

ATHERSYS, INC / NEW

FORM 424B5

(Prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5))

Filed 10/16/17

Address	3201 CARNEGIE AVENUE CLEVELAND, OH, 44115-2634
Telephone	216-431-9900
CIK	0001368148
Symbol	ATHX
SIC Code	2834 - Pharmaceutical Preparations
Industry	Biotechnology & Medical Research
Sector	Healthcare
Fiscal Year	12/31

Prospectus Supplement, Dated October 12, 2017
(To Prospectus dated March 21, 2017)



1,500,000 shares of Common Stock

We are offering up to 1,500,000 shares of our common stock to Garnet Biotherapeutics, Inc., in connection with a settlement agreement that we entered into with Garnet Biotherapeutics, Inc. on October 12, 2017.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "ATHX." On October 11, 2017, the last sale price of our common stock as reported on the NASDAQ Capital Market was \$2.39 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves risks that are described in the "[Risk Factors](#)" section beginning on page 3 of the accompanying prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus supplement is October 12, 2017

Prospectus



\$75,000,000

Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Depository Shares
Warrants
Subscription Rights
Debt Securities
Purchase Contracts
Units

We may offer and sell from time to time our common stock, preferred stock, depository shares, warrants, subscription rights, debt securities and purchase contracts, as well as units that include any of these securities. We may sell any combination of these securities in one or more offerings with an aggregate initial offering price of \$75,000,000 or the equivalent amount in other currencies or currency units.

We will provide the specific terms of the securities to be offered in one or more supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in our securities. This prospectus may not be used to offer and sell our securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of those offered securities.

We may sell the securities directly or to or through underwriters or dealers, and also to other purchasers or through agents. The names of any underwriters or agents that are included in a sale of securities to you, and any applicable commissions or discounts, will be stated in an accompanying prospectus supplement.

Investing in any of our securities involves risk. Please read carefully the section entitled “[Risk Factors](#).” beginning on page 3 of this prospectus.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol “ATHX.” On March 9, 2017, the closing price of our common stock on the NASDAQ Capital Market was \$1.18 per share. None of the other securities that we may offer under this prospectus are currently publicly traded.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is March 21, 2017.

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About This Prospectus

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the “SEC,” using a “shelf” registration process. Under this shelf process, we may from time to time sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to an aggregate initial offering price of \$75,000,000 or the equivalent amount in other currencies or currency units.

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. For a more complete understanding of the offering of the securities, you should refer to the registration statement, including its exhibits. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information” and “Information We Incorporate By Reference.”

We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information from the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement or in any free writing prospectus that we may provide you. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement, any document incorporated by reference or any free writing prospectus is accurate as of any date, other than the date mentioned on the cover page of these documents. We are not making offers to sell the securities in any jurisdiction in which an offer or solicitation is not authorized or in which the person making such offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to anyone to whom it is unlawful to make an offer or solicitation.

References in this prospectus to the terms “we,” “us” or “the Company” or other similar terms mean Athersys, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless we state otherwise or the context indicates otherwise.

Where You Can Find More Information

We are subject to the informational reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or the “Exchange Act.” We file reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available at the SEC’s website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may read and copy any reports, statements and other information filed by us at the SEC’s Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the Public Reference Room. You may also inspect our SEC reports and other information at our website at <http://www.athersys.com>. The information contained on or accessible through our website is not a part of this prospectus, other than the documents that we file with the SEC that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Information We Incorporate By Reference

The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus the information in documents we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be a part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. Any statement contained in any document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein shall be deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in or omitted from this prospectus or any accompanying prospectus supplement, or in any other subsequently filed document that also is or is deemed to be incorporated by reference herein, modifies or supersedes such statement. Any such statement so modified or superseded shall not be deemed, except as so modified or superseded, to constitute a part of this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future documents that we file with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act (1) after the date of the initial filing of the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement and (2) after the date of this prospectus until the offering of the securities is terminated:

- our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016;
- our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on January 13, 2017 and February 1, 2017; and
- the description of our common stock set forth in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on December 6, 2007, and all amendments and reports filed for the purpose of updating that description.

We will not, however, incorporate by reference in this prospectus any documents or portions thereof that are not deemed “filed” with the SEC, including any information furnished pursuant to Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of our current reports on Form 8-K unless, and

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except to the extent, specified in such current reports.

We will provide you with a copy of any of these filings (other than an exhibit to these filings, unless the exhibit is specifically incorporated by reference into the filing requested) at no cost, if you submit a request to us by writing or telephoning us at the following address and telephone number:

Athersys, Inc.
3201 Carnegie Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2634
Phone: (216) 431-9900
Attention: Secretary

The Company

We are an international biotechnology company that is focused primarily in the field of regenerative medicine. We are committed to the discovery and development of best-in-class therapies designed to extend and enhance the quality of human life. We have established a portfolio of therapeutic product development programs to address significant unmet medical needs in multiple disease areas. Our MultiStem[®] cell therapy, a patented and proprietary allogeneic stem cell product, is our lead platform product and is currently in later-stage clinical development. Our current clinical development programs are focused on treating neurological conditions, cardiovascular disease, inflammatory and immune disorders, certain pulmonary conditions and other conditions where the current standard of care is limited or inadequate for many patients. These represent major areas of clinical need, as well as substantial commercial opportunities.

