

INTERCEPT PHARMACEUTICALS INC
 Form 424B5
 April 06, 2018

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-217861

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities To Be Registered	Amount to be Registered	Proposed Maximum Offering Price Per Unit	Proposed Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Amount Of Registration Fee
Common Stock, par value \$0.001 per share	2,695,313 ⁽¹⁾	\$ 64.00	\$ 172,500,032	\$ 21,476.25 ⁽²⁾

(1) Includes 351,563 shares that may be purchased by the underwriters upon exercise of the underwriters option to purchase additional shares.

The filing fee is calculated and being paid pursuant to Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, (2)and relates to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333- 217861) filed by the Registrant on May 10, 2017.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To Prospectus Dated May 10, 2017)

2,343,750 Shares

INTERCEPT PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

Common Stock

We are offering 2,343,750 shares of our common stock. Our common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol ICPT. The last reported sale price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Select Market on April 4, 2018 was \$64.36 per share.

We have granted the underwriters a 30-day option to purchase up to 351,563 additional shares of our common stock.

Pursuant to a securities purchase agreement with our largest existing shareholder, Genextra S.p.A., Samsara BioCapital, L.P. and certain other purchasers named therein (the Private Placement Purchasers), dated as of April 4, 2018 (the Private Placement Agreement), we will sell to the Private Placement Purchasers, in a private placement exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), and at a sale price equal to the price to the public in this offering, 1,562,500 shares of our common stock (the Concurrent Private Placement). The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. However, the consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

Our Chief Executive Officer and certain members of our Board of Directors have agreed to purchase an aggregate of 16,795 shares of our common stock in this offering at the price offered to the public and on the same terms as the other purchasers in this offering.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-6 of this prospectus supplement and on page 2 of the accompanying base prospectus, as well as those risks described in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and in our other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC).

	Price to Public	Underwriting Discounts and Commissions ⁽¹⁾	Proceeds to the Company
Per Share	\$64.00	\$3.84	\$60.16
Total	\$150,000,000	\$9,000,000	\$141,000,000

(1) See Underwriting for a description of compensation payable to the underwriters.

Neither the SEC, any state securities commission nor any other regulatory body has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus to which

it relates are truthful and complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares of common stock to purchasers on or about April 9, 2018.

Credit Suisse

Jefferies

The date of this prospectus supplement is April 5, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

	Page
<u>About This Prospectus Supplement</u>	<u>S-ii</u>
<u>Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>S-iii</u>
<u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u>	<u>S-1</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>S-6</u>
<u>Use Of Proceeds</u>	<u>S-13</u>
<u>Dilution</u>	<u>S-14</u>

	Page
<u>Underwriting</u>	<u>S-15</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>S-21</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>S-21</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>S-21</u>
<u>Incorporation Of Certain Documents By Reference</u>	<u>S-22</u>

Prospectus

	Page
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Incorporation by Reference</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc.</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Consolidated Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Selling Stockholders</u>	<u>9</u>

	Page
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Description of Capital Stock</u>	<u>18</u>

<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Description of Purchase Contracts and Purchase Units</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>Forms of Securities</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>35</u>

S-i

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the specific terms of this offering and the securities offered hereby, and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying base prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference. The second part, the accompanying base prospectus, gives more general information and disclosure. When we refer only to the prospectus, we are referring to both parts combined.

If there is any inconsistency between information in or incorporated by reference into the accompanying base prospectus and information in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement, you should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement. This prospectus supplement, the accompanying base prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference include important information about us, the common stock being offered and other information you should know before investing. You should read this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus together with the additional information described under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information* before investing in our common stock.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized any other person 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 thereof is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying base prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference is accurate only as of the respective dates of the applicable documents. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

When we refer to we, our, us, and the Company in this prospectus supplement, we mean Intercept Pharmaceuticals Inc. and its subsidiaries.

The Intercept Pharmaceuticals® name and logo and the Ocaliva® name and logo are either registered or unregistered trademarks or trade names of the Company in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks, trade names and service marks appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying base prospectus or the documents incorporated into each by reference are the property of their respective owners. Solely for convenience, trademarks and trade names referred to in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying base prospectus and the documents incorporated into each by reference may appear without the ® and ™ symbols, but those references are not intended to indicate, in any way, that we will not assert, to the fullest extent under applicable law, our rights or that the applicable owner will not assert its rights to these trademarks and trade names.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus, including the documents incorporated into each by reference, contain forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, statements regarding the progress, timing and results of our clinical trials, including our clinical trials for the treatment of nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), the safety and efficacy of our approved product, Ocaliva (obeticholic acid or OCA), the potential approval of OCA in indications other than primary biliary cholangitis (PBC), the timing and potential commercial success of OCA and any other product candidates we may develop and our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenue, projected costs, prospects, plans, objectives of management and expected market growth.

These statements constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act).

The words anticipate, believe, estimate, expect, intend, may, plan, predict, project, target, potential, should, continue, and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. Readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements, which speak only as of their respective dates, and we undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statement except as required by law. These forward-looking statements are based on estimates and assumptions by our management that, although believed to be reasonable, are inherently uncertain and subject to a number of risks. The following represent some, but not necessarily all, of the factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from historical results or those anticipated or predicted by our forward-looking statements:

- our ability to successfully commercialize Ocaliva in PBC;
- our ability to maintain our regulatory approval of Ocaliva in PBC in the United States, Europe, Canada and other jurisdictions in which we have or may receive marketing authorization;
- the initiation, cost, timing, progress and results of our development activities, preclinical studies and clinical trials, including our clinical trials for the treatment of NASH;
- the timing of and our ability to obtain regulatory approval of OCA in indications other than PBC and regulatory approval of any other product candidates we may develop;
- conditions that may be imposed by regulatory authorities on our marketing approvals for our products and product candidates, such as the need for clinical outcomes data (and not just results based on achievement of a surrogate endpoint), and any related restrictions, limitations and/or warnings in the label of any products or product candidates;
- our plans to research, develop and commercialize our products and product candidates;
- our ability to obtain and maintain intellectual property protection for our products and product candidates;
- our ability to successfully commercialize our products and product candidates;
- the size and growth of the markets for our products and product candidates and our ability to serve those markets;
- the rate and degree of market acceptance of any of our products, which may be affected by the reimbursement received from payors;
- the success of competing drugs that are or become available;
- regulatory developments in the United States and other countries;
- the performance of our third-party suppliers and manufacturers;
- our collaborators' election to pursue research, development and commercialization activities;
- our ability to attract collaborators with development, regulatory and commercialization expertise;

S-iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

our need for and ability to obtain additional financing;
our estimates regarding expenses, revenues and capital requirements and the accuracy thereof;
our use of cash and short-term investments;
our ability to attract and retain key scientific or management personnel; and
the other risks and uncertainties discussed under the caption Risk Factors herein and in the accompanying base prospectus and in our periodic filings incorporated by reference herein, including our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017.

S-iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights key aspects of this offering. This summary is not complete and does not contain all of the information that you should consider before investing in shares of our common stock. You should read carefully the other information included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus before investing in our common stock. You should pay special attention to the Risk Factors section of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying base prospectus and our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, which is incorporated by reference herein, when determining whether an investment in shares of our common stock is appropriate for you.

Our Company

We are a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of novel therapeutics to treat non-viral, progressive liver diseases with high unmet medical need utilizing our proprietary bile acid chemistry. Our one marketed product, OCA, and portfolio of clinical product candidates have the potential to treat orphan and more prevalent liver diseases for which, currently, there are limited therapeutic solutions.

OCA was approved in the United States in May 2016 for use in patients with PBC, under the brand name Ocaliva® (obeticholic acid). OCA is a bile acid analog, a chemical substance that has a structure based on a naturally occurring human bile acid, that selectively binds to and activates the farnesoid X receptor. We believe OCA has broad liver-protective properties and may effectively counter a variety of chronic insults to the liver that cause fibrosis, or scarring, which can eventually lead to cirrhosis, liver transplant and death. We commenced sales and marketing of Ocaliva in the United States shortly after receiving marketing approval, and Ocaliva is now available to patients primarily through a network of specialty pharmacy distributors. In December 2016, the European Commission granted conditional approval for Ocaliva for the treatment of PBC and we commenced our European commercial launch in January 2017. We have submitted or are in the process of submitting dossiers to a number of reimbursement authorities in the European Union. In May 2017, Health Canada granted a conditional approval for Ocaliva in PBC and we commenced our commercial launch in July 2017. We also plan to file for marketing authorization for OCA in PBC in other target markets.

We are currently evaluating our future development strategy for OCA in other indications, including a variety of other non-viral progressive liver diseases such as NASH, primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC) and biliary atresia.

OCA achieved the primary endpoint in a Phase 2b clinical trial for the treatment of NASH, known as the FLINT trial, which was sponsored by the U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, a part of the National Institutes of Health. The FLINT trial was completed in late July 2014. We have an ongoing Phase 3 clinical trial in non-cirrhotic NASH patients with liver fibrosis, known as the REGENERATE trial. REGENERATE includes a pre-planned histology-based interim analysis after 72 weeks of treatment. In May 2017, we completed enrollment of the interim analysis cohort for the REGENERATE trial. We anticipate top-line results from the interim analysis in the first half of 2019. We have also completed a Phase 2 clinical trial, known as the CONTROL trial, the goal of which was to characterize the lipid metabolic effects of OCA and cholesterol management effects of concomitant statin administration in NASH patients. We announced that this trial met its primary endpoint in July 2017. We continue to work towards expanding our overall NASH development program with additional trials and studies, including our ongoing Phase 3 trial in NASH patients with compensated cirrhosis, known as the REVERSE trial.

In addition to PBC and NASH, we continue to invest in research of OCA for additional patient populations with other

liver diseases. For example, in July 2017, we announced top-line results of our Phase 2 AESOP trial in PSC which evaluated the effects of 24 weeks of treatment with varying doses of OCA compared to placebo. This trial achieved its primary endpoint, which we believe establishes a proof-of-concept of OCA in a second cholestatic liver disease. We plan to discuss these results with regulatory authorities to formulate our future development plans for OCA in PSC. OCA has received orphan drug designation in the United States and the European Union for the treatment of PBC and PSC and breakthrough therapy designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (the FDA) for the treatment of NASH patients with liver fibrosis.

S-1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our current patents for OCA are scheduled to expire at various times through 2033. We own or have rights to develop and commercialize OCA worldwide except for China, where we have exclusively licensed OCA to Sumitomo Dainippon Pharma Co. Ltd.

Our Strategy

Our strategy is to develop and commercialize novel therapeutics for patients with progressive non-viral liver diseases, beginning with OCA for the treatment of PBC, NASH and other follow-on indications that we believe are underserved by existing marketed therapies. The key elements of our strategy are to:

commercialize OCA in the United States, Europe, Canada and other countries, initially for the treatment of PBC; continue to develop OCA for the treatment of NASH and seek regulatory approval of OCA in this indication; continue to develop OCA in other orphan and more prevalent liver diseases; and maintain infrastructure and personnel in the United States and internationally to support our product development and commercialization efforts, as well as our operations as a public company.

In order to achieve our strategic objectives, we have, and will remain, focused on hiring and retaining a highly skilled management team and employee base with extensive experience and specific skill sets relating to the selection, development and commercialization of therapies for liver diseases with high unmet medical need.

Recent Developments

Quarter Ended March 31, 2018

We have previously indicated that we expect the quarter ended March 31, 2018 to be a transitional quarter for our company. In February 2018, we announced that the Ocaliva label in the United States was updated by the FDA to include a boxed warning and a dosing table that reinforce the existing dosing schedule for patients with Child-Pugh Class B or C or decompensated cirrhosis. The FDA issued an updated drug safety communication to accompany the revised label. As a result of the label update, we embarked on a significant outreach program to educate physicians, payers and thought leaders.

For the quarter ended March 31, 2018, we expect total Ocaliva prescriptions filled to be substantially consistent with total Ocaliva prescriptions filled during the quarter ended December 31, 2017. In addition, as we have previously indicated, based primarily on the impact in the first quarter of 2018 of increased gross-to-net deductions relating to the annual resetting of deductibles and the Medicare Part D coverage gap, we currently expect total gross-to-net deductions in the first quarter of 2018 to be towards the higher end of our previously announced 10% to 15% gross-to-net range. As a result, while our belief in the long-term growth opportunity for PBC in the remainder of 2018 and beyond remains unchanged, we expect that net sales of Ocaliva for the quarter ended March 31, 2018 will be slightly lower than net sales of Ocaliva for the quarter ended December 31, 2017.

The above information reflects our preliminary results based on currently available information. Our internal closing procedures with respect to the periods presented above are not complete. As a result, our final results may vary from the preliminary results presented above. Our actual results for the three months ended March 31, 2018 will not be finalized until after this offering is completed and may differ materially from the above estimates. Accordingly, you should not place undue reliance upon these preliminary results. See Risk Factors and Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements.

Concurrent Private Placement

Pursuant to the Private Placement Agreement, we will sell to the Private Placement Purchasers, in a private placement exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act and at a sale price equal to the price to the public in this offering, 1,562,500 shares of our common stock. The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. The Private Placement Purchasers will receive certain registration rights upon the

S-2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement. We will not pay any underwriting discounts or commissions with respect to the shares that are sold in the Concurrent Private Placement. The closing of the Concurrent Private Placement is expected to occur on or about April 9, 2018. The consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

We expect that our largest existing shareholder, Genextra S.p.A. (Genextra), will purchase 390,625 shares of our common stock in the Concurrent Private Placement. See Risk Factors Additional Risks Relating to our Common Stock and this Offering We have a significant stockholder, which will limit your ability to influence corporate matters and may give rise to conflicts of interest and could result in future substantial sales of shares of our common stock into the market.

Company Information

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware on September 4, 2002. Our principal executive offices are located at 10 Hudson Yards, 37th Floor, New York, New York 10001, and our telephone number is (646) 747-1000. We also have administrative offices in San Diego, California and London, United Kingdom. Our website address is www.interceptpharma.com. The information contained on or accessible through our website is not incorporated by reference into, and should not be considered part of, this prospectus supplement or the accompanying base prospectus.

Investors should not rely on any such information in deciding whether to invest in our common stock. We have included our website address in this prospectus supplement as an inactive textual reference only.

