

AbbVie beats 2Q profit forecasts, but sales fall short

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This Jan. 24, 2015, file photo, shows the exterior of AbbVie, in Lake Bluff, Ill. AbbVie Inc. reports quarterly financial results on Friday, July 24, 2015. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

Drugmaker AbbVie Inc. reported better-than-expected second-quarter profit, but its sales disappointed Wall Street.

The North Chicago, Illinois-based company, which makes the blockbuster anti-inflammatory drug Humira, saw profit rise 24.4 percent to \$1.37 billion, or 83 cents per share. Earnings, adjusted for non-recurring costs and amortization costs, came to \$1.08 per share.

The average estimate of eight analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of \$1.06 per share.

Revenue rose 11.1 percent to \$5.48 billion, mainly on a boost in sales of Humira. But, the results fell shy of Wall Street expectations, with five analysts surveyed by Zacks expecting \$5.6 billion.

Humira sales rose 7.6 percent to \$3.54 billion. The company relies on the drug for the majority of its

revenue. It is approved to treat more than a dozen conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis and Crohn's Disease. But, it will start losing patent protection next year and could eventually face competition from Amgen Inc., which is developing a biosimilar version of the drug.

AbbVie's second-biggest seller, the hepatitis C drug Viekira Pak, was approved in December and brought in \$385 million during the second quarter.

Viekira faces a crowded market with already established hepatitis C treatments including Gilead Sciences' Sovaldi and Harvoni. All three treatments are considered major improvements from earlier drug options.

Looking ahead, AbbVie expects full-year earnings in the range of \$4.10 to \$4.30 per share.

AbbVie's stock shed \$2.02, or 2.9 percent, hitting \$68.50 in premarket trading.

AbbVie shares have risen almost 8 percent since the beginning of the year, while the Standard & Poor's 500 index has increased 2 percent. The stock has increased 29 percent in the last 12 months.

Elements of this story were generated by Automated Insights (automatedinsights.com/ap) using data from Zacks Investment Research. Access a Zacks stock report on ABBV at www.zacks.com/ap/ABBV

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