debt Warrants
Equity Warrants**

We may from time to time offer to sell any combination of debt securities, preferred stock, common stock, debt warrants and equity warrants described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. The aggregate initial offering price of all securities sold under this prospectus will not exceed \$150,000,000.

This prospectus provides a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide specific terms of the securities offered in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in any securities. This prospectus may not be used to consummate a sale of securities unless accompanied by the applicable prospectus supplement.

We will sell these securities directly to our stockholders or to purchasers, through agents on our behalf or through underwriters or dealers as designated from time to time. If any agents or underwriters are involved in the sale of any of these securities, the applicable prospectus supplement will provide the names of the agents or underwriters and any applicable fees, commissions or discounts.

Our common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "CADX." On May 4, 2011, the closing price of our common stock was \$8.30.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See "[Risk Factors](#)" on page 1.

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

The date of this prospectus is May 5, 2011

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is a part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, utilizing a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may offer to sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$150,000,000. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities under this shelf registration, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. To the extent that any statement that we make in a prospectus supplement is inconsistent with statements made in this prospectus, the statements made in this prospectus will be deemed modified or superseded by those made in the prospectus supplement. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, including all documents incorporated herein or therein by reference, together with additional information described under “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Information Incorporated by Reference.” We may only use this prospectus to sell the securities if it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement.

We have not authorized anyone to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement. You must rely only on the information and representations contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or the accompanying prospectus supplement. This prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the 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 and any accompanying prospectus supplement is delivered or securities are sold on a later date. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since the respective dates of this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or any information we have incorporated by reference.

CADENCE PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

We are a biopharmaceutical company focused on in-licensing, developing and commercializing proprietary products principally for use in the hospital setting. We currently have rights to one product, OFIRMEV™ (acetaminophen) injection, a proprietary intravenous formulation of acetaminophen. We in-licensed the exclusive United States, or U.S., and Canadian rights to OFIRMEV from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, which sells intravenous acetaminophen in Europe and other markets for the treatment of acute pain and fever under the brand name Perfalgan®. In November 2010, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, granted marketing approval for OFIRMEV, which is indicated for the management of mild to moderate pain, the management of moderate to severe pain with adjunctive opioid analgesics and the reduction of fever in adults and children two years of age and older. We launched commercial sales of OFIRMEV in the U.S. in January 2011.

We believe that OFIRMEV fills significant unmet medical needs and that the hospital pharmaceuticals market is both concentrated and underserved. We have established a hospital-focused sales force to promote OFIRMEV to this market, along with any other product candidates we may acquire in the future.

In June 2010, we entered into an option agreement that granted us an exclusive, irrevocable option to purchase Incline Therapeutics, Inc., which is developing IONSYS™ (fentanyl iontophoretic transdermal system), an investigational product candidate intended to provide patient-controlled analgesia for adult inpatients requiring opioids following surgery.

We intend to build a leading franchise in the hospital setting, continuing to focus on products that are in late stages of development, currently commercialized outside the U.S., or approved in the U.S. but with significant commercial potential for proprietary new uses or formulations.

We were incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in May 2004. Our principal executive offices are located at 12481 High Bluff Drive, Suite 200, San Diego, California 92130 and our telephone number is (858) 436-1400. Information about the company is also available at our website at www.cadencepharm.com, which includes links to reports we have filed with the SEC, which are available free of charge. The public may read and copy any materials that we file with the SEC at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Information on the operation of the Public Reference Room is available by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. These reports may also be accessed free of charge via the SEC's website, www.sec.gov. The information on or accessible through our website is not part of this prospectus. Unless the context requires otherwise, references in this prospectus to "Cadence," "we," "us" and "our" refer to Cadence Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in any securities offered pursuant to this prospectus involves risks. You should carefully consider the specific risks set forth under "Risk Factors" in the applicable prospectus supplement, under "Risk Factors" under Item 1A of Part I of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, and under "Risk Factors" under Item 1A of Part II of our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the Exchange Act, each of which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus, before making an investment decision. For more information, see "Information Incorporated by Reference."

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this prospectus contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. All statements, other than

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statements of historical fact, included in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this prospectus regarding our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenue, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management are forward-looking statements.

The words “anticipate,” “believe,” “could,” “estimate,” “expect,” “hope,” “intend,” “may,” “plan,” “project,” “seek,” “should,” “will,” “would” and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. We may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations disclosed in our forward-looking statements and you should not place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those set forth in this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement, including the information we incorporate by reference, due to the risks and uncertainties inherent in our business, including, without limitation, the following risks:

- our dependence on the successful commercialization of OFIRMEV;
- delays in achieving formulary acceptance for OFIRMEV at a substantial number of targeted accounts would enable competitors to further entrench their products and decrease the market potential for OFIRMEV;
- our ability to ensure an adequate and continued supply of OFIRMEV to meet anticipated market demand;
- our commercialization activities for OFIRMEV must comply with numerous federal, state and local laws and regulatory requirements that apply to the promotion and sale of pharmaceutical products, and any challenge to our business activities under such laws or regulations could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations;
- public concern regarding the safety of drug products such as OFIRMEV could result in new requirements from regulatory agencies to include unfavorable information in our labeling, or require us to undertake other activities that may entail additional costs;
- the potential that we may be required to file a lawsuit to defend our patent rights or regulatory exclusivities from challenges by companies seeking to market generic versions of intravenous acetaminophen;
- new legislation, regulatory proposals and healthcare payor initiatives may increase our costs of compliance and adversely affect our ability to market our products, obtain collaborators and raise capital;
- we face potential product liability exposure, and if successful claims are brought against us, we may incur substantial liability for OFIRMEV or other product candidates we may license or acquire and may have to limit their commercialization; and
- we may not be able to raise sufficient capital when needed.