Corporate Information

We are incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware. Our principal executive offices are located at 3201 Carnegie Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2634. Our telephone number is (216) 431-9900. Our website is <http://www.athersys.com>. The information contained on or accessible through our website is not part of this prospectus, other than the documents that we file with the SEC that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Risk Factors

Investing in our securities involves risk. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” in our most recent annual report on Form 10-K, which is incorporated herein by reference and may be amended, supplemented or superseded from time to time by other reports we file with the SEC in the future. If any of these risks actually occurs, our business, results of operations and financial condition could suffer. In that case, the trading price of our securities could decline, and you could lose all or a part of your investment.

Disclosure Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, contains, and any prospectus supplement may contain, “forward-looking statements” as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These forward-looking statements relate to, among other things, the expected timetable for development of our product candidates, our growth strategy, and our future financial performance, including our operations, economic performance, financial condition, prospects, and other future events. We have attempted to identify forward-looking statements by using such words as “anticipates,” “believes,” “can,” “continue,” “could,” “estimates,” “expects,” “intends,” “may,” “plans,” “potential,” “should,” “suggest,” “will,” or other similar expressions. These forward-looking statements are only predictions and are largely based on our current expectations.

In addition, a number of known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors could affect the accuracy of these statements. Some of the more significant known risks that we face are the risks and uncertainties inherent in the process of discovering, developing, and commercializing products that are safe and effective for use as human therapeutics, including the uncertainty regarding market acceptance of our product candidates and our ability to generate revenues. The following risks and uncertainties may cause our actual results, levels of activity, performance, or achievements to differ materially from any future results, levels of activity, performance, or achievements expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements:

- our ability to raise capital to fund our operations;
- the timing and nature of results from our MultiStem clinical trials;
- the possibility of delays in, adverse results of, and excessive costs of the development process;
- our ability to successfully initiate and complete clinical trials of our product candidates;
- uncertainty regarding market acceptance of our product candidates and our ability to generate revenues, including MultiStem cell therapy for the treatment of stroke, acute myocardial infarction and acute respiratory distress syndrome, and the prevention of graft-versus-host disease and other disease indications;
- changes in external market factors;

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- changes in our industry's overall performance;
- changes in our business strategy;
- our ability to protect and defend our intellectual property and related business operations, including the successful prosecution of our patent applications and enforcement of our patent rights, and operate our business in an environment of rapid technology and intellectual property development;
- our possible inability to realize commercially valuable discoveries in our collaborations with pharmaceutical and other biotechnology companies;
- our ability to meet milestones and earn royalties under our collaboration agreements;
- our collaborators' ability to continue to fulfill their obligations under the terms of our collaboration agreements;
- the success of our efforts to enter into new strategic partnerships and advance our programs, including, without limitation, in the United States, Europe and Japan;
- our possible inability to execute our strategy due to changes in our industry or the economy generally;
- changes in productivity and reliability of suppliers;
- the success of our competitors and the emergence of new competitors; and
- the risks mentioned under Item 1A, "Risk Factors" in our Current Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016.

Any forward-looking statement you read in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any document incorporated by reference reflects our current views with respect to future events and is subject to these and other risks, uncertainties and assumptions relating to our operations, operating results growth strategy and liquidity. You should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements because such statements speak only as of the date when made. We undertake no obligation to publicly update forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as otherwise required by law. You are advised, however, to consult any further disclosures we make on related subjects in our reports on Forms 10-Q, 8-K and 10-K furnished to the SEC. You should understand that it is not possible to predict or identify all risk factors. Consequently, you should not consider any such list to be a complete set of all potential risks or uncertainties.

Any document incorporated by reference or any prospectus supplement may also contain statistical data and estimates we obtained from industry publications and reports generated by third parties. Although we believe that the publications and reports are reliable, we have not independently verified their data.

Use of Proceeds

Unless we inform you otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities for general corporate purposes, including, but not limited to, research and development costs, payment obligations and capital expenditures. Pending any specific application, we may initially invest funds in U.S. government obligations.

Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges

The following table sets forth our ratio of consolidated earnings to fixed charges for the periods presented:

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges(1)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)

- (1) For purposes of calculating our ratio of earnings to fixed charges:
- earnings consist of loss from continuing operations before income taxes plus: (i) interest on indebtedness; and (ii) the portion of rents representative of interest factor;
 - fixed charges consist of: (i) interest on indebtedness; and (ii) the portion of rents representative of interest factor; and
 - the ratio of earnings to fixed charges is determined by dividing earnings by fixed charges, as defined above.
- (2) For the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013 and 2012 there was a deficiency of earnings to cover the fixed charges of \$39,000, \$45,000, \$43,000, \$40,000 and \$37,000, respectively.

Because we have no preferred stock issued (and have not had any issued during the fiscal years shown above), a ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred dividends is not presented.

Description of Capital Stock

We are authorized to issue 150,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.001 per share, and 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share.

Common Stock

This section describes the general terms and provisions of our common stock. For more detailed information, you should refer to our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws, copies of which have been filed with the SEC. These documents are also incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part.