S-3

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Offering

Issuer

Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Common Stock Offered by Us

2,343,750 shares of our common stock.

Underwriters Option to Purchase Additional Shares of Common Stock

We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to 351,563 additional shares of our common stock. The underwriters can exercise this option at any time within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. See Underwriting.

Common Stock Sold by Us in the Concurrent Private Placement

Pursuant to the Private Placement Agreement, we will sell to the Private Placement Purchasers, in a private placement exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act and at a sale price equal to the price to the public in this offering, 1,562,500 shares of our common stock. The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. The Private Placement Purchasers will receive certain registration rights upon the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement. We will not pay any underwriting discounts or commissions with respect to the shares that are sold in the Concurrent Private Placement. The closing of the Concurrent Private Placement is expected to occur on or about April 9, 2018. The consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

Common Stock to be Outstanding After this Offering and the Concurrent Private Placement

29,078,928 shares (or 29,430,491 shares if the underwriters exercise in full their option to purchase additional shares in this offering).

Use of Proceeds

We anticipate that the aggregate gross proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement will be approximately \$250.0 million (or approximately \$272.5 million if the underwriters exercise in full their option to purchase additional shares in this offering). We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering and from the Concurrent Private Placement for working capital and general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, funding the ongoing commercialization of Ocaliva in PBC and the continued advancement of our clinical, research and development programs. See Use of Proceeds.

Risk Factors

Investing in our common stock involves risks. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-6 of this prospectus supplement and on page 2 of the accompanying base prospectus, as well as those risks described in our periodic filings incorporated by reference herein, including our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017.

Nasdaq Global Select Market Symbol

ICPT

S-4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding immediately after this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement is based on 25,172,678 shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2017, and excludes as of that date:

1.8 million shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options, at a weighted average exercise price of \$114.70 per share;

0.1 million shares of common stock issuable upon the vesting of outstanding restricted stock units;

1.9 million shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under our 2012 Equity Incentive Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under such plan pursuant to the terms thereof; and

up to 3.1 million shares of common stock issuable upon conversion of our outstanding 3.25% Convertible Senior Notes due 2023 (the Convertible Senior Notes).

The foregoing does not give effect to any issuance, exercise or settlement of stock-based awards under our equity incentive plan subsequent to December 31, 2017.

Except as otherwise indicated, all information in this prospectus supplement assumes no exercise by the underwriters of their option to purchase additional shares in this offering and assumes no exercise or settlement of the outstanding stock options or restricted stock units described above or conversion of the Convertible Senior Notes.

Our Chief Executive Officer and certain members of our Board of Directors have agreed to purchase an aggregate of 16,795 shares of our common stock in this offering at the price offered to the public and on the same terms as the other purchasers in this offering.

S-5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the following risks as well as the risks described in the section entitled "Risk Factors" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, as well as the other information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus before making a decision to invest in our common stock. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and cash flows could be materially adversely affected by any of these risks. The market or trading price of our common stock could decline due to any of these risks, and you may lose all or part of your investment. In addition, please read "Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements" in this prospectus supplement and "Forward-Looking Statements" in the accompanying base prospectus, where we describe additional uncertainties associated with our business and the forward-looking statements included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus. 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. Please see the sections entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference" in this prospectus supplement.

Additional Risks Relating to our Common Stock and this Offering

Our management will have broad discretion over the use of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement and may allocate such proceeds in ways that may be ineffective or with which you and other stockholders may not agree.

Our management will have broad discretion over the use of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement, including for any of the purposes described in the section entitled "Use of Proceeds," and may apply such proceeds in ways that do not improve our results of operations or enhance the value of our common stock. You will not have the opportunity as part of your investment decision to assess whether such proceeds are being used appropriately. Because of the number and variability of factors that will determine our use of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement, their ultimate use may vary substantially from their current intended use. The failure of our management to use these funds effectively could have a material adverse effect on our business, cause the market price of our common stock to decline and delay the commercialization of Ocaliva and the development of our current or future product candidates. Pending their use, we may invest some or all of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing securities. These investments may not yield a favorable return to our stockholders.

If you purchase shares of our common stock sold in this offering, you will experience immediate and substantial dilution in the net tangible book value of your shares. Future offerings of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock may cause you to experience further dilution and may cause our share price to decline.

Since the price per share of our common stock being offered will be 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 of 2,343,750 shares of our common stock in this offering at a sale price of \$64.00 per share, and after deducting estimated underwriting discounts and commissions, in the case of this offering, and estimated offering expenses payable by us in this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement, our as adjusted net tangible book value as of December 31, 2017 would have been approximately \$156.6 million, or \$5.69 per share. This represents an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$58.31 per share to new investors participating in this offering. The foregoing calculation does not give effect to shares of our common stock issued in the Concurrent Private Placement. For a more detailed discussion of the foregoing, see the section entitled "Dilution."

Furthermore, we may raise additional capital in the future through the sale of additional shares of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, which may be executed at a price per share that is less than the price per share paid by investors in this offering and may

S-6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

cause you to experience further dilution. In addition, the issuance of additional shares of common stock (including pursuant to conversions of the Convertible Senior Notes or the issuance, exercise or settlement of stock-based awards under our equity incentive plan) or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock, or the perception that such issuances may occur, may materially and adversely affect the price of our common stock.

Ownership in our common stock is highly concentrated and your ability to influence corporate matters may be limited as a result.

Our officers, directors and stockholders who own more than 5% of our outstanding common stock together beneficially own a significant percentage of our common stock based on reports filed with the SEC. In addition, in connection with the Concurrent Private Placement, the Private Placement Purchasers, which include our largest shareholder, Genextra, Samsara BioCapital, L.P. and certain other purchasers named in the Private Placement Agreement, will purchase, at a sale price equal to the price to the public in this offering, 1,562,500 shares of our common stock. If certain or all of these stockholders were to choose to act together, they would be able to potentially control our management and affairs and substantially all matters submitted to our stockholders for approval, including the election and removal of directors and approval of any significant transaction. This concentration of ownership may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control, impeding a merger, consolidation, takeover or other business combination involving us, or discouraging a potential acquiror from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain control of our business, even if such a transaction would benefit other stockholders. The interests of such stockholders may not always coincide with your interests or the interests of other stockholders and they may act in a manner that advances their best interests and not necessarily those of other stockholders.

An active trading market in our common stock may not be maintained.

The trading market in our common stock has been extremely volatile. The quotation of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Select Market does not assure that a meaningful, consistent and liquid trading market will exist. We cannot predict whether an active market for our common stock will be maintained in the future. An absence of an active trading market could adversely affect your ability to sell our common stock at current market prices in short time periods, or possibly at all. Additionally, market visibility for our common stock may be limited and such lack of visibility may have a depressive effect on the market price for our common stock. As of December 31, 2017, a significant percentage of our common stock was held by our officers, directors, beneficial owners of 5% or more of our securities (other than FMR LLC, Capital World Investors, Ameriprise Financial, Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co., The Vanguard Group and their respective affiliates) and their respective affiliates, which adversely affects the liquidity of the trading market for our common stock, in as much as federal securities laws restrict sales of our shares by these stockholders. If our affiliates continue to hold their shares of common stock, there will be limited trading volume in our common stock, which may make it more difficult for you to sell your shares or may increase the volatility of our stock price.

We have previously been, and are currently, subject to securities class action litigation and may be subject to similar or other litigation in the future, which may divert management's attention.

We have previously been subject to securities class action lawsuits. In February 2014, two purported securities class actions were filed against us and certain of our officers, which were eventually consolidated. In May 2016, the defendants reached an agreement with the lead plaintiff to seek court approval of a proposed resolution and the settlement was ultimately granted final approval by the court in September 2016. While the final judgment and order

of the court included a dismissal of the action with prejudice against all defendants and the defendants did not admit any liability as part of the settlement, the total payment aggregated to \$55.0 million, of which \$10.0 million was paid by our insurers.

In September 2017, a lawsuit and, in January 2018, a follow-on lawsuit were filed alleging, among other things, that we and certain of our officers violated federal securities laws by making allegedly material false and/or misleading statements regarding our business, operational and compliance policies. The plaintiff seeks unspecified monetary damages on behalf of the putative class and an award of costs and expenses, including attorney's fees. In addition, a lawsuit was filed in August 2017 alleging, among other things, that our directors

S-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

breached their fiduciary duties in connection with our non-executive director compensation practices. In March 2018, that action was dismissed with prejudice. However, the dismissal ruling remains subject to appeal. While we believe we have meritorious defenses and intend to rigorously defend ourselves, we cannot predict the outcome of these lawsuits.

There may be additional suits or proceedings brought in the future. Monitoring and defending against legal actions, whether or not meritorious, is time-consuming for our management and detracts from our ability to fully focus our internal resources on our business activities, and we cannot predict how long it may take to resolve these matters. In addition, we may incur substantial legal fees and costs in connection with litigation. Although we may receive insurance coverage for certain adversarial proceedings, coverage could be denied or prove to be insufficient. It is possible that we could, in the future, incur judgment or enter into settlement of claims for monetary damages. A decision adverse to our interests could result in the payment of substantial damages and could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations and financial condition.

Our stock price has been and may in the future be volatile, which could cause holders of our common stock to incur substantial losses.

The trading price of our common stock has been, and is likely to continue to be, highly volatile and could be subject to wide fluctuations in response to various factors, some of which are beyond our control. Since our initial public offering which occurred in October 2012, the price of our common stock on the Nasdaq Global Select Market has ranged from \$17.96 per share to \$497.00 per share. In addition to the other factors discussed in this Risk Factors section and in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, these factors include:

- failure to successfully commercialize Ocaliva for PBC in jurisdictions where we have received marketing authorization or our inability to receive marketing approval for Ocaliva in other jurisdictions;
- adverse results or delays in our clinical trials, including our clinical trials for the treatment of NASH;
- inability to obtain additional funding;
- any delay in filing an investigational new drug, new drug application, marketing authorization application or comparable submission for any of our products and product candidates and any adverse development or perceived adverse development with respect to the regulatory review of such submission;
- failure to successfully develop and commercialize OCA for indications other than PBC and any of our other product candidates;
- inability to obtain adequate product supply for OCA and our future product candidates or the inability to do so at acceptable prices;
- results of clinical trials of our competitors' products;
- regulatory actions with respect to our products or our competitors' products;
- changes in laws or regulations applicable to our products or future products;
- failure to meet or exceed financial projections we may provide to the public;
- failure to meet or exceed the estimates and projections of the investment community;
- actual or anticipated fluctuations in our financial condition and operating results;
- actual or anticipated changes in our growth rate relative to our competitors;
- actual or anticipated fluctuations in our competitors' operating results or changes in their growth rate;
- competition from existing products or new products that may emerge;

TABLE OF CONTENTS

announcements by us, our collaborators or our competitors of significant acquisitions, strategic collaborations, joint ventures, collaborations or capital commitments;
 issuance of new or updated research or reports by securities analysts;
 fluctuations in the valuation of companies perceived by investors to be comparable to us;
 share price and volume fluctuations attributable to inconsistent trading volume levels of our shares;
 additions or departures of key management or scientific personnel;
disputes or other developments related to proprietary rights, including patents, litigation matters and our ability to obtain patent protection for our technologies;
 announcement or expectation of additional financing efforts;
 significant lawsuits, including patent, stockholder or product liability litigation, involving us;
 sales of our common stock by us, our insiders or our other stockholders;
failure to adopt appropriate information security systems, including any systems that may be required to support our growing and changing business requirements;
 market conditions for biopharmaceutical stocks in general; and
 general economic, industry and market conditions.

Furthermore, the stock markets in general and the market for biotechnology companies in particular have experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that have affected and continue to affect the market prices of equity securities of many companies. These fluctuations often have been unrelated or disproportionate to the operating performance of those companies. These broad market and industry fluctuations, as well as general economic, political and market conditions such as recessions, interest rate changes or international currency fluctuations may negatively impact the market price of shares of our common stock, regardless of our actual operating performance. In the past, companies that have experienced volatility in the market price of their stock have been subject to securities class action litigation. We have been in the past, and are currently the target of this type of litigation, which could result in substantial costs and divert our management's attention from other business concerns, which could seriously harm our business. As a result of this volatility, you could incur substantial losses.

If our stockholders sell substantial amounts of our common stock, the market price of our common stock may decline even if our business is doing well.

A significant number of shares of our common stock are held by a small number of stockholders, including Genextra. Sales of a significant number of shares of our common stock, or the expectation that such sales may occur, could significantly reduce the market price of our common stock. These sales, or the possibility that these sales may occur, also might make it more difficult for us to sell equity securities in the future at a time and at a price that we deem appropriate. We have also registered the offer and sale of all shares of common stock that we may issue under our equity compensation plans, including upon the exercise of stock options. These shares can be freely sold in the public market upon issuance.

As of December 31, 2017, we had 25,172,678 shares of common stock outstanding. In connection with this offering, subject to certain exceptions, we and all of our directors and executive officers and the Private Placement Purchasers have agreed not to offer, sell or agree to sell, directly or indirectly, any shares of common stock without the consent of the underwriters in this offering for a period of 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement. When the applicable lock-up periods expire, subject to the applicable securities laws, we and our directors and executive officers and the Private Placement Purchasers will be able to sell shares in the public market.

Pursuant to the Private Placement Agreement, the Private Placement Purchasers have the right, subject to certain conditions, to require us to file a registration statement covering the sale of their shares of our common stock purchased in the Concurrent Private Placement. Once we register the offer and sale of these shares, the shares can be

If our stockholders sell substantial amounts of our common stock, the market price of our common stock may decline

freely sold in the public market.

S-9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Additionally, sales of our common stock by our executive officers or directors, even when done during an open trading window under our policies with respect to insider sales or done under a trading plan adopted in accordance with the guidelines set forth by Rule 10b5-1, may adversely impact the trading price of our common stock. Although we do not expect that the relatively small volume of such sales will itself significantly impact the trading price of our common stock, the market could react negatively to the announcement of such sales, which could in turn affect the trading price of our common stock.

Furthermore, Genextra, our largest existing shareholder, has informed us that it has pledged its shares of our common stock held prior to the Concurrent Private Placement to an affiliate of Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC as collateral in connection with a margin loan. Enforcement against such collateral could materially and adversely affect the price of our common stock.

