



News Release

May 7th, 2021

JPMA Statement on WTO TRIPS Intellectual Property Waiver

The Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (JPMA) expressed a different view from those in the announcement by the U.S. government of its support for waiving intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines discussed at World Trade Organization (WTO).

There are many technical challenges to be addressed in providing vaccines, including production facilities, materials procurement, know-how, distribution, and local regulatory requirements. Waiving intellectual property rights is not an appropriate measure to increase the volume of vaccination immediately because it would not help mass production and supply of vaccines. The pharmaceutical industry is making every effort to increase the manufacturing scale and supply capacity of vaccines by a number of alliances and technology transfer.

For biopharmaceuticals like vaccines, waiving intellectual property rights cannot assure the production of comparable vaccines, which will eventually lead to concerns that the quality may not be guaranteed or that side reactions may develop as a result of production and distribution of vaccines which have insufficient quality or effectiveness.

In addition, there is now a global shortage of raw materials and materials for vaccine production. We are deeply concerned that uncontrolled manufacturing under the waiver of intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines may accelerate the shortage of raw materials and materials and may cause disruption of supply chains, which will result in further delay in supply.

With a number of alliances among corporations and with academia, the pharmaceutical industry has advanced research and development for vaccines and therapies at an unprecedented speed and scale to address COVID-19. Intellectual property rights are the source of innovation to facilitate such research and development and alliances.

Pharmaceutical companies, in close collaboration with administrative agencies in each country and relevant parties, will continuously devote themselves to helping stamp out COVID-19 at the earliest possible time and saving as many lives as possible.

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