These and other risks are described in detail in the “Risk Factors” section and in other sections of this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein, including our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Exchange Act.

For our forward-looking statements, we claim the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in Section 21E of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. You should not rely unduly on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date on which they were made. We undertake no obligation to update publicly or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless required by law.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities under this prospectus to fund additional development activities for OFIRMEV and for working capital and other general corporate purposes. We may also use a portion of the net proceeds from the sale of the securities by us under this prospectus to acquire or invest in complementary businesses, technologies, product candidates or other intellectual property, although we have no present commitments or agreements to do so. Pending the uses described above, we plan to invest the net proceeds of this offering in short- and medium-term, interest-bearing obligations, investment-grade instruments, certificates of deposit or direct or guaranteed obligations of the U.S. government.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following summary is qualified by the more detailed information appearing in the computation table found in Exhibit 12.1 to the registration statement of which this prospectus is part and the historical financial statements, including the notes to those financial statements, incorporated by reference in this prospectus. Our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the years ended December 31, 2006 to 2010 was as follows:

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges(1)	—	—	—	—	—
Deficiency of earnings available to cover fixed charges	\$52,173	\$51,714	\$57,099	\$45,491	\$56,643

- (1) For purposes of computing this ratio of earnings to fixed charges, fixed charges consist of interest expense and estimated interest component of rent and earnings consist of loss before income taxes plus fixed charges. In each of the periods presented, earnings were insufficient to cover fixed charges. We have not included a ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends because we do not have any preferred stock outstanding as of the date of this prospectus.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities from time to time pursuant to underwritten public offerings, negotiated transactions, block trades or a combination of these methods. We may sell the securities separately or together:

- through one or more underwriters or dealers in a public offering and sale by them;
- through agents; and/or
- directly to one or more purchasers.

We may distribute the securities from time to time in one or more transactions:

- at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;
- at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
- at prices related to such prevailing market prices; or
- at negotiated prices.

We may solicit directly offers to purchase the securities being offered by this prospectus. We may also designate agents to solicit offers to purchase the securities from time to time. We will name in a prospectus supplement any agent involved in the offer or sale of our securities.

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If we utilize a dealer in the sale of the securities being offered by this prospectus, we will sell the securities to the dealer, as principal. The dealer may then resell the securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by the dealer at the time of resale.

If we utilize an underwriter in the sale of the securities being offered by this prospectus, we will execute an underwriting agreement with the underwriter at the time of sale and we will provide the name of any underwriter in the prospectus supplement that the underwriter will use to make resales of the securities to the public. In connection with the sale of the securities, we or the purchasers of securities for whom the underwriter may act as agent may compensate the underwriter in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions. The underwriter may sell the securities to or through dealers, and the underwriter may compensate those dealers in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions.

We will provide in the applicable prospectus supplement any compensation we will pay to underwriters, dealers or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers. In compliance with guidelines of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA, the maximum consideration or discount to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker dealer may not exceed 8% of the aggregate amount of the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement. Underwriters, dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions. We may enter into agreements to indemnify underwriters, dealers and agents against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments they may be required to make in respect thereof. In the event that an offering made pursuant to this prospectus is subject to FINRA Rule 5121, the prospectus supplement will comply with the prominent disclosure provisions of that rule.

The securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange. To facilitate the offering of securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities. This may include over-allotments or short sales of the securities, which involves the sale by persons participating in the offering of more securities than we sold to them. In these circumstances, these persons would cover such over-allotments or short positions by making purchases in the open market or by exercising their over-allotment option. In addition, these persons may stabilize or maintain the price of the securities by bidding for or purchasing securities in the open market or by imposing penalty bids, whereby selling concessions allowed to dealers participating in the offering may be reclaimed if securities sold by them are repurchased in connection with stabilization transactions. The effect of these transactions may be to stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. These transactions may be discontinued at any time.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain purchasers to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the prospectus supplement, and the prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts.

We may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement indicates, in connection with any derivative transaction, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including in short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in such sale transactions will be an underwriter and, if not identified in this prospectus, will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement or a post-effective amendment to the

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registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. In addition, we may otherwise loan or pledge securities to a financial institution or other third party that in turn may sell the securities short using this prospectus. Such financial institution or other third party may transfer its economic short position to investors in our securities or in connection with a concurrent offering of other securities.

The underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with us, or perform services for us, in the ordinary course of business.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The debt securities covered by this prospectus will be issued under one or more separate indentures to be entered into between us and a trustee to be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. This prospectus, together with its prospectus supplement, will describe all the material terms of a particular series of debt securities.

The following is a summary of the most important provisions and definitions of the indenture. For additional information, you should look at the indenture that is filed as an exhibit to the registration statement which includes the prospectus.

General

Debt securities may be issued in separate series without limitation as to aggregate principal amount. We may specify a maximum aggregate principal amount for the debt securities of any series.