Holders of shares of common stock will be entitled to receive dividends if and when declared by the board of directors from funds legally available therefore, and, upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up of our company, will be entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities. The holders of shares of common stock will not have any preemptive rights, but will be entitled to one vote for each share of common stock held of record. Stockholders will not have the right to cumulate their votes for the election of directors. The shares of common stock offered hereby, when issued, will be fully paid and nonassessable.

Preferred Stock

This section describes the general terms and provisions of our preferred stock. For more detailed information, you should refer to our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws, copies of which have been filed with the SEC. These documents are also incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part.

Our board of directors is authorized, without action by our stockholders, to designate and issue up to 10,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, in one or more series. The board of directors can fix the rights, preferences and privileges of the shares of each series and any of its qualifications, limitations or restrictions. Our board of directors may authorize the issuance of preferred stock with voting or conversion rights that could adversely affect the voting power or other rights of the holders of common stock. The issuance of preferred stock, while providing flexibility in connection with possible future financings, acquisitions and other corporate purposes could, under certain circumstances, have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of us and could adversely affect the market price of our common stock. We do not have any shares of preferred stock outstanding, and we have no current plans to issue any preferred stock.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

We have appointed Computershare Investor Services as the transfer agent and registrar for our common stock.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "ATHX."

Description of Depositary Shares

We may offer depositary shares representing fractional shares of our preferred stock of any series. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the depositary shares that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the depositary shares, including the fraction of a preferred share that such depositary share will represent, and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the depositary shares so offered, will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

The shares of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a depositary agreement between us and a bank or trust company that meets certain requirements and is selected by us, which we refer to as the bank depositary. Each owner of a depositary share will be entitled to all the rights and preferences of the shares of preferred stock represented by the depositary share. The depositary shares will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the depositary agreement. Depositary receipts will be distributed to those persons purchasing the fractional shares of preferred stock in accordance with the terms of the offering. The deposit agreement will also contain provisions relating to the manner in which any subscription or similar rights we offer to holders of the preferred stock will be made available to the holders of depositary shares.

The following description is a general summary of some common provisions of a depositary agreement and the related depositary receipts. The description below and in any prospectus supplement does not include all of the terms of the depositary agreement and the related depositary receipts. Copies of the form of depositary agreement and the depositary receipts relating to any particular issue of depositary shares will be filed with the SEC each time we issue depositary shares, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the depositary agreement and the related depositary receipts, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Dividends and Other Distributions

If we pay a cash distribution or dividend on a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares, the bank depositary will distribute these dividends to the record holders of these depositary shares. If the distributions are in property other than cash, the bank depositary will distribute the property to the record holders of the depositary shares. However, if the bank depositary determines that it is not feasible to make the distribution of property, the bank depositary may, with our approval, sell this property and distribute the net proceeds from this sale to the record holders of the depositary shares.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

If we redeem a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares, the bank depositary will redeem the depositary shares from the proceeds received by the bank depositary in connection with the redemption. The redemption price per depositary share will equal the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share of the preferred stock. If fewer than all the depositary shares are redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or pro rata as the bank depositary may determine.

Voting the Preferred Stock

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of the preferred stock represented by depositary shares are entitled to vote, the bank depositary will mail the notice to the record holders of the depositary shares relating to the preferred stock. Each record holder of these depositary shares on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for the preferred stock) may instruct the bank depositary as to how to vote the preferred stock represented by this holder's depositary shares. The bank depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the amount of the preferred stock represented by such depositary shares in accordance with these instructions, and we will take all action which the bank depositary deems necessary in order to enable the bank depositary to do so. The bank depositary will abstain from voting shares of the preferred stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary shares representing this preferred stock.

Amendment and Termination of the Depositary Agreement

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

- all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed; or

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- there has been a final distribution in respect of the preferred stock in connection with any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company and this distribution has been distributed to the holders of depositary receipts.

Charges of Bank 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 bank depositary in connection with the initial deposit of the preferred stock and any redemption of the preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay other transfer, tax and governmental charges and any other charges, including a fee for the withdrawal of shares of preferred stock upon surrender of depositary receipts, as are expressly provided in the depositary agreement to be for their accounts.

Withdrawal of Preferred Stock

Except as may be provided otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, upon surrender of depositary receipts at the principal office of the bank depositary, subject to the terms of the depositary agreement, the owner of the depositary shares may demand delivery of the number of whole shares of preferred stock and all money and other property, if any, represented by those depositary shares. Fractional shares of preferred stock will not be issued. 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 bank depositary will deliver to this holder at the same time a new depositary receipt evidencing the excess number of depositary shares. Holders of preferred stock thus withdrawn may not thereafter deposit those shares under the depositary agreement or receive depositary receipts evidencing depositary shares therefor.

Miscellaneous

The bank depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all reports and communications from us that are delivered to the bank depositary and that we are required to furnish to the holders of preferred stock.

Neither the bank depositary nor we will be liable if we are prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond our control in performing our obligations under the depositary agreement. The obligations of the bank depositary and us under the depositary agreement will be limited to performance in good faith of our duties thereunder, and we will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or shares of preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. We may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by persons presenting shares of preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

Resignation and Removal of Bank Depositary

The bank depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the bank depositary. Any such resignation or removal will take effect upon the appointment of a successor bank depositary and the successor's acceptance of this appointment. The successor bank depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal and must be a bank or trust company meeting the requirements of the depositary agreement.

