

September 5, 2008

Letter to the Editor
The New York Times
620 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018

To the Editor:

Today's editorial "Many Questions About Vytorin" continues the *Times'* record of publishing inaccurate information regarding VYTORIN. The editorial is inappropriate because it could interfere with the doctor/patient relationship, and may cause patients who need this medicine to stop taking it. Patients should take healthcare advice from their healthcare professionals, not the editorial pages of *The New York Times*.

The fact remains that VYTORIN, when used in a manner consistent with the FDA approved label, is an excellent treatment option for patients with elevated cholesterol. Both Merck & Co., Inc. and Schering-Plough stand behind the efficacy and safety profile of VYTORIN.

Finally, the assertion that VYTORIN was approved based on only a handful of "short-term clinical trials" is wrong, as we have tried unsuccessfully to explain to your reporter in the past. The filing of VYTORIN with the FDA included data from patients who were studied in excess of one year. To date, VYTORIN has been evaluated for safety in more than 10,189 patients in clinical trials. In addition, large scale, outcomes trials involving 21,000 are ongoing. *Times* readers deserve to know the facts.

Peter S. Kim
President, Merck Research Laboratories
One Merck Drive
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889-0100

Thomas Koestler
President, Schering-Plough Research Institute
2015 Galloping Hill Rd.
Kenilworth, NJ 07033-1300