We have a significant stockholder, which will limit your ability to influence corporate matters and may give rise to conflicts of interest and could result in future substantial sales of shares of our common stock into the market.

As of December 31, 2017, Genextra owned 6,454,953 shares of our common stock. The shares of common stock owned by Genextra represented approximately 26% of our outstanding common stock as of December 31, 2017. Genextra is also purchasing 390,625 shares of our common stock in the Concurrent Private Placement. Accordingly, Genextra exerts and will continue to exert significant influence over us and any action requiring the approval of the holders of our common stock, including the election of directors and amendments to our organizational documents, such as increases in our authorized shares of common stock and approval of significant corporate transactions. This concentration of voting power makes it less likely any other holder of common stock or directors of our business will be able to affect the way we are managed and could delay or prevent an acquisition of us on terms that other stockholders may desire.

Furthermore, the interests of Genextra may not always coincide with your interests or the interests of other stockholders, and Genextra may act in a manner that advances its best interests and not necessarily those of other stockholders, including seeking a premium value for its common stock, and might affect the prevailing market price for our common stock. Our board of directors, which consists of nine directors, including one associated with Genextra, has the power to set the number of directors on our board from time to time.

Genextra also may sell shares of our common stock into the market from time to time. If we in the future engage in a registered offering of our common stock, we could also determine, as we have done in the past, to register for sale a portion of Genextra's shares as part of that same offering to provide for the orderly sale of such shares. Furthermore, Genextra and the other Private Placement Purchasers will receive certain registration rights upon the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement. We cannot predict the effect, if any, that future sales by Genextra may have on the market price for our common stock.

If securities or industry analysts cease publishing research or reports about us, our business or our market, or if they publish inaccurate or unfavorable reports about our stock, the price of our stock and trading volume could decline.

The trading market for our common stock depends in part on the research and reports that securities or industry analysts publish about our company. We do not have any control over these analysts, and there can be no assurance

that analysts will continue to cover us or provide favorable coverage. If one or more of the analysts who cover us downgrade our common stock or publish inaccurate or unfavorable research about our business, our stock price would likely decline. If one or more of the analysts covering us fail to regularly publish reports on us, demand for our common stock could decline, which could cause our stock price and trading volume to decline.

Anti-takeover provisions in our restated certificate of incorporation and our restated bylaws, as well as provisions of Delaware law, might discourage, delay or prevent a change in control of our company or changes in our management and, therefore, depress the trading price of our common stock.

Provisions in our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws, as well as provisions of Delaware law, contain provisions that may discourage, delay or prevent a merger, acquisition or other change in control that stockholders may consider favorable, including transactions in which you might otherwise

S-10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

receive a premium for your shares of our common stock. These provisions may also prevent or frustrate attempts by our stockholders to replace or remove our management. Our corporate governance documents include provisions:

authorizing the issuance of blank check convertible preferred stock, the terms of which may be established and shares of which may be issued without stockholder approval;

prohibiting stockholder action by written consent, thereby requiring all stockholder actions to be taken at a meeting of our stockholders, to the extent that no stockholder, together with its affiliates, holds more than 50% of our voting stock;

eliminating the ability of stockholders to call a special meeting of stockholders;

permitting our board of directors to accelerate the vesting of outstanding equity awards upon certain transactions that result in a change of control; and

establishing advance notice requirements for nominations for election to the board of directors or for proposing matters that can be acted upon at stockholder meetings.

In addition, as a Delaware corporation, we are subject to provisions of Delaware law, including Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law (the "DGCL"), which prevents some stockholders holding more than 15% of our outstanding common stock from engaging in certain business combinations without approval of the holders of substantially all of our outstanding common stock. Any provision of our restated certificate of incorporation or restated bylaws or Delaware law that has the effect of delaying or deterring a change in control could limit the opportunity for our stockholders to receive a premium for their shares of our common stock, and could also affect the price that some investors are willing to pay for our common stock.

The existence of the foregoing provisions and anti-takeover measures may also frustrate or prevent any attempts by our stockholders to replace or remove our current management or members of our board of directors and could limit the price that investors might be willing to pay in the future for shares of our common stock. They could also deter potential acquirers of our company, thereby reducing the likelihood that you could receive a premium for your common stock in an acquisition.

Claims for indemnification by our directors and officers may reduce our available funds to satisfy successful stockholder claims against us and may reduce the amount of money available to us.

As permitted by Section 102(b)(7) of the DGCL, our restated certificate of incorporation limits the liability of our directors to the fullest extent permitted by law. In addition, as permitted by Section 145 of the DGCL, our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws provide that we shall indemnify, to the fullest extent authorized by the DGCL, each person who is involved in any litigation or other proceeding because such person is or was a director or officer of our company or is or was serving as an officer or director of another entity at our request, against all expense, loss or liability reasonably incurred or suffered in connection therewith. Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that the right to indemnification includes the right to be paid expenses incurred in defending any proceeding in advance of its final disposition, provided, however, that such advance payment will only be made upon delivery to us of an undertaking, by or on behalf of the director or officer, to repay all amounts so advanced if it is ultimately determined that such director is not entitled to indemnification. If we do not pay a proper claim for indemnification in full within 60 days after we receive a written claim for such indemnification, except in the case of a claim for an advancement of expenses, in which case such period is 20 days, our restated certificate of incorporation and our restated bylaws authorize the claimant to bring an action against us and prescribe what constitutes a defense to such action.

Section 145 of the DGCL permits a corporation to indemnify any director or officer of the corporation against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred in connection with any action, suit or proceeding brought by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director or officer of the corporation, if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the corporation, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, if he or she had no reason to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. In

S-11

TABLE OF CONTENTS

a derivative action (i.e., one brought by or on behalf of the corporation), indemnification may be provided only for expenses actually and reasonably incurred by any director or officer in connection with the defense or settlement of such an action or suit if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that he or she reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the corporation, except that no indemnification shall be provided if such person shall have been adjudged to be liable to the corporation, unless and only to the extent that the court in which the action or suit was brought shall determine that the defendant is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for such expenses despite such adjudication of liability.

The rights conferred in the restated certificate of incorporation and the restated bylaws are not exclusive, and we are authorized to enter into indemnification agreements with our directors, officers, employees and agents and to obtain insurance to indemnify such persons.

The above limitations on liability and our indemnification obligations limit the personal liability of our directors and officers for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duty as directors by shifting the burden of such losses and expenses to us. Although we carry directors and officers liability insurance, certain liabilities or expenses covered by our indemnification obligations may not be covered by such insurance or the coverage limitation amounts may be exceeded. As a result, we may need to use a significant amount of our funds to satisfy our indemnification obligations, which could severely harm our business and financial condition and limit the funds available to stockholders who may choose to bring a claim against our company.

We do not intend to pay dividends in the foreseeable future.

To date, we have not paid any cash dividends on our common stock, and we do not intend to pay any dividends in the foreseeable future. Instead, we intend to retain earnings to fund the development and growth of our business. For this reason, the success of an investment in our common stock, if any, will depend on the appreciation of our common stock, which may not occur. There is no guarantee that our common stock will appreciate, and therefore, you may not realize a return on your investment.

This offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. However, the consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement. Accordingly, if you decide to purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you should be willing to do so whether or not we complete the Concurrent Private Placement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds to us from the sale of the shares of our common stock in this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement will be approximately \$240.2 million, or approximately \$261.4 million if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full, after deducting estimated underwriting discounts and commissions, in the case of this offering, and estimated offering expenses payable by us in this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement.

We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement for working capital and general corporate purposes, which may include, among other things, funding the ongoing commercialization of Ocaliva in PBC and the continued advancement of our clinical, research and development programs.

The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures will depend on numerous factors, including our development and commercialization efforts, as well as the amount of cash used in our operations. We therefore cannot estimate with certainty the amount of net proceeds to be used for the purposes described above. We may find it necessary or advisable to use the net proceeds for other purposes, and we will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds. Pending the uses described above, we may invest some or all of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement in short-term, investment-grade, interest-bearing securities.

Our expected use of the net proceeds from this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement represents our current intentions based upon our present plans and business conditions. The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. However, the consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

S-13

TABLE OF CONTENTS**DILUTION**

If you invest in our common stock, your interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the price per share you pay in this offering and the net tangible book value per share of our common stock immediately after you purchase shares in this offering. As of December 31, 2017, our net tangible book value was approximately \$16.4 million, or approximately \$0.65 per share, based on 25,172,678 shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2017. Our net tangible book value per share represents the amount of our total tangible assets reduced by the amount of our total liabilities, divided by the total number of shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2017.

After giving effect to the sale of 2,343,750 shares of our common stock in this offering at a sale price of \$64.00 per share, and after deducting estimated underwriting discounts and commissions, in the case of this offering, and estimated offering expenses payable by us in this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement, our as adjusted net tangible book value as of December 31, 2017 would have been approximately \$156.6 million, or \$5.69 per share. This represents an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$58.31 per share to new investors participating in this offering. The foregoing calculation does not give effect to shares of our common stock issued in the Concurrent Private Placement.

The following table illustrates this calculation on a per share basis:

Sale price per share		\$ 64.00
Net tangible book value per share at December 31, 2017	\$ 0.65	
Increase in net tangible book value per share attributable to investors participating in this offering	5.04	
As adjusted net tangible book value per share after giving effect to this offering		5.69
Dilution in net tangible book value per share to new investors in this offering		\$ 58.31

If the underwriters fully exercise their option to purchase up to 351,563 additional shares of our common stock, our as adjusted net tangible book value per share after giving effect to this offering would increase to \$6.38 per share, and there would be an immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$57.62 per share to new investors.

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding immediately after this offering is based on 25,172,678 shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2017, and excludes as of that date:

1.8 million shares of common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options, at a weighted average exercise price of \$114.70 per share;

0.1 million shares of common stock issuable upon the vesting of outstanding restricted stock units;

1.9 million shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under our 2012 Equity Incentive Plan, as well as any automatic increases in the number of shares of common stock reserved for future issuance under such plan pursuant to the terms thereof;

up to 3.1 million shares of common stock issuable upon conversion of the Convertible Senior Notes; and shares of our common stock issued in the Concurrent Private Placement.

The foregoing table does not give effect to any issuance, exercise or settlement of stock-based awards under our equity incentive plan subsequent to December 31, 2017. See **Risk Factors** **Additional Risks Relating to our Common Stock and this Offering** If you purchase shares of our common stock sold in this offering, you will experience

immediate and substantial dilution in the net tangible book value of your shares. Future offerings of our common stock or other securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock may cause you to experience further dilution and may cause our share price to decline.

S-14

TABLE OF CONTENTS**UNDERWRITING**

Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC and Jefferies LLC are acting as underwriters of the offering. Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in an underwriting agreement among us and the underwriters, we have agreed to sell to the underwriters, and each of the underwriters has agreed, severally and not jointly, to purchase from us, the number of shares of common stock set forth opposite its name below.

Underwriter	Number of Shares
Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC	1,523,438
Jefferies LLC	820,312
Total	2,343,750

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement, the underwriters have agreed, severally and not jointly, to purchase all of the shares of common stock sold under the underwriting agreement (other than those covered by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares described below) if any such shares are purchased.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

Commissions and Discounts

The underwriters propose to offer the shares of common stock initially at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to dealers at that price less a concession not in excess of \$2.304 per share. After the initial offering, the public offering price, concession or any other term of the offering may be changed.

Our Chief Executive Officer and certain members of our Board of Directors have agreed to purchase an aggregate of 16,795 shares of our common stock in this offering at the price offered to the public and on the same terms as the other purchasers in this offering. Whether or not these investors purchase any or all of these shares will not affect the underwriters' commitment to purchase the shares of common stock offered by us. The underwriters will receive the same underwriting discounts and commissions on any shares purchased by these investors as they will on any other shares sold to the public in this offering.

The following table shows the public offering price, underwriting discount and proceeds before expenses to us. The information assumes either no exercise or full exercise by the underwriters of their option to purchase additional shares.

	Per Share	Without Option	With Option
Public offering price	\$ 64.00	\$ 150,000,000	\$ 172,500,032
Underwriting discount	\$ 3.84	\$ 9,000,000	\$ 10,350,002
Proceeds, before expenses, to the Company	\$ 60.16	\$ 141,000,000	\$ 162,150,030

The expenses of this offering and the Concurrent Private Placement, not including the underwriting discount, are estimated at \$788,000 and are payable by us.

Option to Purchase Additional Shares

We have granted an option to the underwriters, exercisable for 30 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, subject to the conditions contained in the underwriting agreement, to purchase up to 351,563 additional shares of common stock from us at the price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. If the underwriters exercise this option, each will be obligated, subject to the conditions contained in the underwriting agreement, to purchase a number of additional shares proportionate to that underwriter's initial amount reflected in the above table.

Concurrent Private Placement

Pursuant to the Private Placement Agreement, we will sell to the Private Placement Purchasers, in a private placement exempt from the registration requirements of the Securities Act and at a sale price equal to

S-15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

the price to the public in this offering, 1,562,500 shares of our common stock. The consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement is contingent on the closing of this offering and the satisfaction of certain other customary conditions. We will not pay any underwriting discounts or commissions with respect to the shares that are sold in the Concurrent Private Placement. The closing of the Concurrent Private Placement is expected to occur on or about April 9, 2018. The consummation of this offering is not contingent on the consummation of the Concurrent Private Placement.

No Sales of Similar Securities

We, our executive officers and directors, certain beneficial owners of 5% or more of our securities and the Private Placement Purchasers have agreed not to sell or transfer any common stock or securities convertible into, exchangeable for, exercisable for, or repayable with common stock, for 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement without first obtaining the written consent of the underwriters. Specifically, we and these other persons have agreed, with certain limited exceptions, not to directly or indirectly:

offer, pledge, sell or contract to sell any common stock;
sell any option or contract to purchase any common stock;
purchase any option or contract to sell any common stock;
grant any option, right or warrant for the sale of any common stock;
lend or otherwise dispose of or transfer any common stock;

request or demand that we file a registration statement related to the common stock; or
enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, the economic consequence of ownership of any common stock whether any such swap or transaction is to be settled by delivery of shares or other securities, in cash or otherwise.

This lock-up provision applies to common stock and to securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for or repayable with common stock. It also applies to common stock owned now or acquired later by the person executing the agreement or for which the person executing the agreement later acquires the power of disposition.