Description of Warrants

We may issue warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock, depository shares or debt securities. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the warrants and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the warrants so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Warrants may be issued independently or together with other securities and may be attached to or separate from any offered securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not have any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

A copy of the forms of the warrant agreement and the warrant certificate relating to any particular issue of warrants will be filed with the SEC each time we issue warrants, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the warrant agreement and the related warrant certificate, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Debt Warrants

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular issue of warrants to issue debt securities will describe the terms of those warrants, including the following:

- the title of the warrants;
- the offering price for the warrants, if any;
- the aggregate number of the warrants;
- the designation and terms of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the debt securities that the warrants are issued with and the number of warrants issued with each debt security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and any debt securities issued with them will be separately transferable;
- the principal amount of debt securities that may be purchased upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which the debt securities may be purchased upon exercise;
- the dates on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and expire;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- whether the warrants represented by the warrant certificates or debt securities that may be issued upon exercise of the warrants will be issued in registered or bearer form;
- information relating to book-entry procedures, if any;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- if applicable, a discussion of material U.S. federal income tax considerations;
- anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;
- redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the warrants;
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants; and
- any other information we think is important about the warrants.

Stock Warrants

The prospectus supplement relating to a particular issue of warrants to issue common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares will describe the terms of the common stock warrants and preferred stock warrants, including the following:

- the title of the warrants;
- the offering price for the warrants, if any;
- the aggregate number of the warrants;
- the designation and terms of the common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares that may be purchased upon exercise of the warrants;
- if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities that the warrants are issued with and the number of warrants issued with each security;
- if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and any securities issued with the warrants will be separately transferable;
- the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock or depositary shares that may be purchased upon exercise of a warrant and the price at which the shares may be purchased upon exercise;
- the dates on which the right to exercise the warrants commence and expire;
- if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the warrants that may be exercised at any one time;
- the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;
- if applicable, a discussion of material U.S. federal income tax considerations;
- anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;
- redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the warrants;
- any additional terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants; and
- any other information we think is important about the warrants.

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle the holder of the warrant to purchase at the exercise price set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement the number of shares of common stock, preferred stock or depositary shares or the principal amount of debt securities being offered. Holders may exercise warrants at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants are void. Holders may exercise warrants as set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants being offered.

Until a holder exercises the warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities, the holder will not have any rights as a holder of our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities, as the case may be, by virtue of ownership of warrants.

Description of Subscription Rights

We may issue to our shareholders subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares or debt securities. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the subscription rights that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the subscription rights and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the subscription rights so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Subscription rights may be issued independently or together with any other security offered by this prospectus and may or may not be transferable by the shareholder receiving the rights in the rights offering. In connection with any rights offering, we may enter into a standby underwriting agreement with one or more underwriters pursuant to which the underwriter will purchase any securities that remain unsubscribed for upon completion of the rights offering, or offer these securities to other parties who are not our shareholders. A copy of the form of subscription rights certificate will be filed with the SEC each time we issue subscription rights, and you should read that document for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain a copy of any subscription rights certificate, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

The applicable prospectus supplement relating to any subscription rights will describe the terms of the offered subscription rights, including, where applicable, the following:

- the exercise price for the subscription rights;
- the number of subscription rights issued to each shareholder;
- the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;
- any other terms of the subscription rights, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;
- the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights will commence and the date on which the right will expire;
- the extent to which the subscription rights include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities; and
- the material terms of any standby underwriting arrangement entered into by us in connection with the subscription rights offering.

Description of Debt Securities

The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may issue, which may be issued as convertible or exchangeable debt securities. We will set forth the particular terms of the debt securities we offer in a prospectus supplement and the extent, if any, to which the following general terms and provisions will apply to particular debt securities.

The debt securities will be issued under an indenture to be entered into between us and a trustee that we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement. The indenture, and any supplemental indentures thereto, will be subject to, and governed by, the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended. The following description of general terms and provisions relating to the debt securities and the indenture under which the debt securities will be issued is a summary only and therefore is not complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the terms and provisions of the indenture. The form of the indenture has been filed with the SEC as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part, and you should read the indenture for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain a copy of the form of the indenture, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

Capitalized terms used in this section and not defined herein have the meanings specified in the indenture. When we refer to “we,” “our” and “us” in this section, we mean Athersys, Inc. excluding, unless the context otherwise requires or as otherwise expressly stated, its subsidiaries.

General

Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement, the debt securities will be our direct, unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our existing and future senior unsecured indebtedness senior in right of payment to all of our subordinated indebtedness.

The indenture does not limit the aggregate principal amount of debt securities that may be issued under it and provides that debt securities may be issued under it from time to time in one or more series. We may specify a maximum aggregate principal amount for the debt securities of any series.

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the indenture does not afford the holders of the debt securities the right to require us to repurchase or redeem the debt securities in the event of a highly-leveraged transaction.

We are not obligated to issue all debt securities of one series at the same time and, unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may reopen a series, without the consent of the holders of the outstanding debt securities of that series, for the issuance of additional debt securities of that series. Additional debt securities of a particular series will have the same terms and conditions as outstanding debt securities of such series, except for the issue date and, in some cases, the public offering price and the first interest payment date, and will be consolidated with, and form a single series with, such outstanding debt securities; *provided, however*, that if such additional debt securities are not fungible with the outstanding debt securities of such series for U.S. federal income tax purposes, the additional debt securities will have a separate CUSIP number.