We are not limited as to the amount of debt securities we may issue under the indenture, though such amount shall be limited by the aggregate principal amount of securities that we may sell under this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will set forth:

- the title of the debt securities;
- the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which we will sell the debt securities;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;
- the date or dates on which we will pay the principal on the debt securities;
- the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or the method used to determine the rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the debt securities will bear interest, the date or dates from which interest will accrue, the date or dates on which interest will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;
- the place or places where principal of, and premium and interest on, the debt securities will be payable;
- the terms and conditions upon which we may redeem the debt securities;
- any obligation we have to redeem or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of debt securities;
- the dates on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase debt securities at the option of the holders of debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of these repurchase obligations;
- the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof;
- whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of certificated debt securities or global debt securities;
- the portion of principal amount of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount;
- the currency of denomination of the debt securities;
- the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of, and premium and interest on, the debt securities will be made;

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- if payments of principal of, or premium or interest on, the debt securities will be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than that or those in which the debt securities are denominated, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to these payments will be determined;
- the manner in which the amounts of payment of principal of, or premium or interest on, the debt securities will be determined, if these amounts may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies other than that in which the debt securities are denominated or designated to be payable or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index;
- any provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities;
- any addition to or change in the events of default described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any addition to or change in the covenants described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the debt securities; and
- any other terms of the debt securities, which may supplement, modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to that series.

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement:

- the debt securities will be registered debt securities; and
- registered debt securities denominated in U.S. dollars will be issued in denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof.

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.

Exchange and Transfer

Debt securities may be transferred or exchanged at the office of the security registrar or at the office of any transfer agent designated by us.

We will not impose a service charge for any transfer or exchange, but we may require holders to pay any tax or other governmental charges associated with any transfer or exchange.

In the event of any potential redemption of debt securities of any series, we will not be required to:

- issue, register the transfer of or exchange any debt security of that series during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption and ending at the close of business on the day of the mailing; or
- register the transfer of or exchange any debt security of that series selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion being redeemed in part.

We may initially appoint the trustee as the security registrar. Any transfer agent, in addition to the security registrar initially designated by us, will be named in the prospectus supplement. We may designate additional transfer agents or change transfer agents or change the office of the transfer agent. However, we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of each series.

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Global Securities

The debt securities of any series may be represented, in whole or in part, by one or more global securities. Each global security will:

- be registered in the name of a depository that we will identify in a prospectus supplement;
- be deposited with the depository or nominee or custodian; and
- bear any required legends.

No global security may be exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities registered in the name of any person other than the depository or any nominee unless:

- the depository has notified us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository or has ceased to be qualified to act as depository, and in either case, we fail to appoint a successor qualified to act as a depository within 90 days of such event;
- we execute and deliver to the trustee a certificate that such global security shall be exchangeable;
- an event of default is continuing; or
- any other circumstances described in a prospectus supplement occur.

As long as the depository, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a global security, the depository or nominee will be considered the sole owner and holder of the debt securities represented by the global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except in the above limited circumstances, owners of beneficial interests in a global security:

- will not be entitled to have the debt securities registered in their names;
- will not be entitled to physical delivery of certificated debt securities; and
- will not be considered to be holders of those debt securities under the indentures.

Payments on a global security will be made to the depository or its nominee as the holder of the global security. Some jurisdictions have laws that require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in a global security.

Institutions that have accounts with the depository or its nominee are referred to as “participants.” Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be limited to participants and to persons that may hold beneficial interests through participants. The depository will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the respective principal amounts of debt securities represented by the global security to the accounts of its participants.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be shown on and effected through records maintained by the depository, with respect to participants’ interests, or any participant, with respect to interests of persons held by participants on their behalf. Payments, transfers and exchanges relating to beneficial interests in a global security will be subject to policies and procedures of the depository. The depository policies and procedures may change from time to time. Neither we nor the trustee will have any responsibility or liability for the depository’s or any participant’s records with respect to beneficial interests in a global security.

Payment and Paying Agent

The provisions of this paragraph will apply to the debt securities unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement. Payment of interest on a debt security on any interest payment date will be made to the

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person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date. Payment on debt securities of a particular series will be payable at the office of a paying agent or paying agents designated by us. However, at our option, we may pay interest by mailing a check to the record holder.

We may also name any other paying agents in the prospectus supplement. We may designate additional paying agents, change paying agents or change the office of any paying agent. However, 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 payment on any debt security which remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such payment was due will be repaid to us. Thereafter, the holder may look only to us for such payment.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Except as otherwise set forth in the prospectus supplement, we may not consolidate with or merge into any other person, in a transaction in which we are not the surviving corporation, or convey, transfer or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to, any person, unless:

- the successor is a U.S. corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust or other entity;
- the successor assumes our obligations on the debt securities and under the indenture;
- immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no default or event of default shall have occurred and be continuing; and
- certain other conditions are met.

Events of Default

Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the indenture will define an event of default with respect to any series of debt securities as one or more of the following events:

- (1) failure to pay principal of or any premium on any debt security of that series when due;
- (2) failure to pay any interest on any debt security of that series within 30 days following the due date;
- (3) default in the performance or breach of any covenant or warranty in the indenture continued for 90 days after being given the notice required in the indenture;
- (4) our bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization; and
- (5) any other event of default specified in the prospectus supplement.

An event of default of one series of debt securities is not necessarily an event of default for any other series of debt securities.

If an event of default, other than an event of default described in clause (4) above, shall occur and be continuing, either the trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding securities of that series may declare the principal amount of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on the debt securities of that series to be due and payable immediately.

If an event of default described in clause (4) above shall occur, the principal amount of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all the debt securities of that series will automatically become immediately due and payable. Any payment by us on subordinated debt securities following any such acceleration will be subject to the subordination provisions described below under "Subordinated Debt Securities."

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At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series has been made, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding securities of that series may, by written notice to us and the trustee, rescind and annul such declaration if all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal and interest, if any, have been cured or waived.

