



## PRESS RELEASE

# LabCorp Introduces MGMT Methylation Testing Service in North America

*OncoMethylome's MGMT gene methylation technology provides oncologists with a new tool to guide patient care*

**Liege (Belgium) – November 19, 2008, 2:00 PM CET** - OncoMethylome Sciences (Euronext Brussels: ONCOB, Euronext Amsterdam: ONCOA) announced today that Laboratory Corporation of America® Holdings (LabCorp®) commercially launched its MGMT methylation testing service. LabCorp recently licensed OncoMethylome's patented MSP and MGMT DNA methylation marker technology for its test.

This is the third DNA methylation test overall and the first "personalized medicine" test using technology from OncoMethylome Sciences to become commercially available in North America for clinical use. OncoMethylome Sciences will receive royalty and milestone payments from LabCorp on the sales of the MGMT methylation testing service.

MGMT gene methylation is a common event in many cancers. It is predictive of response to some cancer therapies. In particular, MGMT methylation testing is of interest to oncologists based on several studies demonstrating that patients with advanced malignant brain tumors are more likely to respond to standard chemotherapy regimens if their tumor is MGMT methylated.

"Commercial availability in North America of our MGMT methylation technology via LabCorp, a major clinical laboratory, marks a significant milestone for OncoMethylome's personalized medicine program", commented Herman Spolders, Chief Executive Officer of OncoMethylome. "Efforts are also underway to extend commercial availability of this clinically important assay to the European markets".

LabCorp, an industry leader in oncology testing and the second largest clinical reference laboratory in the U.S., is headquartered in Burlington, North Carolina, USA.

To download this press release as a PDF, click here: [\*\*Press Release PDF\*\*](#)

## About MGMT methylation

In a healthy individual, the MGMT gene is an essential DNA repair enzyme, which is frequently silenced due to abnormal methylation during cancer development. The loss of MGMT activity that made the cell more likely to become a cancer cell in the first place also makes tumor cells more sensitive to radiation therapy and certain alkylating drugs. With the loss of the DNA-repair capability of MGMT, due to methylation, tumor cells are more responsive to the desired effects by such therapies.

A landmark study published in the New England Journal of Medicine in March 2005 reported on the methylation status of MGMT in tumor tissues from patients with malignant brain tumors (glioblastoma multiforme, GBM) who were treated with radiation alone, or with temozolomide (Schering Plough) plus radiation. The study showed that patients with unmethylated (functioning) MGMT did not significantly benefit from the addition of temozolomide to the standard treatment of radiation therapy. Alternatively, patients with methylated (silenced) MGMT demonstrated significantly longer progression-free and overall survival with the combination of radiation therapy and temozolomide. In this study and others, the MGMT methylation status identified the patients deriving the greatest benefit from temozolomide therapy.

### **About OncoMethylome Sciences**

OncoMethylome Sciences (Euronext Brussels: ONCOB; Euronext Amsterdam: ONCOA) is a molecular diagnostics company developing gene methylation tests to assist physicians in effectively detecting and treating cancer. Specifically, the company's tests are designed to help the physician (i) accurately detect cancer in early stages of cancer development, (ii) predict a patient's response to drug therapy, and (iii) predict the likelihood of cancer recurrence.

OncoMethylome boasts a broad product development pipeline consisting of ten products and a solid partnering record. The company collaborates with leading international molecular oncology research centers, such as The Johns Hopkins University, and has a number of commercial and collaborative partnerships with Veridex LLC (a Johnson & Johnson company), LabCorp, Schering-Plough Corp., GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals, Abbott, Millipore Corporation's BioScience Division, EXACT Sciences Corp., Merck KGaA, and Qiagen, OncoMethylome's products are based on methylation technology invented by Johns Hopkins University (USA).

Established in January 2003, OncoMethylome has offices in Liege and Leuven (Belgium), in Durham, NC (USA), and in Amsterdam (the Netherlands).

### **For more information please contact:**

Herman Spolders

Tel. +32 16 751 380

[ir@oncomethylome.com](mailto:ir@oncomethylome.com)

[www.oncomethylome.com](http://www.oncomethylome.com)