We will set forth in a prospectus supplement relating to any debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount and the following terms of the debt securities, if applicable:

- the title of debt securities;
- the price or prices (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount) at which the debt securities will be issued;
- any limit on the aggregate principal amount of the series of debt securities;
- whether the debt securities will be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities, and if they are subordinated debt securities, the terms of the subordination;
- the date or dates on which the principal on the series of debt securities is payable;
- the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) per annum or the method used to determine such rate or rates (including any commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index) at which the series of debt securities will bear interest, if any, the date or dates from which such interest, if any, will accrue, the date or dates on which such interest, if any, will commence and be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable on any interest payment date;

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- the right, if any, to extend the interest periods and the duration of that extension;
- the place or places where the principal of, and premium and interest, if any, on, the debt securities will be payable;
- the terms and conditions upon which the debt securities may be redeemed;
- any obligation we may have to redeem or purchase the debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provisions or at the option of a holder of the debt securities;
- the dates on which and the price or prices at which we will repurchase the debt securities at the option of the holders of the debt securities and other detailed terms and provisions of such repurchase obligations;
- the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued, if other than denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof;
- whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of certificated debt securities or global debt securities;
- the portion of principal amount of the debt securities payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date, if other than the principal amount;
- the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal of, premium and interest, if any, on the debt securities will be made if other than U.S. dollars;
- any provisions relating to any security provided for the debt securities;
- any addition to or change in the events of default described in this prospectus or in the indenture and any change in the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any addition to, or change in, the covenants described in this prospectus or in the indenture with respect to the debt securities;
- any other terms of the debt securities (which may supplement, modify or delete any provision of the indenture as it applies to such debt securities);
- any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents with respect to the series of debt securities, if other than those, if any, appointed in the indenture; and
- any provisions relating to conversion of the debt securities.

The foregoing is not intended to be an exclusive list of the terms that may be applicable to any offered debt securities.

In addition, the indenture does not limit our ability to issue convertible, exchangeable or subordinated debt securities. Any conversion, exchange or subordination provisions of debt securities will be described in the relevant prospectus supplement. Such terms may include provisions for conversion or exchange, either mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option, in which case the number of shares of common stock or other securities to be received by the holders of debt securities would be calculated as of a time and in the manner stated in the prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities that provide for an amount less than their stated principal amount to be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity pursuant to the terms of the indenture. We will provide you with information on the U.S. federal income tax considerations and other special considerations applicable to any of these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

If we denominate the purchase price of any of the debt securities in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, or if the principal of, and any premium and interest on, any series of debt securities is payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units, we will provide you with information on the restrictions, elections, general tax considerations, specific terms and other information with respect to that issue of debt securities and such foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Exchange and Transfer

Debt securities may be transferred or exchanged at the office of the registrar or co-registrar designated by us.

We will not impose a service charge for any transfer or exchange, but we may require holders to pay any tax or other governmental charges associated with any transfer or exchange.

In the event of any redemption of debt securities of any series, we will not be required to:

- issue, register the transfer of, or exchange, any debt security of that series during a period beginning at the opening of 15 business days before the day of sending of a notice of redemption and ending at the close of business on the day such notice is sent; or
- register the transfer of or, exchange any, debt security of that series selected, called or being called for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any series being redeemed in part.

We may initially appoint the trustee as the registrar. Any transfer agent, in addition to the registrar initially designated by us, will be named in the prospectus supplement. We may designate additional transfer agents or change transfer agents or change the office of the transfer agent. However, we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of each series.

Global Securities

The debt securities of any series may be represented, in whole or in part, by one or more global securities. Each global security will:

- be registered in the name of a depository that we will identify in a prospectus supplement;
- be deposited with the trustee as custodian for the depository or its nominee; and
- bear any required legends.

No global security may be exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities registered in the name of any person other than the depository or any nominee unless:

- the depository has notified us that it is unwilling or unable to continue as depository or has ceased to be qualified to act as depository, and in either case we fail to appoint a successor depository registered as a clearing agency under the Exchange Act within 90 days of such event;
- we execute and deliver to the trustee an officer's certificate to the effect that such global securities shall be so exchangeable; or
- an event of default with respect to the debt securities represented by such global securities shall have occurred and be continuing.

As long as the depository, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a global security, the depository or nominee will be considered the sole owner and holder of the debt securities represented by the global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except in the above limited circumstances, owners of beneficial interests in a global security:

- will not be entitled to have the debt securities registered in their names;
- will not be entitled to physical delivery of certificated debt securities; and
- will not be considered to be holders of those debt securities under the indenture.

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Payments on a global security will be made to the depository or its nominee as the holder of the global security. Some jurisdictions have laws that require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in a global security.