Other than the duty to act with the required care during an event of default, the trustee will not be obligated to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request of the holders unless the holders shall have offered to the trustee satisfactory indemnity. Generally, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee.

A holder will not have any right to institute any proceeding with respect to the indentures, or to appoint a receiver or a trustee, or to any other remedy under the indentures, unless:

- (1) the holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default with respect to the debt securities of that series;
- (2) the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made a written request and have offered reasonable indemnity to the trustee to institute the proceeding; and
- (3) the trustee has failed to institute the proceeding and has not received direction inconsistent with the original request from the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series within 60 days after the original request.

Holders, however, have an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, and premium and any interest on, that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of payment without following the procedures listed in (1) through (3) above.

We will furnish the trustee an annual statement by our officers as to whether or not we are in default in the performance of the indenture and, if so, specifying all known defaults.

Modification and Waiver

Except as provided in the next two succeeding paragraphs, we and the trustee may make modifications and amendments to the indenture (including, without limitation, through consents obtained in connection with a purchase of, or tender offer or exchange offer for, outstanding securities) and may waive any existing default or event of default (including, without limitation, through consents obtained in connection with a purchase of, or tender offer for, outstanding securities) with the consent of the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding securities of each series affected by the modification or amendment.

However, neither we nor the trustee may make any modification or amendment without the consent of the holder of each outstanding security of that series affected by the modification or amendment if such modification or amendment would:

- reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver;
- reduce the rate of or extend the time for payment of interest (including default interest) on any debt security;
- reduce the principal of or premium on or change the fixed maturity of any debt security or reduce the amount of, or postpone the date fixed for, the payment of any sinking fund or analogous obligation with respect to any series of debt securities;

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- reduce the principal amount of discount securities payable upon acceleration of maturity;
- waive a default in the payment of the principal of, or premium or interest on, any debt security (except a rescission of acceleration of the debt securities of any series by the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of that series and a waiver of the payment default that resulted from such acceleration);
- make the principal of or premium or interest on any debt security payable in currency other than that stated in the debt security;
- make any change to certain provisions of the indenture relating to, among other things, the right of holders of debt securities to receive payment of the principal of, or premium and interest on, those debt securities and to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment and to waivers or amendments; or
- waive a redemption payment or modify any of the redemption provisions of any debt security.

Notwithstanding the preceding, without the consent of any holder of outstanding securities, we and the trustee may amend or supplement the indentures:

- to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency;
- to provide for uncertificated securities in addition to or in place of certificated securities;
- to provide for the assumption of our obligations to holders of any debt security in the case of a merger or consolidation or sale of all or substantially all of our assets;
- to make any change that would provide any additional rights or benefits to the holders of securities or that does not adversely affect the legal rights under the indenture of any such holder;
- to comply with requirements of the SEC in order to effect or maintain the qualification of an indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939;
- to conform the text of the indentures to any provision of the Description of Debt Securities to the extent that such provision in the Description of Debt Securities was intended to be a verbatim recitation of a provision of the indentures;
- to provide for the issuance of additional securities in accordance with the limitations set forth in the indenture as of the date of the indenture;
- to allow any guarantor to execute a supplemental indenture with respect to debt securities and to release guarantors in accordance with the terms of the indenture; or
- to add additional obligors under the indenture and the securities.

The consent of holders is not necessary under the indentures to approve the particular form of any proposed amendment. It is sufficient if such consent approves the substance of the proposed amendment.

Satisfaction and Discharge; Defeasance

We may be discharged from our obligations on the debt securities of any series that have matured or will mature or be redeemed within one year if we irrevocably deposit with the trustee enough cash to pay all principal, interest and any premium due on the stated maturity date or redemption date of the debt securities.

The indenture contains a provision that, unless otherwise provided by the terms of the applicable series of debt securities, permits us to elect:

- to be discharged from all of our obligations, subject to limited exceptions, with respect to any series of debt securities then outstanding; and/or

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- to be released from our obligations under the covenant described under the heading “Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets” and certain other covenants set forth in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, and from the consequences of a default or event of default resulting from a breach of all covenants other than the obligation to pay principal and interest.

To make either of the above elections, we must deposit in trust with the trustee enough money to pay in full the principal, interest and any premium on the debt securities. This deposit may be made in cash and/or U.S. government obligations. As a condition to either of the above elections, we must deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel that the holders of the debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for Federal income tax purposes as a result of the action.

If any of the above events occurs, the holders of debt securities of the series will not be entitled to the benefits of the indenture, except for the rights of holders to receive payments on the debt securities, the registration of transfer and exchange of debt securities and replacement of lost, stolen or mutilated debt securities.

Notices

Notices to holders will be given by mail to the addresses of the holders in the security register.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed under, the laws of the State of New York.

Subordinated Debt Securities

Payment on subordinated debt securities will, to the extent provided in the indenture, be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness (except that the trustee may make payments to holders of monies deposited with it as described under “Satisfaction and Discharge; Defeasance”). The subordinated debt securities also are effectively subordinated to all debt and other liabilities, including trade payables and lease obligations, if any, of our subsidiaries, if any.

Upon any distribution of our assets upon any dissolution, winding up, liquidation or reorganization, the payment of the principal of and interest on subordinated debt securities will be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all senior indebtedness in cash or other payment satisfactory to the holders of senior indebtedness. In the event of any acceleration of subordinated debt securities because of an event of default, the holders of any senior indebtedness would be entitled to payment in full in cash or other payment satisfactory to such holders of all senior indebtedness obligations before the holders of subordinated debt securities are entitled to receive any payment or distribution (except that holders of notes may receive and retain subordinated debt securities and payments made from either of the trusts described under “Satisfaction and Discharge; Defeasance”). The indenture requires us or the trustee to promptly notify holders of designated senior indebtedness if payment of subordinated debt securities is accelerated because of an event of default.