Among other customary exceptions, the restrictions described above do not apply to:

sales of common stock by certain of our executive officers and directors under trading plans established prior to the date of the lock-up agreement pursuant to Rule 10b5-1 under the Exchange Act, subject to certain conditions; and the sale of common stock issuable in connection with the exercise of stock options or the vesting of restricted stock units or awards during the lock-up period, subject to certain conditions.

The underwriters in their sole discretion may release the common stock and other securities subject to the lock-up agreements described above at any time without notice.

Nasdaq Global Select Market Listing

Our shares are listed on the Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol ICPT.

Price Stabilization, Short Positions

Until the distribution of the shares is completed, SEC rules may limit the underwriters from bidding for and purchasing our common stock. However, the underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize the price of the common stock, such as bids or purchases to peg, fix or maintain that price.

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may purchase and sell our common stock in the open market. These transactions may include short sales, purchases on the open market to cover positions created by short sales and stabilizing transactions. Short sales involve the sale by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in the offering. Covered short sales are sales made in an amount not greater than the underwriters option to purchase additional shares described above. The

S-16

TABLE OF CONTENTS

underwriters may close out any covered short position by either exercising their option to purchase additional shares or purchasing shares in the open market. In determining the source of shares to close out the covered 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 option granted to them. Naked short sales are sales in excess of such option. The underwriters must close out any naked short position by purchasing shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of our common stock in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering. Stabilizing transactions consist of various bids for or purchases of shares of common stock made by the underwriters in the open market prior to the completion of the offering.

Similar to other purchase transactions, the underwriters' purchases to cover the syndicate short sales 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 our 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. The underwriters may conduct these transactions on the Nasdaq Global Select Market, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise.

Neither we nor any of 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 our common stock. In addition, neither we nor any of the underwriters make any representation that the underwriters will engage in these transactions or that these transactions, once commenced, will not be discontinued without notice.

Electronic Distribution

In connection with the offering, the underwriters or securities dealers may distribute prospectuses by electronic means, such as e-mail.

Other Relationships

The underwriters and their respective affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include sales and trading, commercial and investment banking, advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, market making, brokerage and other financial and non-financial activities and services. Some of the underwriters and their affiliates have engaged in, and may in the future engage in, investment banking and other commercial dealings in the ordinary course of business with us or our affiliates. They have received, or may in the future receive, customary fees and commissions for these transactions.

Genextra, our largest existing shareholder, has informed us that it has pledged its shares of our common stock held prior to the Concurrent Private Placement to an affiliate of Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC as collateral in connection with a margin loan.

In addition, in the ordinary course of their business activities, the underwriters and their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area (each, a Member State), which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State), an offer to the public of any shares which are the subject of the offering contemplated herein may not be made in that Relevant Member State, except that an offer to the public in that Relevant Member State of any shares may be made at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive, if they have been implemented in that Relevant Member State:

- A. to legal entities which are qualified investors as defined under the Prospectus Directive;
-

S-17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

by the underwriters to fewer than 150 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the B. Prospectus Directive), as permitted under the Prospectus Directive, subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representative of the underwriters for any such offer; or
in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of C. shares shall require us or any underwriter to publish a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive or supplement a prospectus pursuant to Article 16 of the Prospectus Directive.
Each person in a Relevant Member State who receives any communication in respect of, or who acquires any shares under, the offers contemplated in this prospectus will be deemed to have represented, warranted and agreed to and with each underwriter and us that:

it is a qualified investor as defined under the Prospectus Directive; and
in the case of any shares acquired by it as a financial intermediary, as that term is used in Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, (i) the shares acquired by it in the offering have not been acquired on behalf of, nor have they been acquired with a view to their offer or resale to, persons in any Relevant Member State other than qualified investors, as that term is defined in the Prospectus Directive, or in the circumstances in which the prior consent of the representative of the underwriters has been given to the offer or resale or (ii) where shares have been acquired by it on behalf of persons in any Relevant Member State other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive, the offer of such shares to it is not treated under the Prospectus Directive as having been made to such persons.
For the purposes of this representation and the provision above, the expression an offer 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 the offer and any 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. The expression Prospectus Directive means Directive 2003/71/EC (as amended, including by Directive 2010/73/EU), and includes any relevant implementing measure in the Relevant Member State.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus has only been communicated or caused to have been communicated and will only be communicated or caused to be communicated as an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act of 2000 (the FSMA)) as received in connection with the issue or sale of the shares in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us. All applicable provisions of the FSMA will be complied with in respect to anything done in relation to the shares in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Switzerland

This document is not intended to constitute an offer or solicitation to purchase or invest in the shares described herein. The shares may not be publicly offered, sold or advertised, directly or indirectly, in, into or from Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange or on any other exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the shares constitutes a prospectus as such term is understood pursuant to article 652a or article 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or a listing prospectus within the meaning of the listing rules of the SIX Swiss Exchange or any other regulated trading facility in Switzerland.

Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the shares or the offering may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, the Company or the shares have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. The shares are not subject to the supervision by any Swiss regulatory authority, e.g., the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA (FINMA), and investors in the shares will not benefit from protection or supervision by such authority.

S-18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Arab Emirates

The shares have not been, and are not being, publicly offered, sold, promoted or advertised in the United Arab Emirates (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) other than in compliance with the laws of the United Arab Emirates (and the Dubai International Financial Centre) governing the issue, offering and sale of securities. Further, this prospectus does not constitute a public offer of securities in the United Arab Emirates (including the Dubai International Financial Centre) and is not intended to be a public offer. The prospectus has not been approved by or filed with the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates, the Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority or the Dubai Financial Services Authority.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Australia

No placement document, prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document has been lodged with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), in relation to this offering. This prospectus does not constitute a prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document under the Corporations Act 2001 (the Corporations Act), and does not purport to include the information required for a prospectus, product disclosure statement or other disclosure document under the Corporations Act.

Any offer in Australia of the shares may only be made to persons (the Exempt Investors) who are sophisticated investors (within the meaning of section 708(8) of the Corporations Act), professional investors (within the meaning of section 708(11) of the Corporations Act) or otherwise pursuant to one or more exemptions contained in section 708 of the Corporations Act so that it is lawful to offer the shares without disclosure to investors under Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act.

The shares applied for by Exempt Investors in Australia must not be offered for sale in Australia in the period of 12 months after the date of allotment under this offering, except in circumstances where disclosure to investors under Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act would not be required pursuant to an exemption under section 708 of the Corporations Act or otherwise or where the offer is pursuant to a disclosure document which complies with Chapter 6D of the Corporations Act. Any person acquiring shares must observe such Australian on-sale restrictions.

This prospectus contains general information only and does not take account of the investment objectives, financial situation or particular needs of any particular person. It does not contain any securities recommendations or financial product advice. Before making an investment decision, investors need to consider whether the information in this prospectus is appropriate to their needs, objectives and circumstances, and, if necessary, seek expert advice on those matters.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Hong Kong

The shares may not be offered or sold in Hong Kong by means of any document other than (i) to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571) of Hong Kong and any rules made under that Ordinance, or (ii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus as defined in the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32) of Hong Kong or which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of that Ordinance. 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, 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 of Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities 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 as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571) of Hong Kong and any rules made under that Ordinance.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Japan

The shares have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act of Japan (Act No. 25 of 1948, as amended; the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act) and each underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any shares, 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, or for the benefit of, a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the

S-19

TABLE OF CONTENTS

registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore

This prospectus has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to 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 pursuant to Section 275(1), 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 shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 by a relevant person which is: (a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) 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 the trust is an individual who is an accredited investor, securities (as defined in Section 239(1) of the SFA) of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired shares pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except: (1) to an institutional investor or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person arising from an offer referred to in Section 275(1A) or Section 276(4)(i)(B) of the SFA; (2) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer; (3) where the transfer is by operation of law; (4) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA; or (5) as specified in Regulation 32 of the Securities and Futures (Offers of Investments) (Shares and Debentures) Regulations 2005 of Singapore.

Notice to Residents of Canada

The shares may be sold only to purchasers purchasing, or deemed to be purchasing, as principal that are accredited investors, as defined in National Instrument 45-106 *Prospectus Exemptions* or subsection 73.3(1) of the *Securities Act* (Ontario), and are permitted clients, as defined in National Instrument 31-103 *Registration Requirements, Exemptions and Ongoing Registrant Obligations*. Any resale of shares must be made in accordance with an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the prospectus requirements of applicable securities laws.

Securities legislation in certain provinces or territories of Canada may provide a purchaser with remedies for rescission or damages if this prospectus (including any amendments thereto) contains a misrepresentation, provided that the remedies for rescission or damages are exercised by the purchaser within the time limit prescribed by the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory. The purchaser should refer to any applicable provisions of the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory for particulars of these rights or consult with a legal advisor.

Pursuant to section 3A.3 of National Instrument 33-105 *Underwriting Conflicts* (NI 33-105), the underwriters are not required to comply with the disclosure requirements of NI 33-105 regarding underwriter conflicts of interest in connection with this offering.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters will be passed upon for us by Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, New York, New York. The underwriters are being represented in connection with this offering by Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc. as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2017, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2017, appearing in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, have been incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference, and upon the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

This prospectus supplement and accompanying base prospectus are part of the registration statement on Form S-3 (File No. 333-217861) we filed with the SEC under the Securities Act and do not contain all of the information set forth in the registration statement. Whenever a reference is made in this prospectus supplement or accompanying base prospectus to any of our contracts, agreements or other documents, the reference may not be complete and you should refer to the exhibits that are a part of the registration statement or the exhibits to the reports or other documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying base prospectus for a copy of such contract, agreement or other document.

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any reports or other information that we file with the SEC at the SEC's Public Reference Room located at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington D.C. 20549. You may also receive copies of these documents upon payment of a duplicating fee, by writing to the SEC's Public Reference Room. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room in Washington D.C. and other locations. Our SEC filings are also available to you, free of charge, on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also obtain additional information by visiting our website at <http://www.interceptpharma.com>. The information contained on or accessible through our website is not incorporated by reference into, and should not be considered part of, this prospectus supplement or the accompanying base prospectus. We have included our website address in this prospectus supplement as an inactive textual reference only.

S-21

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information into this prospectus supplement which has been previously filed with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document filed separately with the SEC. The information incorporated by reference is deemed to be part of this prospectus supplement, except for any information superseded by information included or subsequently incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. We have filed the documents listed below with the SEC under the Exchange Act, and these documents are incorporated herein by reference:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, filed with the SEC on February 28, 2018; our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 5, 2018, February 16, 2018, March 26, 2018 and April 4, 2018;

The information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016 from our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on May 1, 2017; and the description of our common stock set forth in our registration statement on Form 8-A, filed with the SEC on September 27, 2012, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

All documents that we file (but not those that we furnish) with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus supplement and prior to the termination of the offering of shares of common stock hereby will be deemed to be incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and will automatically update and supersede the information in this prospectus supplement and any previously filed document.

We will provide to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom a copy of this prospectus supplement is delivered, a copy of any or all of the information that has been incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement but not delivered with this prospectus supplement (other than the exhibits to such documents which are not specifically incorporated by reference herein). We will provide this information at no cost to the requester upon written or oral request to:

Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
10 Hudson Yards, 37th Floor
New York, New York 10001
Attn: Investor Relations
Phone: (646) 747-1000

S-22

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSPECTUS

INTERCEPT PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

**Debt Securities
Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Depositary Shares
Purchase Contracts
Purchase Units
Warrants**

We may issue securities from time to time in one or more offerings. This prospectus describes the general terms of these securities and the general manner in which these securities will be offered. We will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. The prospectus supplements will also describe the specific manner in which these securities will be offered and may also supplement, update or amend information contained in this document. This prospectus may be used to offer shares of our common stock for the account of persons other than us, whom we refer to in this prospectus as selling stockholders. You should read this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest.

We or any selling stockholders may offer these securities in amounts, at prices and on terms determined at the time of offering. The securities may be sold directly to you, through agents, or through underwriters and dealers. If agents, underwriters or dealers are used to sell the securities, we will name them and describe their compensation in a prospectus supplement. Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we will not receive any proceeds from the sale of common stock by any selling stockholders.

Our common stock trades on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ICPT.

Investing in these securities involves significant risks. See Risk Factors included in any accompanying prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus for a discussion of the factors you should carefully consider before deciding to purchase these securities.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is May 10, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>INTERCEPT PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>CONSOLIDATED RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>SELLING STOCKHOLDERS</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND PURCHASE UNITS</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>FORMS OF SECURITIES</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	<u>35</u>
<u>EXPERTS</u>	<u>35</u>

i

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, which we refer to as the SEC, utilizing a shelf registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may from time to time sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings, and selling stockholders may from time to time sell shares of common stock described in this prospectus in one or more offerings.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we or selling stockholders may offer. Each time we or selling stockholders sell securities, we will provide one or more prospectus supplements that will contain specific information about the terms of the offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** beginning on page 3 of this prospectus.

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with information different from that contained in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or in any related free writing prospectus filed by us with the SEC. We do not take any responsibility for, and cannot provide any assurance as to the reliability of, any information other than the information in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or in any related free writing prospectus filed by us with the SEC. This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the securities described in this prospectus or such prospectus supplement or an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy such securities in any circumstances in which such offer or solicitation is unlawful. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, the documents incorporated by reference and any related free writing prospectus is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed materially since those dates.

Unless the context otherwise indicates, references in this prospectus to **we**, **our**, **us** and **the Company** refer, collectively, to Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its consolidated subsidiaries.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves significant risks. You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement, including the risk factors set forth in our filings with the SEC that are incorporated by reference herein, including the risk factors in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016 and in our subsequent periodic and current reports filed with the SEC, before making an investment decision pursuant to this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement relating to a specific offering.

Our business, financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected by any or all of these risks or by additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial that may adversely affect us in the future.

2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. Copies of certain information filed by us with the SEC are also available on our website at <http://www.interceptpharma.com>. Our website is not a part of this prospectus and is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You may also read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room, 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room.