Institutions that have accounts with the depository or its nominee are referred to as “participants.” Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be limited to participants and to persons that may hold beneficial interests through participants. The depository will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the respective principal amounts of debt securities represented by the global security to the accounts of its participants. Each person owning a beneficial interest in a global security must rely on the procedures of the depository (and, if such person is not a participant, on procedures of the participant through which such person owns its interest) to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be shown on and effected through records maintained by the depository, with respect to participants’ interests, or by any participant, with respect to interests of persons held by participants on their behalf. Payments, transfers and exchanges relating to beneficial interests in a global security will be subject to policies and procedures of the depository. The depository policies and procedures may change from time to time. Neither we nor the trustee will have any responsibility or liability for the depository’s acts or omissions or any participant’s records with respect to beneficial interests in a global security.

Payment and Paying Agent

The provisions of this subsection will apply to the debt securities unless otherwise indicated in the prospectus supplement. Payment of interest on a debt security on any interest payment date will be made to the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date. Payment on debt securities of a particular series will be payable at the office of a paying agent or paying agents designated by us. However, at our option, we may pay interest by mailing a check to the record holder.

We may also name any other paying agents in the prospectus supplement. We may designate additional paying agents, change paying agents or change the office of any paying agent. However, we will be required to maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of a particular series.

Subject to any applicable abandoned property law, all moneys paid by us to a paying agent for payment on any debt security that remain unclaimed at the end of two years after such payment was due will be repaid to us. Thereafter, the holder may look only to us for such payment.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Except as otherwise set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may not merge or consolidate with or into any other person, in a transaction in which we are not the surviving corporation, or sell, convey, transfer, lease or otherwise dispose of all or substantially all of the properties and assets of us and our subsidiaries, taken as a whole, to any person, unless:

- the successor or transferee is a U.S. corporation, limited liability company, partnership, trust or other entity;
- the successor or transferee assumes our obligations on the debt securities and under the indenture pursuant to a supplemental indenture in form reasonably satisfactory to the trustee;
- immediately after giving effect to the transaction and treating our obligations in connection with or as a result of such transaction as having been incurred as of the time of such transaction, no default or event of default under the indenture shall have occurred and be continuing; and
- an officer’s certificate and an opinion of counsel have been delivered to the trustee in connection with the foregoing.

In the event of the above transaction, if there is a successor or transferee, then the successor or transferee will expressly assume all of our obligations under the indenture and automatically be substituted for us in the indenture and as issuer of the debt securities and may exercise every right and power of ours under the indenture with the same effect as if such successor or transferee had been named in our place in the indenture; provided, however, that the predecessor company will not be relieved of the obligation to pay principal and interest on the debt securities except in the case of a sale of all of the assets of us and our subsidiaries.

Events of Default

Event of default means, with respect to any series of debt securities, any of the following:

- default in the payment of any interest on any debt security of that series when it becomes due and payable, and continuance of that default for a period of 30 days;
- default in the payment of principal of, or premium on, any debt security of that series when due and payable;
- failure on our part to comply with the covenant described under “—Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets”;
- default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty by us in the indenture or any supplemental indenture with respect to such series (other than a covenant or warranty that has been included in the indenture or supplemental indenture solely for the benefit of a series of debt securities other than that series), which default continues uncured for a period of 60 days after (1) we receive written notice from the trustee or (2) we and the trustee receive written notice from the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series as provided in the indenture;
- certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of our company or our significant subsidiaries; and
- any other event of default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We will promptly deliver to the trustee written notice of any event which with the giving of notice and the lapse of time would become a covenant event of default, or any other event of default provided with respect to debt securities of that series that is described in the applicable prospectus supplement, along with a description of the status and what action we are taking or propose to take with respect to such event of default.

No event of default with respect to a particular series of debt securities (except as to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization) necessarily constitutes an event of default with respect to any other series of debt securities. The occurrence of an event of default may constitute an event of default under our bank credit agreements in existence from time to time. In addition, the occurrence of certain events of default or an acceleration under the indenture may constitute an event of default under certain of our other indebtedness outstanding from time to time.

If an event of default (other than an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of our company) with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may, by a notice in writing to us (and to the trustee if given by the holders), declare to be due and payable immediately the principal (or, if the debt securities of that series are discount securities, that portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms of that series) of, and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all debt securities of that series. In the case of an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of our company, the principal (or such specified amount) of and accrued and unpaid interest, if any, on all outstanding debt securities will become and be immediately due and payable without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder of outstanding debt securities. At any time after a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of any series has been made, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may rescind and annul the acceleration if the rescission and annulment would not conflict with any judgment or decree already rendered and if all events of default with respect to that series, other than the non-payment of principal and interest, if any, with respect to debt securities of that series that has become due and payable solely because of the acceleration, have been cured or waived and all sums paid or advanced by the trustee and the reasonable compensation expenses and disbursements of the trustee and its agents and counsel have been paid as provided in the indenture.

The indenture provides that the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any holder of outstanding debt securities, unless the trustee receives security or indemnity satisfactory to it against any loss, liability or expense. Subject to certain rights of the trustee, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to 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 the debt securities of that series.

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No holder of any debt security of any series will have any right to institute any proceeding, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture or for the appointment of a receiver or trustee, or for any remedy under the indenture, unless:

- that holder has previously given to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default with respect to debt securities of that series; and
- the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and offered security or indemnity satisfactory to the trustee, to institute the proceeding as trustee, and the trustee has not received from the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series a direction inconsistent with that request and has failed to institute the proceeding within 60 days.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the holder of any debt security will have an absolute and unconditional right to receive payment of the principal of, and premium and any interest on, that debt security on or after the due dates expressed in that debt security and to institute suit for the enforcement of such payment.

