

Pfizer considers consumer business sale

October 10 2017



This April 6, 2016, file photo shows the Pfizer logo appearing on a screen above its trading post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Pfizer said Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017, it may sell its consumer health care business, which includes the Advil brand, as part of a strategic review. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Pfizer may be done selling ChapStick, Advil, Robitussin and other brands that people can buy without a prescription.

The pharmaceutical giant is weighing options for its consumer health

care business. It may spin off or sell the unit, which also produces Advil, Preparation H and the Centrum brand of vitamins. Pfizer may also leave the business as is, with no sale.

The New York drugmaker expects any decisions on the business to be made next year.

Chairman and CEO Ian Read said Tuesday that consumer health products are distinct enough from the company's main biopharmaceutical business that its value might be "more fully realized" outside the company.

The consumer health care unit had revenue of about \$3.4 billion last year, while the company as a whole recorded \$52.8 billion.

Centerview Partners, Guggenheim Securities and Morgan Stanly are working as financial advisers for the review.

Pfizer's larger prescription drug business includes the erectile dysfunction treatment Viagra, the breast cancer drug Ibrance and the cholesterol fighter Lipitor. The company booked a \$3.07 billion profit in the in the second quarter on \$12.9 billion in revenue. The company will report third-quarter results later this month.

Pfizer said in August that it expects to gain regulatory approvals over the next five years for up to 18 new drugs and a half-dozen "biosimilars," or near-generic versions of complex injected drugs manufactured inside cells. But the drugmaker also faces competition from cheaper, generic versions of key products like Lipitor, which was the world's top selling drug for a decade.

Pfizer shares edged up 28 cents to close at \$36.42. The stock price has climbed about 12 percent so far this year, while the Standard & Poor's

500 index has risen more than 13 percent.

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