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the SEC. This prospectus omits some information contained in the registration statement in accordance with SEC rules and regulations. You should review the information and exhibits in the registration statement for further information on us and our consolidated subsidiaries and the securities we are offering. Statements in this prospectus concerning any document we filed as an exhibit to the registration statement or that we otherwise filed with the SEC are not intended to be comprehensive and are qualified by reference to these filings. You should review the complete document to evaluate these statements.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference in this prospectus much of the information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those publicly available documents. The information that we incorporate by reference in this prospectus is considered to be part of this prospectus. Because we are incorporating by reference future filings with the SEC, this prospectus is continually updated and those future filings may modify or supersede some of the information included or incorporated in this prospectus. This means that you must look at all of the SEC filings that we incorporate by reference to determine if any of the statements in this prospectus or in any document previously incorporated by reference have been modified or superseded. This prospectus incorporates by reference the documents listed below (File No. 001-35668) and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act (in each case, other than those documents or the portions of those documents not deemed to be filed) until the offering of the securities under the registration statement is terminated or completed:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, including the information specifically incorporated by reference into the Annual Report on Form 10-K from our definitive proxy statement for the 2017 Annual Meeting of Stockholders;

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the three months ended March 31, 2017;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on February 23, 2017 (solely with respect to Item 5.02); and

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed on September 27, 2012, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

You may request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following address or phone number:

Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
10 Hudson Yards, 37th Floor
New York, New York 10001
Attn: Investor Relations
Phone: (646) 747-1000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus include forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. All statements other than statements of historical facts contained or incorporated by reference herein, including statements regarding our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenue, projected costs, prospects, plans, objectives of management and expected market growth are forward-looking statements. The words anticipate, believe, estimate, expect, intend, may, plan, predict, project, possible, could, should, continue, and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. We cannot guarantee that we actually will achieve the plans, intentions or expectations expressed or implied in our forward-looking statements. There are a number of important factors that could cause actual results, levels of activity, performance or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements we make. These important factors include our critical accounting estimates described in Part II, Item 7 Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations Critical Accounting Policies and Estimates of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and the factors set forth under the caption Risk Factors in Part I, Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, as may be updated in our subsequent periodic and current reports filed with the SEC. Although we may elect to update forward-looking statements in the future, we specifically disclaim any obligation to do so, even if our estimates change, and readers should not rely on those forward-looking statements as representing our views as of any date subsequent to the date of this prospectus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERCEPT PHARMACEUTICALS, INC.

We are a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of novel therapeutics to treat non-viral, progressive liver diseases with high unmet medical need utilizing our proprietary bile acid chemistry.

Our marketed product and clinical product candidates have the potential to treat orphan and more prevalent liver diseases for which, currently, there are limited therapeutic solutions.

Our principal executive offices are located at 10 Hudson Yards, 37th Floor, New York, New York 10001, and our telephone number is (646) 747-1000.

6

TABLE OF CONTENTS**CONSOLIDATED RATIOS OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

Our earnings were inadequate to cover fixed charges for the three months ended March 31, 2017 and for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013 and 2012. The amount of the deficiency by which our earnings did not cover our fixed charges for each such period is disclosed in the table below.

	Three Months Ended March 31, 2017 (unaudited)	Years Ended December 31, (in thousands)				
		2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Deficiency	\$ (89,930)	\$ (412,830)	\$ (226,429)	\$ (283,226)	\$ (67,792)	\$ (43,643)

For purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings are calculated as follows: (i) adding (a) pretax income (loss) from continuing operations; (b) fixed charges; (c) amortization of capitalized interest; (d) distributed income of equity investees; and (e) our share of pretax losses of equity investees for which charges arising from guarantees are included in fixed charges; and (ii) then subtracting from such sum (A) interest capitalized; and (B) any net income attributable to non-controlling interests. Fixed charges are calculated as the sum of (1) interest costs (both expensed and capitalized); (2) amortization of debt expense and discount or premium relating to any indebtedness; and (3) that portion of rental expense that is representative of the interest factor.

This information should be read in conjunction with our consolidated financial statements and the accompanying notes incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of any securities offered under this prospectus for general corporate purposes unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement. General corporate purposes may include the acquisition of products, technologies or businesses, repayment and refinancing of debt, working capital and capital expenditures. We may temporarily invest the net proceeds in investment-grade, interest-bearing securities until they are used for their stated purpose. We have not determined the amount of net proceeds to be used specifically for such purposes. As a result, management will retain broad discretion over the allocation of net proceeds.

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we will not receive any proceeds from the sale of common stock by any selling stockholders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SELLING STOCKHOLDERS

In addition to covering the offering of the securities by us, this prospectus covers the offering for resale of common stock by selling stockholders. Information about selling stockholders, if any, will be set forth in a prospectus supplement, in an amendment to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part or in other filings we make with the SEC under the Exchange Act, which are incorporated by reference.

9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

We may offer debt securities which may be senior or subordinated. We refer to the senior debt securities and the subordinated debt securities collectively as debt securities. The following description summarizes the general terms and provisions of the debt securities. We will describe the specific terms of the debt securities and the extent, if any, to which the general provisions summarized below apply to any series of debt securities in the prospectus supplement relating to the series and any applicable free writing prospectus that we authorize to be delivered. When we refer to the Company, we, our, and us in this section, we mean Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc. excluding, unless the context otherwise requires or as otherwise expressly stated, our subsidiaries.

We may issue senior debt securities from time to time, in one or more series under a senior indenture to be entered into between us and a senior trustee to be named in a prospectus supplement, which we refer to as the senior trustee. We may issue subordinated debt securities from time to time, in one or more series under a subordinated indenture to be entered into between us and a subordinated trustee to be named in a prospectus supplement, which we refer to as the subordinated trustee. The forms of senior indenture and subordinated indenture are filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. Together, the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture are referred to as the indentures and, together, the senior trustee and the subordinated trustee are referred to as the trustees. This prospectus briefly outlines some of the provisions of the indentures. The following summary of the material provisions of the indentures is qualified in its entirety by the provisions of the indentures, including definitions of certain terms used in the indentures. Wherever we refer to particular sections or defined terms of the indentures, those sections or defined terms are incorporated by reference in this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement. You should review the indentures that are filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part for additional information.

None of the indentures will limit the amount of debt securities that we may issue. The applicable indenture will provide that debt securities may be issued up to an aggregate principal amount authorized from time to time by us and may be payable in any currency or currency unit designated by us or in amounts determined by reference to an index.

General

The senior debt securities will constitute our unsubordinated general obligations and will rank pari passu with our other unsubordinated obligations. The subordinated debt securities will constitute our subordinated general obligations and will be junior in right of payment to our senior indebtedness (including senior debt securities), as described under the heading Certain Terms of the Subordinated Debt Securities Subordination.

The debt securities will be our unsecured obligations unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Any secured debt or other secured obligations will be effectively senior to the debt securities to the extent of the value of the assets securing such debt or other obligations.

The applicable prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus will include any additional or different terms of the debt securities of any series being offered, including the following terms:

- the title and type of the debt securities;
- whether the debt securities will be senior or subordinated debt securities, and, with respect to debt securities issued under the subordinated indenture the terms on which they are subordinated;
- the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

the price or prices at which we will sell the debt securities;
the maturity date or dates of the debt securities and the right, if any, to extend such date or dates;
the rate or rates, if any, per year, at which the debt securities will bear interest, or the method of determining such rate or rates;

10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest will be payable or the manner of determination of such interest payment dates and the related record dates;
the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of that extension;
the manner of paying principal and interest and the place or places where principal and interest will be payable;
provisions for a sinking fund, purchase fund or other analogous fund, if any;
any redemption dates, prices, obligations and restrictions on the debt securities;
the currency, currencies or currency units in which the debt securities will be denominated and the currency, currencies or currency units in which principal and interest, if any, on the debt securities may be payable;
any conversion or exchange features of the debt securities;
whether and upon what terms the debt securities may be defeased;
any events of default or covenants in addition to or in lieu of those set forth in the indenture;
whether the debt securities will be issued in definitive or global form or in definitive form only upon satisfaction of certain conditions;
whether the series of debt securities will be guaranteed as to payment or performance;
if the debt securities of the series or, if applicable, any guarantees will be secured by any collateral and, if so, a general description of the collateral and the terms and provisions of such collateral security, pledge or other agreements; and
any other material terms of the debt securities.

The applicable prospectus supplement will also describe any applicable material U.S. federal income tax consequences.

When we refer to principal in this section with reference to the debt securities, we are also referring to premium, if any.

We may from time to time, without notice to or the consent of the holders of any series of debt securities, create and issue further debt securities of any such series ranking equally with the debt securities of such series in all respects (or in all respects other than (1) the payment of interest accruing prior to the issue date of such further debt securities or (2) the first payment of interest following the issue date of such further debt securities). Such further debt securities may be consolidated and form a single series with the debt securities of such series and have the same terms as to status, redemption or otherwise as the debt securities of such series.

You may present debt securities for exchange and you may present debt securities for transfer in the manner, at the places and subject to the restrictions set forth in the debt securities and the applicable prospectus supplement. We will provide you those services without charge, although you may have to pay any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with any exchange or transfer, as set forth in the indenture.

Debt securities may bear interest at a fixed rate or a floating rate. Debt securities bearing no interest or interest at a rate that at the time of issuance is below the prevailing market rate (original issue discount securities) may be sold at a discount below their stated principal amount.

We may issue debt securities with the principal amount payable on any principal payment date, or the amount of interest payable on any interest payment date, to be determined by reference to one or more currency exchange rates, securities or baskets of securities, commodity prices or indices. You may receive a payment of principal on any principal payment date, or a payment of interest on any interest payment date, that is greater than or less than the amount of principal or interest otherwise payable on such dates, depending

TABLE OF CONTENTS

on the value on such dates of the applicable currency, security or basket of securities, commodity or index. Information as to the methods for determining the amount of principal or interest payable on any date, the currencies, securities or baskets of securities, commodities or indices to which the amount payable on such date is linked.

Certain Terms of the Senior Debt Securities

Covenants. Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement, the senior debt securities will not contain any financial or restrictive covenants, including covenants restricting either us or any of our subsidiaries from incurring, issuing, assuming or guaranteeing any indebtedness secured by a lien on any of our or our subsidiaries' property or capital stock, or restricting either us or any of our subsidiaries from entering into sale and leaseback transactions.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets. Unless we indicate otherwise in a 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, in either case, unless:

the successor entity, if any, is a U.S. corporation, limited liability company, partnership or trust (subject to certain exceptions provided for in the senior indenture);

the successor entity assumes our obligations on the senior debt securities and under the senior 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.

No Protection in the Event of a Change in Control. Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement with respect to a particular series of senior debt securities, the senior debt securities will not contain any provisions that may afford holders of the senior debt securities protection in the event we have a change in control or in the event of a highly leveraged transaction (whether or not such transaction results in a change in control).

Events of Default. Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement with respect to a particular series of senior debt securities, the following are events of default under the senior indenture for any series of senior debt securities:

failure to pay interest on any senior debt securities of such series when due and payable, if that default continues for a period of 90 days (or such other period as may be specified for such series);

failure to pay principal on the senior debt securities of such series when due and payable whether at maturity, upon redemption, by declaration or otherwise (and, if specified for such series, the continuance of such failure for a specified period);

default in the performance of or breach of any of our covenants or agreements in the senior indenture applicable to senior debt securities of such series, other than a covenant breach which is specifically dealt with elsewhere in the senior indenture, and that default or breach continues for a period of 90 days after we receive written notice from the trustee or from the holders of 25% or more in aggregate principal amount of the senior debt securities of such series;

certain events of bankruptcy or insolvency, whether or not voluntary; and any other event of default provided for in such series of senior debt securities as may be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement, the default by us under any other debt, including any other series of debt securities, is not a default under the senior indenture.

If an event of default other than an event of default specified in the fourth bullet point above occurs with respect to a series of senior debt securities and is continuing under the senior indenture, then, and in each

TABLE OF CONTENTS

such case, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of such series then outstanding under the senior indenture (each such series voting as a separate class) by written notice to us and to the trustee, if such notice is given by the holders, may, and the trustee at the request of such holders shall, declare the principal amount of and accrued interest on such series of senior debt securities to be immediately due and payable, and upon this declaration, the same shall become immediately due and payable.

If an event of default specified in the fourth bullet point above occurs with respect to us and is continuing, the entire principal amount of and accrued interest, if any, on each series of senior debt securities then outstanding shall become immediately due and payable.

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement relating to a series of senior debt securities originally issued at a discount, the amount due upon acceleration shall include only the original issue price of the senior debt securities, the amount of original issue discount accrued to the date of acceleration and accrued interest, if any.

Upon certain conditions, declarations of acceleration may be rescinded and annulled and past defaults may be waived by the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of all the senior debt securities of such series affected by the default, each series voting as a separate class. Furthermore, prior to a declaration of acceleration and subject to various provisions in the senior indenture, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of a series of senior debt securities, by notice to the trustee, may waive an existing default or event of default with respect to such senior debt securities and its consequences, except a default in the payment of principal of or interest on such senior debt securities or in respect of a covenant or provision of the senior indenture which cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holders of each such senior debt security. Upon any such waiver, such default shall cease to exist, and any event of default with respect to such senior debt securities shall be deemed to have been cured, for every purpose of the senior indenture; but no such waiver shall extend to any subsequent or other default or event of default or impair any right consequent thereto. For information as to the waiver of defaults, see Modification and Waiver.

The holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of a series of senior debt securities may 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 with respect to such senior debt securities. However, the trustee may refuse to follow any direction that conflicts with law or the senior indenture, that may involve the trustee in personal liability or that the trustee determines in good faith may be unduly prejudicial to the rights of holders of such series of senior debt securities not joining in the giving of such direction and may take any other action it deems proper that is not inconsistent with any such direction received from holders of such series of senior debt securities. A holder may not pursue any remedy with respect to the senior indenture or any series of senior debt securities unless:

- the holder gives the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;
- the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of such series of senior debt securities make a written request to the trustee to pursue the remedy in respect of such event of default;
- the requesting holder or holders offer the trustee indemnity satisfactory to the trustee against any costs, liability or expense;
- the trustee does not comply with the request within 60 days after receipt of the request and the offer of indemnity; and during such 60-day period, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of such series of senior debt securities do not give the trustee a direction that is inconsistent with the request.