The indenture requires us, within 120 days after the end of our fiscal year, to furnish to the trustee a statement as to compliance with the indenture. The indenture provides that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any series of any default or event of default (except in payment on any debt securities of that series) with respect to debt securities of that series if it in good faith determines that withholding notice is in the interest of the holders of those debt securities.

Modification and Waiver

We may amend or modify the indenture without the consent of any holder of debt securities of the series affected by the modifications or amendments in order to:

- cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency;
- conform the text of the indenture, including any supplemental indenture, or the debt securities to any corresponding provision of this “Description of Debt Securities” or description of the debt securities found in the prospectus supplement as evidenced by an officer’s certificate;
- provide for the issuance of additional debt securities;
- provide for the assumption of our obligations in the case of a merger or consolidation and our discharge upon such assumption provided that the provision under “Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets” of the indenture is complied with;
- add covenants or make any change that would provide any additional rights or benefits to the holders of the debt securities;
- add guarantees with respect to the debt securities;
- provide for uncertificated debt securities in addition to or in place of certificated debt securities;
- secure the debt securities;
- add or appoint a successor or separate trustee;
- make any change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder of debt securities in any material respect, as evidenced by an officer’s certificate; or
- obtain or maintain the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

Other amendments and modifications of the indenture or the debt securities issued may be made with the consent of the holders of at least a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series, and our compliance with any provision of the indenture with respect to the debt securities may be waived by written notice to the trustee by the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series. However, no modification or amendment may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security of the affected series:

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- reduce the principal amount, any premium or change the stated maturity of any debt security or alter or waive any of the provisions with respect to the redemption or repurchase of the debt securities;
- change the place of payment or currency in which principal, any premium or interest is paid;
- impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on the debt securities;
- waive a payment default with respect to the debt securities;
- reduce the interest rate or extend the time for payment of interest on the debt securities;
- make any change to the amendment and modification provisions in the indenture; or
- reduce the percentage in principal amount outstanding of debt securities, the consent of the holders of which is required for any of the foregoing modifications or otherwise necessary to modify, supplement or amend the indenture or to waive any past default.

Except for certain specified provisions, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of an affected series may, on behalf of the holders of all debt securities of such series, waive our compliance with provisions of the indenture. Prior to the acceleration of the maturity of the debt securities of any series pursuant to the terms of the indenture, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series may, on behalf of the holders of all the debt securities of such series, waive any past default under the indenture with respect to such debt securities and its consequences, except (i) a default with respect to such series in the payment of the principal of, or premium or any interest on, the debt securities of such series or (ii) a default or event of default in respect of a covenant or provision that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of all of the holders of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series.

Defeasance of Debt Securities and Certain Covenants in Certain Circumstances

Legal Defeasance. The indenture provides that, in certain circumstances, we may be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the debt securities of any series (except for certain obligations to register the transfer or exchange of debt securities, to replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities, and to maintain paying agencies and certain provisions relating to the treatment of funds held by paying agents). We will be so discharged upon the deposit with the trustee, in trust, of money and/or U.S. government obligations that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the written opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants, a nationally recognized investment bank or a nationally recognized appraisal firm to pay and discharge each installment of principal, premium and interest in accordance with the terms of the indenture and the debt securities of that series.

This discharge may occur only if, among other things, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the United States Internal Revenue Service a ruling or, since the date of execution of the indenture, there has been a change in the applicable U.S. federal income tax law, in either case to the effect that, and based thereon such opinion shall confirm that, the beneficial owners of the debt securities of the applicable series will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge had not occurred.

Defeasance of Certain Covenants. The indenture provides that, upon compliance with certain conditions, we may be released from our obligation to comply with certain covenants set forth in the indenture and any supplemental indenture, and any failure to comply with those covenants will not constitute a default or an event of default with respect to the debt securities of the applicable series, or covenant defeasance. If we exercise our covenant defeasance option with respect to a series of debt securities, payment of such debt securities may not be accelerated because of an event of default related to certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of our significant subsidiaries.

The conditions include:

- depositing with the trustee money and/or U.S. government obligations that, through the payment of interest and principal in accordance with their terms, will provide money in an amount sufficient in the written opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants, a nationally recognized investment bank or a nationally recognized appraisal firm to pay and discharge each installment of principal of, premium and interest in accordance with the terms of the indenture and the debt securities of the applicable series; and
- delivering to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the beneficial owners of the debt securities of the applicable series will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and related covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if the deposit and related covenant defeasance had not occurred.

Governing Law

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

Description of Purchase Contracts

We may issue purchase contracts, including contracts obligating holders to purchase from us, and obligating us to sell to the holders, a specified number of common shares or other securities at a future date or dates. The price per security of the securities and the number of securities 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 also may require us to make periodic payments to the holders of the purchase contracts, or vice versa, and those payments may be unsecured or refunded on some basis. The purchase contracts may require holders to secure their obligations thereunder in a specified manner and may provide for the prepayment of all or part of the consideration payable by holders in connection with the purchase of the underlying security or other property pursuant to the purchase contracts.