We may not make any payment on subordinated debt securities, including upon redemption at the option of the holder of any subordinated debt securities or at our option, if:

- a default in the payment of the principal, premium, if any, interest, rent or other obligations in respect of designated senior indebtedness occurs and is continuing beyond any applicable period of grace (called a “payment default”); or
- a default other than a payment default on any designated senior indebtedness occurs and is continuing that permits holders of designated senior indebtedness to accelerate its maturity, and the trustee receives a notice of such default (called a “payment blockage notice”) from us or any other person permitted to give such notice under the indenture (called a “non-payment default”).

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We may resume payments and distributions on the subordinated debt securities:

- in the case of a payment default, upon the date on which such default is cured, waived or ceases to exist; and
- in the case of a non-payment default, the earlier of the date on which such nonpayment default is cured, waived or ceases to exist and 179 days after the date on which the payment blockage notice is received by the trustee, if the maturity of the designated senior indebtedness has not been accelerated.

No new period of payment blockage may be commenced pursuant to a payment blockage notice unless 365 days have elapsed since the initial effectiveness of the immediately prior payment blockage notice and all scheduled payments of principal, any premium and interest, including any liquidated damages, on the notes that have come due have been paid in full in cash. No non-payment default that existed or was continuing on the date of delivery of any payment blockage notice shall be the basis for any later payment blockage notice unless the non-payment default is based upon facts or events arising after the date of delivery of such payment blockage notice.

If the trustee or any holder of the notes receives any payment or distribution of our assets in contravention of the subordination provisions on the subordinated debt securities before all senior indebtedness is paid in full in cash, property or securities, including by way of set-off, or other payment satisfactory to holders of senior indebtedness, then such payment or distribution will be held in trust for the benefit of holders of senior indebtedness or their representatives to the extent necessary to make payment in full of all unpaid senior indebtedness in cash or payment satisfactory to the holders of senior indebtedness (except that the trustee may make payments to holders of monies deposited with it as described under “Satisfaction and Discharge; Defeasance”).

In the event of our bankruptcy, dissolution or reorganization, holders of senior indebtedness may receive more, ratably, and holders of the subordinated debt securities may receive less, ratably, than our other creditors (including our trade creditors). This subordination will not prevent the occurrence of any event of default under the indenture.

We are not prohibited from incurring debt, including senior indebtedness, under the indenture. We may from time to time incur additional debt, including senior indebtedness.

In June 2010, we entered into an Amended and Restated Loan and Security Agreement with Oxford Finance Corporation, Silicon Valley Bank and GE Business Financial Services, Inc. to provide a \$30.0 million loan facility, which was further amended in November 2010. As of December 31, 2010, we had drawn the full \$30.0 million under the loan facility, and no additional amounts can be drawn. Amounts borrowed under the loan facility are collateralized by substantially all of our assets other than, subject to certain limited exceptions, intellectual property. Under the terms of the loan agreement, we are precluded from entering into certain financing and other transactions, including disposing of certain assets and paying dividends, and are subject to certain non-financial covenants and prepayment penalties.

We are obligated to pay reasonable compensation to the trustee and to indemnify the trustee against certain losses, liabilities or expenses incurred by the trustee in connection with its duties relating to the subordinated debt securities. The trustee’s claims for these payments will generally be senior to those of noteholders in respect of all funds collected or held by the trustee.

Certain Definitions

“indebtedness” means:

(1) all indebtedness, obligations and other liabilities for borrowed money, including overdrafts, foreign exchange contracts, currency exchange agreements, interest rate protection agreements, and any loans or

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advances from banks, or evidenced by bonds, debentures, notes or similar instruments, other than any account payable or other accrued current liability or obligation incurred in the ordinary course of business in connection with the obtaining of materials or services;

(2) all reimbursement obligations and other liabilities with respect to letters of credit, bank guarantees or bankers' acceptances;

(3) all obligations and liabilities in respect of leases required in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles to be accounted for as capitalized lease obligations on our balance sheet;

(4) all obligations and other liabilities under any lease or related document in connection with the lease of real property which provides that we are contractually obligated to purchase or cause a third party to purchase the leased property and thereby guarantee a minimum residual value of the leased property to the lessor and our obligations under the lease or related document to purchase or to cause a third party to purchase the leased property;

(5) all obligations with respect to an interest rate or other swap, cap or collar agreement or other similar instrument or agreement or foreign currency hedge, exchange, purchase agreement or other similar instrument or agreement;

(6) all direct or indirect guaranties or similar agreements in respect of, and our obligations or liabilities to purchase, acquire or otherwise assure a creditor against loss in respect of, indebtedness, obligations or liabilities of others of the type described in (1) through (5) above;

(7) any indebtedness or other obligations described in (1) through (6) above secured by any mortgage, pledge, lien or other encumbrance existing on property which is owned or held by us; and

(8) any and all refinancings, replacements, deferrals, renewals, extensions and refundings of, or amendments, modifications or supplements to, any indebtedness, obligation or liability of the kind described in clauses (1) through (7) above.