These limitations, however, do not apply to the right of any holder of a senior debt security to receive payment of the principal of and interest, if any, on such senior debt security in accordance with the terms of such debt security, or to bring suit for the enforcement of any such payment in accordance with the terms of such debt security, on or after the due date for the senior debt securities, which right shall not be impaired or affected without the consent of the holder.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The senior indenture requires certain of our officers to certify, on or before a fixed date in each year in which any senior debt security is outstanding, as to their knowledge of our compliance with all covenants, agreements and conditions under the senior indenture.

Satisfaction and Discharge. We can satisfy and discharge our obligations to holders of any series of senior debt securities if:

we pay or cause to be paid, as and when due and payable, the principal of and any interest on all senior debt securities of such series outstanding under the senior indenture; or all senior debt securities of such series have become due and payable or will become due and payable within one year (or are to be called for redemption within one year) and we deposit in trust a combination of cash and U.S. government or U.S. government agency obligations that will generate enough cash to make interest, principal and any other payments on the debt securities of that series on their various due dates.

Under current U.S. federal income tax law, the deposit and our legal release from the senior debt securities would be treated as a taxable event, and beneficial owners of such debt securities would generally recognize any gain or loss on such senior debt securities. Purchasers of the senior debt securities should consult their own advisers with respect to the tax consequences to them of such deposit and discharge, including the applicability and effect of tax laws other than the U.S. federal income tax law.

Defeasance. Unless the applicable prospectus supplement provides otherwise, the following discussion of legal defeasance and discharge and covenant defeasance will apply to any senior series of senior debt securities issued under the indentures.

Legal Defeasance. We can legally release ourselves from any payment or other obligations on the senior debt securities of any series (called legal defeasance) if certain conditions are met, including the following:

We deposit in trust for your benefit and the benefit of all other direct holders of the senior debt securities of the same series a combination of cash and U.S. government or U.S. government agency obligations that will generate enough cash to make interest, principal and any other payments on the senior debt securities of that series on their various due dates.

There is a change in current U.S. federal income tax law or an IRS ruling that lets us make the above deposit without causing you to be taxed on the senior debt securities any differently than if we did not make the deposit and instead repaid the senior debt securities ourselves when due.

We deliver to the trustee a legal opinion of our counsel confirming the tax law change or ruling described above.

If we ever did accomplish legal defeasance, as described above, you would have to rely solely on the trust deposit for repayment of the debt securities. You could not look to us for repayment in the event of any shortfall.

Covenant Defeasance. Without any change of current U.S. federal tax law, we can make the same type of deposit described above and be released from some of the covenants in the senior debt securities (called covenant defeasance).

In that event, you would lose the protection of those covenants but would gain the protection of having money and securities set aside in trust to repay the debt senior securities. In order to achieve covenant defeasance, we must do the following (among other things):

We must deposit in trust for your benefit and the benefit of all other direct holders of the senior debt securities of the same series a combination of cash and U.S. government or U.S. government agency obligations that will generate enough cash to make interest, principal and any other payments on the senior debt securities of that series on their various due dates.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

We must deliver to the trustee a legal opinion of our counsel confirming that under current U.S. federal income tax law we may make the above deposit without causing you to be taxed on the senior debt securities any differently than if we did not make the deposit and instead repaid the debt securities ourselves when due.

If we accomplish covenant defeasance, you can still look to us for repayment of the senior debt securities if there were a shortfall in the trust deposit. In fact, if one of the events of default occurred (such as our bankruptcy) and the debt securities become immediately due and payable, there may be such a shortfall. Depending on the events causing the default, you may not be able to obtain payment of the shortfall.

Modification and Waiver. We and the trustee may amend or supplement the senior indenture or the senior debt securities without the consent of any holder:

to convey, transfer, assign, mortgage or pledge any assets as security for the senior debt securities of one or more series;

to evidence the succession of a corporation, limited liability company, partnership or trust to us, and the assumption by such successor of our covenants, agreements and obligations under the senior indenture;

to add to our covenants such new covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions for the protection of the holders, and to make the occurrence, or the occurrence and continuance, of a default in any such additional covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions an event of default;

to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency in the senior indenture or in any supplemental indenture or to conform the senior indenture or the senior debt securities to the description of senior debt securities of such series set forth in this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement;

to provide for or add guarantors with respect to the senior debt securities of any series;

to establish the form or forms or terms of the senior debt securities as permitted by the senior indenture;

to evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment under the senior indenture by a successor trustee, or to make such changes as shall be necessary to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts in the senior indenture by more than one trustee;

to add to, delete from or revise the conditions, limitations and restrictions on the authorized amount, terms, purposes of issue, authentication and delivery of any series of senior debt securities;

to make any change to the senior debt securities of any series so long as no senior debt securities of such series are outstanding; or

to make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder in any material respect.

Other amendments and modifications of the senior indenture or the senior debt securities issued may be made, and our compliance with any provision of the senior indenture with respect to any series of senior debt securities may be waived, with the consent of the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding senior debt securities of all series affected by the amendment or modification (voting together as a single class); provided,

however, that each affected holder must consent to any modification, amendment or waiver that:

extends the final maturity of any senior debt securities of such series;

reduces the principal amount of any senior debt securities of such series;

reduces the rate or extends the time of payment of interest on any senior debt securities of such series;

reduces the amount payable upon the redemption of any senior debt securities of such series;

changes the currency of payment of principal of or interest on any senior debt securities of such series;

TABLE OF CONTENTS

reduces the principal amount of original issue discount securities payable upon acceleration of maturity or the amount provable in bankruptcy;

waives a default in the payment of principal of or interest on the senior debt securities; changes the provisions relating to the waiver of past defaults or changes or impairs the right of holders to receive payment or to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment or conversion of any senior debt securities of such series on or after the due date therefor; modifies any of the provisions of these restrictions on amendments and modifications, except to increase any required percentage or to provide that certain other provisions cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each senior debt security of such series affected by the modification; or reduces the above-stated percentage of outstanding senior debt securities of such series whose holders must consent to a supplemental indenture or to modify or amend or to waive certain provisions of or defaults under the senior indenture.

It shall not be necessary for the holders to approve the particular form of any proposed amendment, supplement or waiver, but it shall be sufficient if the holders' consent approves the substance thereof. After an amendment, supplement or waiver of the senior indenture in accordance with the provisions described in this section becomes effective, the trustee must give to the holders affected thereby certain notice briefly describing the amendment, supplement or waiver. Any failure by the trustee to give such notice, or any defect therein, shall not, however, in any way impair or affect the validity of any such amendment, supplemental indenture or waiver.

No Personal Liability of Incorporators, Stockholders, Officers, Directors. The senior indenture provides that no recourse shall be had under any obligation, covenant or agreement of ours in the senior indenture or any supplemental indenture, or in any of the senior debt securities or because of the creation of any indebtedness represented thereby, against any of our incorporators, stockholders, officers or directors, past, present or future, or of any predecessor or successor entity thereof under any law, statute or constitutional provision or by the enforcement of any assessment or by any legal or equitable proceeding or otherwise. Each holder, by accepting the senior debt securities, waives and releases all such liability.

Concerning the Trustee. The senior indenture provides that, except during the continuance of an event of default, the trustee will not be liable except for the performance of such duties as are specifically set forth in the senior indenture. If an event of default has occurred and is continuing, the trustee will exercise such rights and powers vested in it under the senior indenture and will use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent person would exercise under the circumstances in the conduct of such person's own affairs.

The senior indenture and the provisions of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, or Trust Indenture Act, incorporated by reference therein contain limitations on the rights of the trustee thereunder, should it become a creditor of ours or any of our subsidiaries, to obtain payment of claims in certain cases or to realize on certain property received by it in respect of any such claims, as security or otherwise. The trustee is permitted to engage in other transactions, provided that if it acquires any conflicting interest (as defined in the Trust Indenture Act), it must eliminate such conflict or resign.

We may have normal banking relationships with the senior trustee in the ordinary course of business.

Unclaimed Funds. All funds deposited with the trustee or any paying agent for the payment of principal, premium, interest or additional amounts in respect of the senior debt securities that remain unclaimed for two years after the date upon which such principal, premium or interest became due and payable will be repaid to us. Thereafter, any right of any holder of senior debt securities to such funds shall be enforceable only against us, and the trustee and paying agents will have no liability therefor.

Governing Law. The senior indenture and the senior debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Certain Terms of the Subordinated Debt Securities

Other than the terms of the subordinated indenture and subordinated debt securities relating to subordination or otherwise as described in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of subordinated debt securities, the terms of the subordinated indenture and subordinated debt securities are identical in all material respects to the terms of the senior indenture and senior debt securities.

Additional or different subordination terms may be specified in the prospectus supplement applicable to a particular series.

Subordination. The indebtedness evidenced by the subordinated debt securities is subordinate to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness, as defined in the subordinated indenture. During the continuance beyond any applicable grace period of any default in the payment of principal, premium, interest or any other payment due on any of our senior indebtedness, we may not make any payment of principal of or interest on the subordinated debt securities (except for certain sinking fund payments). In addition, upon any payment or distribution of our assets upon any dissolution, winding-up, liquidation or reorganization, the payment of the principal of and interest on the subordinated debt securities will be subordinated to the extent provided in the subordinated indenture in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all our senior indebtedness. Because of this subordination, if we dissolve or otherwise liquidate, holders of our subordinated debt securities may receive less, ratably, than holders of our senior indebtedness. The subordination provisions do not prevent the occurrence of an event of default under the subordinated indenture.

The term *senior indebtedness* of a person means with respect to such person the principal of, premium, if any, interest on, and any other payment due pursuant to any of the following, whether outstanding on the date of the subordinated indenture or incurred by that person in the future:

- all of the indebtedness of that person for money borrowed;
- all of the indebtedness of that person evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds or other securities sold by that person for money;
- all of the lease obligations which are capitalized on the books of that person in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;
 - all indebtedness of others of the kinds described in the first two bullet points above and all lease obligations of others of the kind described in the third bullet point above that the person, in any manner, assumes or guarantees or that the person in effect guarantees through an agreement to purchase, whether that agreement is contingent or otherwise; and
- all renewals, extensions or refundings of indebtedness of the kinds described in the first, second or fourth bullet point above and all renewals or extensions of leases of the kinds described in the third or fourth bullet point above;
 - unless, in the case of any particular indebtedness, renewal, extension or refunding, the instrument creating or evidencing it or the assumption or guarantee relating to it expressly provides that such indebtedness, renewal, extension or refunding is not superior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities. Our senior debt securities constitute senior indebtedness for purposes of the subordinated debt indenture.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock is intended as a summary only. This description is based upon, and is qualified by reference to, our restated certificate of incorporation, as amended, or our restated certificate of incorporation, our restated bylaws and applicable provisions of Delaware corporate law. This summary is not complete. You should read our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws, which are filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part, for the provisions that are important to you.

At our 2016 annual meeting held on July 19, 2016, our stockholders approved an amendment to our restated certificate of incorporation to increase the number of authorized shares of common stock from 35,000,000 shares to 45,000,000 shares. Our authorized capital stock consists of 45,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.001 par value per share, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.001 par value per share. As of April 28, 2017, 25,009,178 shares of common stock were outstanding, and no shares of preferred stock were outstanding. In addition, as of April 28, 2017, we also had outstanding options to purchase 1,906,066 shares of our common stock and restricted stock units to purchase 494,606 shares of our common stock.

Common Stock

Annual Meeting. Annual meetings of our stockholders are held on the date designated in accordance with our restated bylaws. Written notice must be mailed to each stockholder entitled to vote not less than ten nor more than 60 days before the date of the meeting. The presence in person or by proxy of the holders of record of a majority of our issued and outstanding shares entitled to vote at such meeting constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the stockholders. Special meetings of the stockholders may be called for any purpose only by our board of directors pursuant to a resolution adopted by a majority of the total number of directors. Except as may be otherwise provided by applicable law, our restated certificate of incorporation or our restated bylaws, all elections shall be decided by a plurality, and all other questions shall be decided by a majority, of the votes cast by stockholders entitled to vote thereon at a duly held meeting of stockholders at which a quorum is present.

Voting Rights. 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 and do not have cumulative voting rights.

Dividends. Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding shares of preferred stock, holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably such dividends, if any, as may be declared from time to time by our board of directors out of funds legally available for dividend payments.

Liquidation and Dissolution. In the event of any liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of our affairs, holders of common stock will be entitled to share ratably in any of our assets remaining after payment or provision for payment of all of our debts and obligations and after liquidation payments to holders of outstanding shares of preferred stock, if any.

Other Rights. The holders of common stock have no preferences or rights of conversion, exchange, pre-emptive or other subscription rights. There are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to the common stock.

Transfer Agent and Registrar. VStock Transfer, LLC is transfer agent and registrar for the common stock.

NASDAQ Global Select Market. Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the

symbol ICPT.

Preferred Stock

As of April 28, 2017, no shares of preferred stock were outstanding. Other terms of any series of preferred stock will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock. The terms of any series of preferred stock may differ from the terms described below. Certain provisions of the preferred stock described below and in any applicable prospectus supplement are not complete.

18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

We are authorized to issue blank check preferred stock, which may be issued in one or more series upon authorization of our board of directors. Our board of directors is authorized to fix the designation of the series, the number of authorized shares of the series, dividend rights and terms, conversion rights, voting rights, redemption rights and terms, liquidation preferences and any other rights, powers, preferences and limitations applicable to each series of preferred stock. The authorized shares of our preferred stock are available for issuance without further action by our stockholders, unless such action is required by applicable law or the rules of any stock exchange on which our securities may be listed. If the approval of our stockholders is not required for the issuance of shares of our preferred stock, our board may determine not to seek stockholder approval. The specific terms of any series of preferred stock offered pursuant to this prospectus will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock.

A series of our preferred stock could, depending on the terms of such series, impede the completion of a merger, tender offer or other takeover attempt. Our board of directors will make any determination to issue such shares based upon its judgment as to the best interests of our stockholders. Our directors, in so acting, could issue preferred stock having terms that could discourage an acquisition attempt through which an acquirer may be able to change the composition of our board of directors, including a tender offer or other transaction that some, or a majority, of our stockholders might believe to be in their best interests or in which stockholders might receive a premium for their stock over the then-current market price of the stock.