The securities related to the purchase contracts may be pledged to a collateral agent for our benefit pursuant to a pledge agreement to secure the obligations of holders of purchase contracts to purchase the underlying security or property under the related purchase contracts. The rights of holders of purchase contracts to the related pledged securities will be subject to our security interest therein created by the pledge agreement. No holder of purchase contracts will be permitted to withdraw the pledged securities related to such purchase contracts from the pledge arrangement.

The prospectus supplement relating to any particular issuance of purchase contracts will describe the terms of the purchase contracts. The description in the prospectus supplement will not necessarily be complete, and reference will be made to the purchase contracts, and, if applicable, collateral or depository arrangements, relating to the purchase contracts, which will be filed with the SEC each time we issue purchase contracts. U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the purchase contracts will also be discussed in the prospectus supplement.

Description of Units

We may issue units comprising one or more securities described in this prospectus in any combination. The following description sets forth certain general terms and provisions of the units that we may offer pursuant to this prospectus. The particular terms of the units and the extent, if any, to which the general terms and provisions may apply to the units so offered will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit also is the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. Units will be issued pursuant to the terms of a unit agreement, which may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately at any time or at any time before a specified date. A copy of the forms of the unit agreement and the unit certificate relating to any particular issue of units will be filed with the SEC each time we issue units, and you should read those documents for provisions that may be important to you. For more information on how you can obtain copies of the forms of the unit agreement and the related unit certificate, see “Where You Can Find More Information.”

The prospectus supplement relating to any particular issuance of units will describe the terms of those units, including, to the extent applicable, the following:

- the designation and terms of the units and the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;
- any provision for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units; and
- whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form.

Plan of Distribution

We may sell the offered securities in and outside the United States:

- through underwriters or dealers;
- directly to purchasers;
- in a rights offering;
- in “at the market” offerings, within the meaning of Rule 415(a)(4) of the Securities Act, to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market on an exchange or otherwise;
- through agents; or
- through a combination of any of these methods.

The prospectus supplement will include the following information:

- the terms of the offering;
- the names of any underwriters or agents;
- the name or names of any managing underwriter or underwriters;
- the purchase price or initial public offering price of the securities;
- the net proceeds from the sale of the securities;
- any delayed delivery arrangements;
- any underwriting discounts, commissions and other items constituting underwriters’ compensation;
- any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and
- any commissions paid to agents.

Sale through Underwriters or Dealers

If underwriters are used in the sale, the underwriters will acquire the securities for their own account. The underwriters may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. Underwriters may offer securities to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more firms acting as underwriters. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to certain conditions, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all the offered securities if they purchase any of them. The underwriters may change from time to time any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

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 agreement, we may retain a dealer-manager to manage a subscription rights offering for us.

During and after an offering through underwriters, the underwriters may purchase and sell the securities in the open market. These transactions may include over-allotment and stabilizing transactions and purchases to cover syndicate short positions created in connection with the offering. The underwriters may also impose a penalty bid, which means that selling concessions allowed to syndicate members or other broker-dealers for the offered securities sold for their account may be reclaimed by the syndicate if the offered securities are repurchased by the syndicate in stabilizing or covering transactions. These activities may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the offered securities, which may be higher than the price that might otherwise prevail in the open market. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue these activities at any time.

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Some or all of the securities that we offer through this prospectus may be new issues of securities with no established trading market. Any underwriters to whom we sell our securities for public offering and sale may make a market in those securities, but they will not be obligated to do so and they may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. Accordingly, we cannot assure you of the liquidity of, or continued trading markets for, any securities that we offer.

If dealers are used in the sale of securities, we will sell the securities to them as principals. They may then resell those securities to the public at varying prices determined by the dealers at the time of resale. We will include in the prospectus supplement the names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction.

Direct Sales and Sales through Agents

We may sell the securities directly. In this case, no underwriters or agents would be involved. We may also sell the securities through agents designated from time to time at fixed prices or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. In the prospectus supplement, we will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the offered securities, and we will describe any commissions payable to the agent. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, any agent will agree to use its reasonable best efforts to solicit purchases for the period of its appointment.

We may sell the securities directly to institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act with respect to any sale of those securities. We will describe the terms of any sales of these securities in the prospectus supplement.

Remarketing Arrangements

Offered securities may also be offered and sold, if so indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, in connection with a remarketing upon their purchase, in accordance with a redemption or repayment pursuant to their terms, or otherwise, by one or more remarketing firms, acting as principals for their own accounts or as agents for us. Any remarketing firm will be identified and the terms of its agreements, if any, with us and its compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Delayed Delivery Contracts

If we so indicate in the prospectus supplement, we may authorize agents, underwriters or dealers to solicit offers from certain types of institutions to purchase securities from us at the public offering price under delayed delivery contracts. These contracts would provide for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts would be subject only to those conditions described in the prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will describe the commission payable for solicitation of those contracts.

General Information

We may have agreements with the agents, dealers, underwriters and remarketing firms to indemnify them against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute with respect to payments that the agents, dealers, underwriters or remarketing firms may be required to make. Agents, dealers, underwriters and remarketing firms may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

Legal Matters

Jones Day will pass upon the validity of the securities being offered hereby.

Experts

The consolidated financial statements of Athersys, Inc. and subsidiaries appearing in Athersys, Inc.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2016, including the schedule appearing therein, and the effectiveness of Athersys, Inc. and subsidiaries' internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016, have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.