"senior indebtedness" means the principal, premium, if any, interest, including any interest accruing after bankruptcy, and rent or termination payment on or other amounts due on our current or future indebtedness, whether created, incurred, assumed, guaranteed or in effect guaranteed by us, including any deferrals, renewals, extensions, refundings, amendments, modifications or supplements to the above. However, senior indebtedness does not include:

- indebtedness that expressly provides that it shall not be senior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities or expressly provides that it is on the same basis or junior to the subordinated debt securities;
- our indebtedness to any of our majority-owned subsidiaries, if any; and
- the subordinated debt securities.

"designated senior indebtedness" means any of our senior indebtedness that expressly provides that it is "designated senior indebtedness" for purposes of the indenture (provided that the instrument, agreement or other document creating or evidencing such senior indebtedness may place limitations and conditions on the right of such senior indebtedness to exercise the rights of designated senior indebtedness).

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The following summary of the terms of our common stock does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation, or certificate of incorporation, and Amended and Restated Bylaws, as amended, or bylaws, which are incorporated by reference herein. See "Where You Can Find More Information."

General

We have authority to issue 100,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.0001 par value per share. As of February 28, 2011, we had 63,148,298 shares of common stock outstanding. As of December 31, 2010, we had an aggregate of 7,135,315 shares of common stock reserved for issuance upon exercise of outstanding stock options and restricted stock units granted under our 2006 Equity Incentive Award Plan and 2004 Equity Incentive Award Plan, an aggregate of 563,584 shares of common stock reserved for issuance pursuant to future grants under our 2006 Equity Incentive Award Plan and outstanding warrants to purchase an aggregate of 6,325,021 shares of our common stock.

Voting Rights

The holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of the stockholders, including the election of directors, and do not have cumulative voting rights. Accordingly, the holders of a majority of the shares of common stock entitled to vote in any election of directors can elect all of the directors standing for election, if they so choose.

Dividends

Subject to limitations under Delaware law and preferences that may be applicable to any then outstanding preferred stock, holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably those dividends, if any, as may be declared by our board of directors out of legally available funds.

Liquidation

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holders of common stock will be entitled to share ratably in the net assets legally available for distribution to stockholders after the payment of all of our debts and other liabilities of our company, subject to the prior rights of any preferred stock then outstanding.

Rights and Preferences

Holders of common stock have no preemptive or conversion rights or other subscription rights and there are no redemption or sinking funds provisions applicable to the common stock.

Fully Paid and Nonassessable

All outstanding shares of our common stock are fully paid and nonassessable and the shares of common stock offered hereby will be fully paid and nonassessable.

Registration Rights

Under the terms of an investor rights agreement to which we are a party, if we propose to register any of our securities under the Securities Act, the investors who are parties to that agreement are entitled to notice of such registration and are entitled to include their securities covered by that agreement in our registration statement. These securities are referred to as registrable securities. As of the date of this prospectus, these investors hold

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approximately 10.2 million shares of common stock that are registrable securities under the investor rights agreement. These investors are also entitled to demand registration, pursuant to which they may require us to use our best efforts to register their registrable securities under the Securities Act at our expense, up to a maximum of two such registrations. These investors may also require us to file an unlimited number of additional registration statements on Form S-3 at our expense so long as they propose to sell registrable securities of at least \$1.0 million and we have not already filed two such registration statements on Form S-3 in the previous 12 months.

All of these registration rights are subject to certain conditions and limitations, among them the right of the underwriters of an offering to limit the number of shares included in such registration and our right not to effect a requested registration 60 days prior to or 180 days after a public offering of our securities, including the offering made here. These registration rights will continue following this offering and will terminate upon the earlier of October 24, 2013 or for any particular investor, at such time when all securities held by that investor subject to registration rights may be sold pursuant to Rule 144 under the Securities Act. These registration rights have been waived by all of the holders of registrable securities with respect to this offering.

In addition, in connection with our private placement in February 2009 of an aggregate of 12,039,794 shares of common stock and warrants to purchase up to an aggregate of 6,019,897 additional shares of common stock, we agreed to register for resale under the Securities Act both the shares we issued and the shares underlying the warrants. We filed a registration statement on Form S-3 covering all of these shares in March 2009, and the registration statement was declared effective by the SEC in May 2009. We may be liable for liquidated damages if we do not maintain the effectiveness of the registration statement or the listing of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Market, the New York Stock Exchange or the American Stock Exchange, in each case for a period of ten days, or for more than sixty days in any 365-day period. The amount of the liquidated damages is one percent per applicable ten or 60 day period, subject to an aggregate cap of eight percent per calendar year, of the aggregate purchase price of the common stock issued in February 2009 then held by each investor that with respect to which registration rights continue to apply.

Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaw Provisions

See “Certain Provisions of Delaware Law and of the Company’s Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws—Anti-Takeover Effects of Provisions of Our Certificate of Incorporation, Our Bylaws and Delaware Law” for a description of provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws which may have the effect of delaying changes in our control or management.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

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

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

We currently have authorized 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.0001 par value per share. As of the date of this prospectus, we did not have any shares of preferred stock outstanding.

General

Prior to issuance of shares of each series of our undesignated preferred stock, our board of directors is required by the Delaware General Corporate Law, or DGCL, and our certificate of incorporation to adopt resolutions and file a Certificate of Designations with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware, fixing for each such series the designations, powers, preferences, rights, qualifications, limitations and restrictions of the shares of such series. Our board of directors could authorize the issuance of shares of preferred stock with terms and conditions which could have the effect of discouraging a takeover or other transaction which holders of some, or a majority, of such shares might believe to be in their best interests or in which holders of some, or a majority, of such shares might receive a premium for their shares over the then-market price of such shares.