The preferred stock has the terms described below unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of preferred stock. You should read the prospectus supplement relating to the particular series of preferred stock being offered for specific terms, including:

the designation and stated value per share of the preferred stock and the number of shares offered;
the amount of liquidation preference per share;
the price at which the preferred stock will be issued;

the dividend rate, or method of calculation of dividends, the dates on which dividends will be payable, whether dividends will be cumulative or noncumulative and, if cumulative, the dates from which dividends will commence to accumulate;

any redemption or sinking fund provisions;
if other than the currency of the United States, the currency or currencies including composite currencies in which the preferred stock is denominated and/or in which payments will or may be payable;
any conversion provisions;

whether we have elected to offer depositary shares as described below under Description of Depositary Shares; and any other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions on the preferred stock.

The preferred stock will, when issued, be fully paid and nonassessable. Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, each series of preferred stock will rank equally as to dividends and liquidation rights in all respects with each other series of preferred stock. The rights of holders of shares of each series of preferred stock will be subordinate to those of our general creditors.

As described under Description of Depositary Shares, we may, at our option, with respect to any series of preferred stock, elect to offer fractional interests in shares of preferred stock, and provide for the issuance of depositary receipts representing depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest in a share of the series of preferred stock. The fractional interest will be specified in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of preferred stock.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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

senior to our common stock and to all equity securities ranking junior to such preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs;
on a parity with all equity securities issued by us, the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank on a parity with the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and
junior to all equity securities issued by us, the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank senior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

The term equity securities does not include convertible debt securities.

Dividends. Holders of the preferred stock of each series will be entitled to receive, when, as and if declared by our board of directors, cash dividends at such rates and on such dates described in the prospectus supplement. Different series of preferred stock may be entitled to dividends at different rates or based on different methods of calculation. The dividend rate may be fixed or variable or both. Dividends will be payable to the holders of record as they appear on our stock books on record dates fixed by our board of directors, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Dividends on any series of preferred stock may be cumulative or noncumulative, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If our board of directors does not declare a dividend payable on a dividend payment date on any series of noncumulative preferred stock, then the holders of that noncumulative preferred stock will have no right to receive a dividend for that dividend payment date, and we will have no obligation to pay the dividend accrued for that period, whether or not dividends on that series are declared payable on any future dividend payment dates. Dividends on any series of cumulative preferred stock will accrue from the date we initially issue shares of such series or such other date specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

No dividends may be declared or paid or funds set apart for the payment of any dividends on any parity securities unless full dividends have been paid or set apart for payment on the preferred stock. If full dividends are not paid, the preferred stock will share dividends pro rata with the parity securities.

No dividends may be declared or paid or funds set apart for the payment of dividends on any junior securities unless full dividends for all dividend periods terminating on or prior to the date of the declaration or payment will have been paid or declared and a sum sufficient for the payment set apart for payment on the preferred stock.

Liquidation Preference. Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, then, before we make any distribution or payment to the holders of any common stock or any other class or series of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, the holders of each series of preferred stock shall be entitled to receive out of assets legally available for distribution to stockholders, liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference per share set forth in the prospectus supplement, plus any accrued and unpaid dividends thereon. Such dividends will not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid noncumulative dividends for prior dividend periods. Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, after payment of the full amount of their liquidating distributions, the holders of preferred stock will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. Upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, if our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all other classes or series of our capital stock ranking on parity with the preferred stock and all other such classes or series of shares of capital

stock ranking on parity with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets, then the holders of the preferred stock and all other such classes or series of capital stock will share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be entitled.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Upon any such liquidation, dissolution or winding up and if we have made liquidating distributions in full to all holders of preferred stock, we will distribute our remaining assets among the holders of any other classes or series of capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock according to their respective rights and preferences and, in each case, according to their respective number of shares. For such purposes, our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation, trust or entity, or the sale, lease or conveyance of all or substantially all of our property or assets will not be deemed to constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

Redemption. If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, as a whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in such prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of preferred stock that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares of preferred stock that shall be redeemed by us in each year commencing after a date to be specified, at a redemption price per share to be specified, together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends thereon to the date of redemption. Unless the shares have a cumulative dividend, such accrued dividends will not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods. We may pay the redemption price in cash or other property, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. If the redemption price for preferred stock of any series is payable only from the net proceeds of the issuance of shares of our capital stock, the terms of such preferred stock may provide that, if no such shares of our capital stock shall have been issued or to the extent the net proceeds from any issuance are insufficient to pay in full the aggregate redemption price then due, such preferred stock shall automatically and mandatorily be converted into the applicable shares of our capital stock pursuant to conversion provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we will not redeem any preferred stock of a series unless:

if that series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period; or

if such series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends for the then current dividend period.

In addition, we will not acquire any preferred stock of a series unless:

if that series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends on all outstanding shares of such series of preferred stock for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period; or

if that series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends on the preferred stock of such series for the then current dividend period.

However, at any time we may purchase or acquire preferred stock of that series (1) pursuant to a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding preferred stock of such series or (2) by conversion into or exchange for shares of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of preferred stock of any series are to be redeemed, we will determine the number of shares that may be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held or for which redemption is requested by such holder or by any other equitable manner that we determine. Such determination will reflect adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement, we will mail notice of redemption at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of record of preferred stock to be redeemed at the address shown on our stock transfer books. Each notice shall state:

the redemption date;

the number of shares and series of preferred stock to be redeemed;

the redemption price;

the place or places where certificates for such preferred stock are to be surrendered for payment of the redemption price;

that dividends on the shares to be redeemed will cease to accrue on such redemption date;

the date on which the holder's conversion rights, if any, as to such shares shall terminate; and

the specific number of shares to be redeemed from each such holder if fewer than all the shares of any series are to be redeemed.

If notice of redemption has been given and we have set aside the funds necessary for such redemption in trust for the benefit of the holders of any shares called for redemption, then from and after the redemption date, dividends will cease to accrue on such shares, and all rights of the holders of such shares will terminate, except the right to receive the redemption price.

Voting Rights. Holders of preferred stock will not have any voting rights, except as required by law or as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise provided for under the terms of any series of preferred stock, no consent or vote of the holders of shares of preferred stock or any series thereof shall be required for any amendment to our restated certificate of incorporation that would increase the number of authorized shares of preferred stock or the number of authorized shares of any series thereof or decrease the number of authorized shares of preferred stock or the number of authorized shares of any series thereof (but not below the number of authorized shares of preferred stock or such series, as the case may be, then outstanding).

Conversion Rights. The terms and conditions, if any, upon which any series of preferred stock is convertible into our common stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating thereto. Such terms will include the number of shares of common stock into which the shares of preferred stock are convertible, the conversion price, rate or manner of calculation thereof, the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at our option or at the option of the holders of the preferred stock, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption.

Transfer Agent and Registrar. The transfer agent and registrar for the preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Effects of Authorized but Unissued Stock

We have shares of common stock and preferred stock available for future issuance without stockholder approval, subject to any limitations imposed by the listing standards of The NASDAQ Global Select Market. We may utilize these additional shares for a variety of corporate purposes, including for future public offerings to raise additional capital, or facilitate corporate acquisitions or for payment as a dividend on our capital stock. The existence of unissued and unreserved common stock and preferred stock may enable our board of directors to issue shares to persons friendly to current management or to issue preferred stock with terms that could have the effect of making it more difficult for a third party to acquire, or could discourage a third party from seeking to acquire, a controlling interest in

our company by means of a merger, tender offer, proxy contest or otherwise. In addition, if we issue preferred stock, the issuance could adversely affect the voting power of holders of common stock, and the likelihood that such holders will receive dividend payments and payments upon liquidation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Anti-Takeover Effects of Delaware Law and Our Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Restated Bylaws

The provisions of Delaware law and our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws could discourage or make it more difficult to accomplish a proxy contest or other change in our management or the acquisition of control by a holder of a substantial amount of our voting stock. 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. These provisions are intended to enhance the likelihood of continuity and stability in the composition of our board of directors and in the policies formulated by the board of directors and to discourage certain types of transactions that may involve an actual or threatened change of our control. These provisions are designed to reduce our vulnerability to an unsolicited acquisition proposal and to discourage certain tactics that may be used in proxy fights. Such provisions also may have the effect of preventing changes in our management.

Delaware Business Combination Statute. We are subject to the anti-takeover provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which we refer to as the DGCL. With some exception, Section 203 of the DGCL prohibits a publicly-held Delaware corporation from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person became an interested stockholder, unless the business combination is, or the transaction in which the person became an interested stockholder was, approved by the board of directors and the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation. The shares held by the interested stockholder are not counted as outstanding when calculating the two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock needed for approval. For purposes of Section 203 of the DGCL, a business combination is defined broadly to include a merger, asset sale or other transaction resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder, and, subject to certain exceptions, an interested stockholder is a person who, together with his or her affiliates and associates, owns, or within three years prior, did own, 15% or more of the corporation's outstanding voting stock.

Advance Notice Provisions for Stockholder Proposals and Stockholder Nominations of Directors. Our restated bylaws provide that, for nominations to the board of directors or for other business to be properly brought by a stockholder before a meeting of stockholders, a stockholder must first have given timely notice of the proposal in writing to our secretary. For an annual meeting, a stockholder's notice generally must be delivered not less than 90 days nor more than 120 days prior to the first anniversary of the previous year's annual meeting date; *provided*, that if the date of the annual meeting is more than 30 days before or more than 30 days after the anniversary of the previous year's annual meeting date, such stockholder's notice must be delivered not earlier than the close of business on the 120th day prior to such annual meeting and not later than the close of business on the later of the 90th day prior to such annual meeting or the close of business on the 10th day following the day on which public announcement of the date of such meeting is first made by us. For a special meeting, the notice must generally be delivered not earlier than the 90th day prior to the meeting and not later than the later of (1) the 60th day prior to the meeting or (2) the 10th day following the day on which public announcement of the meeting is first made. Detailed requirements as to the form of the notice and information required in the notice are specified in the restated bylaws. If it is determined that business was not properly brought before a meeting in accordance with our bylaws provisions, such business will not be conducted at the meeting.

Special Meetings of Stockholders. Special meetings of the stockholders may be called only by our board of directors pursuant to a resolution adopted by a majority of the total number of directors.

No Stockholder Action by Written Consent. Any action to be effected by our stockholders must be effected at a duly called annual or special meeting of the stockholders provided, however, our restated certificate of incorporation

provides that if any one stockholder, together with its affiliates, collectively holds a majority of the voting power of the then-outstanding shares of our capital stock, action may be taken without a meeting and vote, through the written consent of holders of the requisite number of votes necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Directors. We do not have a classified board of directors. All of our directors are elected annually. The number of directors comprising our board of directors is fixed from time to time by the board of directors.

Removal of Directors by Stockholders. Our restated bylaws provide that our directors may be removed with or without cause by the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the votes that all our stockholders would be entitled to cast in an annual election of directors, and our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws provide that any vacancy on our board of directors, including a vacancy resulting from an increase in the size of our board of directors, may be filled only by vote of a majority of our directors then in office.

Super Majority Stockholder Vote Required for Certain Actions. The DGCL provides generally that the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares entitled to vote on any matter is required to amend a corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, unless the corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, as the case may be, requires a greater percentage. Our restated certificate of incorporation requires the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 80% of our outstanding voting stock to amend or repeal any of the provisions discussed in this section of the prospectus entitled *Anti-Takeover Effects of Delaware Law and Our Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Restated Bylaws.*

This 80% stockholder vote would be in addition to any separate class vote that might in the future be required pursuant to the terms of any preferred stock that might then be outstanding. The affirmative vote of at least 80% of our outstanding voting stock is also required for any amendment to, or repeal of, our restated bylaws by the stockholders.

Our restated bylaws may be amended or repealed by a simple majority vote of the board of directors.

Directors Liability

Pursuant to our restated bylaws, we indemnify our directors and our executive officers to the fullest extent permitted by law so that they will be free from undue concern about personal liability in connection with their service to us. We have also purchased a policy of directors and officers liability insurance that insures our directors and officers against the cost of defense, settlement or payment of a judgment under certain circumstances.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

General

We may, at our option, elect to offer fractional shares of preferred stock, which we call depositary shares, rather than full shares of preferred stock. If we do, we will issue to the public receipts, called depositary receipts, for depositary shares, each of which will represent a fraction, to be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, of a share of a particular series of preferred stock. Unless otherwise provided in the prospectus supplement, each owner of a depositary share will be entitled, in proportion to the applicable fractional interest in a share of preferred stock represented by the depositary share, to all the rights and preferences of the preferred stock represented by the depositary share. Those rights include dividend, voting, redemption, conversion and liquidation rights.

The shares of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares will be deposited with a bank or trust company selected by us to act as depositary under a deposit agreement between us, the depositary and the holders of the depositary receipts. The depositary will be the transfer agent, registrar and dividend disbursing agent for the depositary shares.

The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the deposit agreement. Holders of depositary receipts agree to be bound by the deposit agreement, which requires holders to take certain actions such as filing proof of residence and paying certain charges.

The summary of terms of the depositary shares contained in this prospectus is not a complete description of the terms of the depositary shares. You should refer to the form of the deposit agreement, our certificate of incorporation and the certificate of designation for the applicable series of preferred stock that are, or will be, filed with the SEC.

Dividends and Other Distributions

The depositary will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions, if any, received in respect of the preferred stock underlying the depositary shares to the record holders of depositary shares in proportion to the numbers of depositary shares owned by those holders on the relevant record date. The relevant record date for depositary shares will be the same date as the record date for the underlying preferred stock.

If there is a distribution other than in cash, the depositary will distribute property (including securities) received by it to the record holders of depositary shares, unless the depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution. If this occurs, the depositary may, with our approval, adopt another method for the distribution, including selling the property and distributing the net proceeds from the sale to the holders.

Liquidation Preference

If a series of preferred stock underlying the depositary shares has a liquidation preference, in the event of the voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of us, holders of depositary shares will be entitled to receive the fraction of the liquidation preference accorded each share of the applicable series of preferred stock, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Withdrawal of Stock

Unless the related depositary shares have been previously called for redemption, upon surrender of the depositary receipts at the office of the depositary, the holder of the depositary shares will be entitled to delivery, at the office of the depositary to or upon his or her order, of the number of whole shares of the preferred stock and any money or other property represented by the depositary shares. If the depositary receipts delivered by the holder evidence a number of depositary shares in excess of the number of depositary shares representing the number of whole shares of preferred stock to be withdrawn, the depositary will deliver to the holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. In no event will the depositary deliver fractional shares of preferred stock upon surrender of depositary receipts. Holders of preferred stock thus withdrawn may not thereafter deposit those shares under the deposit agreement or receive depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares therefor.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of depositary shares representing shares of the preferred stock so

TABLE OF CONTENTS

redeemed, so long as we have paid in full to the depositary the redemption price of the preferred stock to be redeemed plus an amount equal to any accumulated and unpaid dividends on the preferred stock to the date fixed for redemption. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the redemption price and any other amounts per share payable on the preferred stock multiplied by the fraction of a share of preferred stock represented by one depositary share. If less than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or pro rata or by any other equitable method as may be determined by the depositary.

After the date fixed for redemption, depositary shares called for redemption will no longer be deemed to be outstanding and all rights of the holders of depositary shares will cease, except the right to receive the monies payable upon redemption and any money or other property to which the holders of the depositary shares were entitled upon redemption upon surrender to the depositary of the depositary receipts evidencing the depositary shares.

Voting the Preferred Stock

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in the notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary receipts relating to that preferred stock. The record date for the depositary receipts relating to the preferred stock will be the same date as the record date for the preferred stock. Each record holder of the depositary shares on the record date will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the number of shares of preferred stock represented by that holder's depositary shares. The depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the number of shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares in accordance with those instructions, and we will agree to take all action that may be deemed necessary by the depositary in order to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary will not vote any shares of preferred stock except to the extent it receives specific instructions from the holders of depositary shares representing that number of shares of preferred stock.

Charges of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay transfer, income and other taxes and governmental charges and such other charges (including those in connection with the receipt and distribution of dividends, the sale or exercise of rights, the withdrawal of the preferred stock and the transferring, splitting or grouping of depositary receipts) as are expressly provided in the deposit agreement to be for their accounts. If these charges have not been paid by the holders of depositary receipts, the depositary may refuse to transfer depositary shares, withhold dividends and distributions and sell the depositary shares evidenced by the depositary receipt.

Amendment and Termination of the Deposit Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may be amended by agreement between us and the depositary. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary shares, other than fee changes, will not be effective unless the amendment has been approved by the holders of a majority of the outstanding depositary shares. The deposit agreement may be terminated by the depositary or us only if:

all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed; or

there has been a final distribution of the preferred stock in connection with our dissolution and such distribution has been made to all the holders of depositary shares.

Resignation and Removal of Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may remove the depositary at any time. Any resignation or removal of the depositary will take effect upon our appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. The successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company having its principal office in the United States and having the requisite combined capital and surplus as set forth in the applicable agreement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notices

The depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all notices, reports and other communications, including proxy solicitation materials received from us, that are delivered to the depositary and that we are required to furnish to the holders of the preferred stock. In addition, the depositary will make available for inspection by holders of depositary receipts at the principal office of the depositary, and at such other places as it may from time to time deem advisable, any reports and communications we deliver to the depositary as the holder of preferred stock.

Limitation of Liability

Neither we nor the depositary will be liable if either we or it is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control in performing its obligations. Our obligations and those of the depositary will be limited to performance in good faith of our and their duties thereunder. We and the depositary will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We and the depositary may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, on information provided by persons presenting preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent to give such information and on documents believed to be genuine and to have been signed or presented by the proper party or parties.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS AND PURCHASE UNITS

We may issue purchase contracts, including contracts obligating holders to purchase from or sell to us, and obligating us to sell to or purchase from the holders, a specified number of shares of our common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares at a future date or dates, which we refer to in this prospectus as purchase contracts. The price per share of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares and the number of shares of each may be fixed at the time the purchase contracts are issued or may be determined by reference to a specific formula set forth in the purchase contracts. The purchase contracts may be issued separately or as part of units, often known as purchase units, consisting of one or more purchase contracts and beneficial interests in debt securities or any other securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement or any combination of the foregoing, securing the holders obligations to purchase the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares under the purchase contracts.

The purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the purchase units or vice versa, and these payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations under those contracts in a specified manner, including pledging their interest in another purchase contract.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the purchase contracts and purchase units, including, if applicable, collateral or depositary arrangements.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants to purchase debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares. We may offer warrants separately or together with one or more additional warrants, debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares, or any combination of those securities in the form of units, as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. If we issue warrants as part of a unit, the accompanying prospectus supplement will specify whether those warrants may be separated from the other securities in the unit prior to the expiration date of the warrants. The applicable prospectus supplement will also describe the following terms of any warrants:

- the specific designation and aggregate number of, and the offering price at which we will issue, the warrants;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will begin and the date on which that right will expire or, if you may not continuously exercise the warrants throughout that period, the specific date or dates on which you may exercise the warrants;
- whether the warrants are to be sold separately or with other securities as parts of units;
- whether the warrants will be issued in definitive or global form or in any combination of these forms, although, in any case, the form of a warrant included in a unit will correspond to the form of the unit and of any security included in that unit;
- any applicable material U.S. federal income tax consequences;
- the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants and of any other depositaries, execution or paying agents, transfer agents, registrars or other agents;
- the proposed listing, if any, of the warrants or any securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants on any securities exchange;
- the designation and terms of any equity securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- the designation, aggregate principal amount, currency and terms of any debt securities that may be purchased upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares with which the warrants are issued and, the number of warrants issued with each security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which any warrants issued as part of a unit and the related debt securities, common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares will be separately transferable;
- the number of shares of common stock, the number of shares of preferred stock or the number of depositary shares purchasable upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which those shares may be purchased;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;
- the antidilution provisions of, and other provisions for changes to or adjustment in the exercise price of, the warrants, if any;
- any redemption or call provisions; and
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange or exercise of the warrants.

29

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORMS OF SECURITIES

Each debt security, depositary share, purchase contract, purchase unit and warrant will be represented either by a certificate issued in definitive form to a particular investor or by one or more global securities representing the entire issuance of securities. Unless the applicable prospectus supplement provides otherwise, certificated securities will be issued in definitive form and global securities will be issued in registered form. Definitive securities name you or your nominee as the owner of the security, and in order to transfer or exchange these securities or to receive payments other than interest or other interim payments, you or your nominee must physically deliver the securities to the trustee, registrar, paying agent or other agent, as applicable. Global securities name a depositary or its nominee as the owner of the debt securities, depositary shares, purchase contracts or purchase units or warrants represented by these global securities. The depositary maintains a computerized system that will reflect each investor's beneficial ownership of the securities through an account maintained by the investor with its broker/dealer, bank, trust company or other representative, as we explain more fully below.

Registered Global Securities

We may issue the registered debt securities, depositary shares, purchase contracts, purchase units and warrants in the form of one or more fully registered global securities that will be deposited with a depositary or its nominee identified in the applicable prospectus supplement and registered in the name of that depositary or nominee. In those cases, one or more registered global securities will be issued in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal or face amount of the securities to be represented by registered global securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole for securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred except as a whole by and among the depositary for the registered global security, the nominees of the depositary or any successors of the depositary or those nominees.

If not described below, any specific terms of the depositary arrangement with respect to any securities to be represented by a registered global security will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to those securities. We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depositary arrangements.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be limited to persons, called participants, that have accounts with the depositary or persons that may hold interests through participants. Upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depositary will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants accounts with the respective principal or face amounts of the securities beneficially owned by the participants. Any dealers, underwriters or agents participating in the distribution of the securities will designate the accounts to be credited. Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the depositary, with respect to interests of participants, and on the records of participants, with respect to interests of persons holding through participants. The laws of some states may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of these securities in definitive form. These laws may impair your ability to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in registered global securities.

So long as the depositary, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a registered global security, that depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the applicable indenture, deposit agreement, purchase contract, warrant agreement or purchase unit agreement. Except as described below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security will not be entitled to have the securities represented by the registered global security registered in their

names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of the securities in definitive form and will not be considered the owners or holders of the securities under the applicable indenture, deposit agreement, purchase contract, purchase unit agreement or warrant agreement. Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depositary for that registered global security and, if that person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the applicable indenture, deposit agreement, purchase contract, purchase unit agreement or warrant agreement. We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security desires to give or take

TABLE OF CONTENTS

any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the applicable indenture, deposit agreement, purchase contract, purchase unit agreement or warrant agreement, the depositary for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take that action, and the participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through them to give or take that action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

Principal, premium, if any, and interest payments on debt securities, and any payments to holders with respect to depositary shares, warrants, purchase agreements or purchase units, represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depositary or its nominee will be made to the depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the registered global security. None of us, the trustees, the warrant agents, the unit agents or any other agent of ours, agent of the trustees or agent of the warrant agents or unit agents will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the registered global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to those beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depositary for any of the securities represented by a registered global security, upon receipt of any payment to holders of principal, premium, interest or other distribution of underlying securities or other property on that registered global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in that registered global security as shown on the records of the depositary. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security held through participants will be governed by standing customer instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of those participants.

If the depositary for any of the securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depositary or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and a successor depositary registered as a clearing agency under the Exchange Act is not appointed by us within 90 days, we will issue securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security that had been held by the depositary. Any securities issued in definitive form in exchange for a registered global security will be registered in the name or names that the depositary gives to the relevant trustee, warrant agent, unit agent or other relevant agent of ours or theirs. It is expected that the depositary's instructions will be based upon directions received by the depositary from participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in the registered global security that had been held by the depositary.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We or a selling stockholder may sell securities:

to or through underwriters, brokers or dealers;
through agents;

directly to one or more purchasers in negotiated sales or competitively bid transactions;
through a block trade in which the broker or dealer engaged to handle the block trade will attempt to sell the securities as agent, but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction; or
through a combination of any of the above methods of sale.

In addition, we may issue the securities as a dividend or distribution or in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders.

We or any selling stockholder may directly solicit offers to purchase securities, or agents may be designated to solicit such offers. We will, in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering, name any agent that could be viewed as an underwriter under the Securities Act, and describe any commissions that we must pay. Any such agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment or, if indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, on a firm commitment basis. This prospectus may be used in connection with any offering of our securities through any of these methods or other methods described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The distribution of the securities may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions:

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

Each prospectus supplement will describe the method of distribution of the securities and any applicable restrictions.

The prospectus supplement with respect to the securities of a particular series will describe the terms of the offering of the securities, including the following:

the name of the agent or any underwriters;
the public offering or purchase price;
any discounts and commissions to be allowed or paid to the agent or underwriters;
all other items constituting underwriting compensation;
any discounts and commissions to be allowed or paid to dealers; and
any exchanges on which the securities will be listed.

If any underwriters or agents are utilized in the sale of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered, we will enter into an underwriting agreement or other agreement with them at the time of sale to them, and we will set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering the names of the underwriters or agents and the terms of the related agreement with them.

If a dealer is utilized in the sale of the securities in respect of which the prospectus is delivered, we or any selling stockholder will sell such securities to the dealer, as principal. The dealer may then resell such securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by such dealer at the time of resale.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

If we offer securities in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders, we may enter into a standby underwriting agreement with dealers, acting as standby underwriters. We may pay the standby underwriters a commitment fee for the securities they commit to purchase on a standby basis. If we do not enter into a standby underwriting arrangement, we may retain a dealer-manager to manage a subscription rights offering for us.

Remarketing firms, agents, underwriters, dealers and other persons may be entitled under agreements which they may enter into with us to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

We may pay expenses incurred with respect to the registration of the shares of common stock owned by any selling stockholders.

If so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we or any selling stockholder will authorize underwriters or other persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by certain institutions to purchase securities from us pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the date stated in the prospectus supplement. Each contract will be for an amount not less than, and the aggregate amount of securities sold pursuant to such contracts shall not be less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in the prospectus supplement. Institutions with whom the contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and other institutions, but shall in all cases be subject to our approval. Delayed delivery contracts will not be subject to any conditions except that:

the purchase by an institution of the securities covered under that contract shall not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of the jurisdiction to which that institution is subject; and
if the securities are also being sold to underwriters acting as principals for their own account, the underwriters shall have purchased such securities not sold for delayed delivery. The underwriters and other persons acting as our agents will not have any responsibility in respect of the validity or performance of delayed delivery contracts.

Certain agents, underwriters and dealers, and their associates and affiliates may be customers of, have borrowing relationships with, engage in other transactions with, or perform services, including investment banking services, for us or one or more of our respective affiliates or any selling stockholder in the ordinary course of business.

In order to facilitate the offering of the securities, any underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities or any other securities the prices of which may be used to determine payments on such securities. Specifically, any underwriters may overallocate in connection with the offering, creating a short position for their own accounts. In addition, to cover overallocations or to stabilize the price of the securities or of any such other securities, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, the securities or any such other securities in the open market. Finally, in any offering of the securities through a syndicate of underwriters, the underwriting syndicate may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an underwriter or a dealer for distributing the securities in the offering if the syndicate repurchases previously distributed securities in transactions to cover syndicate short positions, in stabilization transactions or otherwise. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities above independent market levels. Any such underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

Under Rule 15c6-1 of the Exchange Act, trades in the secondary market generally are required to settle in three business days, unless the parties to any such trade expressly agree otherwise. The applicable prospectus supplement may provide that the original issue date for your securities may be more than three scheduled business days after the trade date for your securities. Accordingly, in such a case, if you wish to trade securities on any date prior to the third business day before the original issue date for your securities, you will be required, by virtue of the fact that your securities initially are expected to settle in more than three scheduled business days after the trade date for your

securities, to make alternative settlement arrangements to prevent a failed settlement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

To comply with the securities laws of some states, if applicable, the securities may be sold in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, in some states the securities may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale or an exemption from registration or qualification requirements is available and is complied with.

The securities may be new issues of securities and may have no established trading market. The securities may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange. We can make no assurance as to the liquidity of or the existence of trading markets for any of the securities.

34

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LEGAL MATTERS

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement indicates otherwise, the validity of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered will be passed upon by Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Intercept Pharmaceuticals, Inc. as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, and for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 have been incorporated by reference herein and in the registration statement in reliance upon the reports of KPMG LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated by reference herein, and upon the authority of said firm as experts in accounting.

35

TABLE OF CONTENTS