Subject to limitations prescribed by the DGCL, our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws, our board of directors is authorized to fix the number of shares constituting each series of preferred stock and the designations, powers, preferences, rights, qualifications, limitations and restrictions of the shares of such series, including such provisions as may be desired concerning voting, redemption, dividends, dissolution or the distribution of assets, conversion or exchange, and such other subjects or matters as may be fixed by resolution of the board of directors. Each series of preferred stock that we offer under this prospectus will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable and will not have, or be subject to, any preemptive or similar rights.

The applicable prospectus supplement(s) will describe the following terms of the series of preferred stock in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered:

- the title and stated value of the preferred stock;
- the number of shares of the preferred stock offered, the liquidation preference per share and the purchase price of the preferred stock;
- the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or the method(s) of calculation for dividends;
- whether dividends shall be cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends on the preferred stock shall accumulate;
- the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any, for the preferred stock;
- the provisions for a sinking fund, if any, for the preferred stock;
- the provisions for redemption, if applicable, of the preferred stock;
- any listing of the preferred stock on any securities exchange or market;
- the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which the preferred stock will be convertible into common stock or another series of our preferred stock, including the conversion price (or its manner of calculation) and conversion period;
- the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which preferred stock will be exchangeable into our debt securities, including the exchange price, or its manner of calculation, and exchange period;
- voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock;
- a discussion of any material and/or special U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock;
- whether interests in the preferred stock will be represented by depositary shares;

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- the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs;
- any limitations on issuance of any series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and
- any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions on the preferred stock.

Rank

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the preferred stock will rank:

- senior to all classes or series of our common stock, and to all equity securities issued by us the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank junior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of us;
- on a parity with all equity securities issued by us that do not rank senior or junior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of us; and
- junior to all equity securities issued by us the terms of which do not specifically provide that such equity securities rank on a parity with or junior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of us (including any entity with which we may be merged or consolidated or to which all or substantially all of our assets may be transferred or which transfers all or substantially all of our assets).

As used for these purposes, the term “equity securities” does not include convertible debt securities.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for any series or class of preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue debt warrants to purchase debt securities, as well as equity warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock. The warrants may be issued independently or together with any securities and may be attached to or separate from the securities. The warrants are to be issued under warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent, all as shall be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to warrants being offered pursuant to such prospectus supplement. The following description of warrants will apply to the warrants offered by this prospectus unless we provide otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement for a particular series of warrants may specify different or additional terms.

Debt Warrants

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of debt warrants offered, the warrant agreement relating to the debt warrants and the debt warrant certificates representing the debt warrants, including the following:

- the title of the debt warrants;
- the aggregate number of the debt warrants;
- the price or prices at which the debt warrants will be issued;
- the designation, aggregate principal amount and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants, and the procedures and conditions relating to the exercise of the debt warrants;
- the designation and terms of any related debt securities with which the debt warrants are issued, and the number of debt warrants issued with each debt security;
- the date, if any, on and after which the debt warrants and the related debt securities will be separately transferable;
- the principal amount of debt securities purchasable upon exercise of each debt warrant;
- the date on which the right to exercise the debt warrants will commence, and the date on which this right will expire;
- the maximum or minimum number of debt warrants which may be exercised at any time;
- a discussion of any material Federal income tax considerations; and
- any other terms of the debt warrants and terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exercise of debt warrants.

Debt warrants may be exercised at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the prospectus supplement. Prior to the exercise of their debt warrants, holders of debt warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise and will not be entitled to payment of principal or any premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise.

Equity Warrants

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of equity warrants offered:

- the title of the equity warrants;
- the securities (i.e., common stock or preferred stock) for which the equity warrants are exercisable;
- the price or prices at which the equity warrants will be issued;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the common stock or preferred stock with which the equity warrants are issued, and the number of equity warrants issued with each share of common stock or preferred stock;

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- if applicable, the date on and after which the equity warrants and the related common stock or preferred stock will be separately transferable;
- if applicable, a discussion of any material Federal income tax considerations; and
- any other terms of the equity warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of equity warrants.

Prior to exercise of the equity warrants, holders of equity warrants will not be entitled, by virtue of being such holders, to vote, consent, receive dividends, receive notice as stockholders with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as our stockholders.

The exercise price payable and the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon the exercise of each equity warrant will be subject to adjustment in certain events, including the issuance of a stock dividend to holders of common stock or preferred stock or a stock split, reverse stock split, combination, subdivision or reclassification of common stock or preferred stock. In lieu of adjusting the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon exercise of each equity warrant, we may elect to adjust the number of equity warrants. No adjustments in the number of shares purchasable upon exercise of the equity warrants will be required until cumulative adjustments require an adjustment of at least 1% thereof. We may, at our option, reduce the exercise price at any time. No fractional shares will be issued upon exercise of equity warrants, but we will pay the cash value of any fractional shares otherwise issuable. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in case of any consolidation, merger, or sale or conveyance of our property in its entirety or substantially in its entirety, the holder of each outstanding equity warrant shall have the right to the kind and amount of shares of stock and other securities and property, including cash, receivable by a holder of the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock into which the equity warrant was exercisable immediately prior to such transaction.

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle the holder to purchase for cash such principal amount of securities or shares of stock at such exercise price as shall in each case be set forth in, or be determinable as set forth in, the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void.

The warrants may be exercised as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered. Upon receipt of payment and the warrant certificate properly completed and duly executed at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the securities purchasable upon such exercise. If less than all of the warrants represented by such warrant certificate are exercised, a new warrant certificate will be issued for the remaining warrants.

**CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF DELAWARE LAW AND OF THE
COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS**

**Anti-Takeover Effects of Provisions of Our Certificate of Incorporation, Our
Bylaws and Delaware Law**

Some provisions of Delaware law, our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws contain provisions that could make the following transactions more difficult: acquisition of us by means of a tender offer; acquisition of us by means of a proxy contest or otherwise; or removal of our incumbent officers and directors. It is possible that these provisions could make it more difficult to accomplish or could deter transactions that stockholders may otherwise consider to be in their best interests or in our best interests, including transactions that might result in a premium over the market price for our shares.

These provisions, summarized below, are expected to discourage coercive takeover practices and inadequate takeover bids. These provisions are also designed to encourage persons seeking to acquire control of us to first negotiate with our board of directors. We believe that the benefits of increased protection of our potential ability to negotiate with the proponent of an unfriendly or unsolicited proposal to acquire or restructure us outweigh the disadvantages of discouraging these proposals because negotiation of these proposals could result in an improvement of their terms.

Undesignated Preferred Stock

The ability to authorize undesignated preferred stock makes it possible for our board of directors to issue preferred stock with voting or other rights or preferences that could impede the success of any attempt to change control of us. These and other provisions may have the effect of deferring hostile takeovers or delaying changes in control or management of our company.

Stockholder Meetings

Our charter documents provide that a special meeting of stockholders may be called only by our chairman of the board or president, or by a resolution adopted by a majority of our board of directors.

Requirements for Advance Notification of Stockholder Nominations and Proposals

Our bylaws establish advance notice procedures with respect to stockholder proposals and the nomination of candidates for election as directors, other than nominations made by or at the direction of the board of directors or a committee of the board of directors.

Elimination of Stockholder Action by Written Consent

Our certificate of incorporation eliminates the right of stockholders to act by written consent without a meeting.

Election and Removal of Directors

Our board of directors is divided into three classes. The directors in each class will serve for a three-year term, one class being elected each year by our stockholders. This system of electing and removing directors may tend to discourage a third party from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain control of us, because it generally makes it more difficult for stockholders to replace a majority of the directors.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Statute

We are subject to Section 203 of the DGCL, which prohibits persons deemed "interested stockholders" from engaging in a "business combination" with a publicly held Delaware corporation for three years following the date these persons become interested stockholders unless the business combination is, or the transaction in which

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the person became an interested stockholder was, approved in a prescribed manner or another prescribed exception applies. Generally, an “interested stockholder” is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns, or within three years prior to the determination of interested stockholder status did own, 15% or more of a corporation’s voting stock. Generally, a “business combination” includes a merger, asset or stock sale, or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. The existence of this provision may have an anti-takeover effect with respect to transactions not approved in advance by the board of directors.

Amendment of Charter Provisions

The amendment of any of the above provisions, except for the provision making it possible for our board of directors to issue preferred stock, would require approval by holders of at least 66-²/₃% of our then outstanding common stock.

The provisions of Delaware law, our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws could have the effect of discouraging others from attempting hostile takeovers and, as a consequence, they may also inhibit temporary fluctuations in the market price of our common stock that often result from actual or rumored hostile takeover attempts. These provisions may also have the effect of preventing changes in our management. It is possible that these provisions could make it more difficult to accomplish transactions that stockholders may otherwise deem to be in their best interests

LEGAL MATTERS

Latham & Watkins LLP, San Diego, California, will issue an opinion about certain legal matters with respect to the securities.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2010, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements as of December 31, 2010, are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP’s reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the reporting requirements of the Exchange Act, and file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy these reports, proxy statements and other information at the SEC’s public reference facilities at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You can request copies of these documents by writing to the SEC and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference facilities. Our SEC filings are also available at the SEC’s website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement are only part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we have filed with the SEC under the Securities Act, and therefore omit certain information contained in the registration statement. We have also filed exhibits and schedules with the registration statement that are excluded from this prospectus supplement, and you should refer to the applicable exhibit or schedule for a complete description of any statement referring to any contract or other document. You may inspect a copy of the registration statement, including the exhibits and schedules, without charge, at the SEC’s public reference facilities or obtain a copy from the SEC upon payment of the fees prescribed by the SEC.

We also maintain a website at www.cadencepharm.com through which you can access our filings with the SEC. The information contained in, or accessible through, our website is not a part of this prospectus.

INFORMATION INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” the information from other documents that we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future information filed (rather than furnished) with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act between the date of this prospectus and the termination of the offering, provided, however, that we are not incorporating any information furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of any current report on Form 8-K:

- our annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010, which was filed with the SEC on March 4, 2011;
- our quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2011, filed on May 5, 2011;
- our definitive proxy statement on Schedule 14A (other than information furnished rather than filed), which was filed on April 27, 2011;
- our current reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 18, 2011, February 2, 2011 and March 22, 2011; and
- the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A, which was filed with the SEC on October 19, 2006, including any amendment or reports filed for the purpose of updating the description.

These documents may also be accessed on our website at www.cadencepharm.com. The information contained in, or accessible through, our website is not a part of this prospectus.

We will furnish without charge to you, upon written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents, by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Cadence Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
12481 High Bluff Drive, Suite 200
San Diego, California 92130
(858) 436-1400
Attention: Investor Relations

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You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and in any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with the offering. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and in any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, is accurate only as of the date of those respective documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates. You should read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and any free writing prospectus that we have authorized for use in connection with this offering, in their entirety before making an investment decision. You should also read and consider the information in the documents we have referred you to in the sections of this prospectus supplement entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Information Incorporated by Reference".

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Common Stock

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Prospectus Supplement

November , 2011