

Tennis Champion Caroline Wozniacki and UCB Launch *Advantage Hers* Campaign for Women with Chronic Inflammatory Diseases

- Grand Slam winner Caroline Wozniacki is the highest-ranking female athlete known to have been diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis whilst still playing professional tennis
- *Advantage Hers* will equip and empower women around the world living with chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, to take more active roles in shared decision-making about their care

Brussels, Belgium – 9 September 2020 – UCB, a global biopharmaceutical company, has partnered with world-renowned tennis champion Caroline Wozniacki to launch [Advantage Hers](#), a major new global health initiative. Inspired by Caroline's own journey with rheumatoid arthritis, the campaign will raise awareness of the unmet needs of millions of women across the world living with chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis, and provide information and support to empower them to take more active roles in their care.

"I know from experience the difficulties of living day-to-day with a chronic disease such as rheumatoid arthritis, as well as the delays there can be getting a swift and accurate diagnosis. This is why I am so passionate about being part of *Advantage Hers*," said Caroline Wozniacki. "Through this new awareness and empowerment campaign, I want to connect with as many women with chronic inflammatory diseases around the world as possible, to help inspire, encourage and provide other women like me with as much support and information as possible. Collectively we can support each other in gaining advantage over our conditions – one small win at a time."

Chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis, affect more than 180 million people worldwide,^{1,2,3} approximately half of which are women.^{4,5,6} These chronic conditions can place substantial physical and emotional strains on those living with them.^{7,8,9,10,11} Symptoms can vary, but include chronic pain, constant fatigue, gastrointestinal complications and frequent infections, as well as emotional burdens, such as depression or anxiety, and comorbidities like diabetes and heart disease.¹²

The *Advantage Hers* campaign is underpinned by a necessity to improve the standard of care for women with these chronic inflammatory diseases and the need to equip them with tools to help them become their own care self-advocates. Women with these conditions encounter unique challenges and gender disparities that need addressing, including delayed diagnosis in some of the conditions for women,^{13,14} increased physical and mental burdens as compared to men with the same diseases,^{7,8,9,11} and unaddressed concerns related to family planning and pregnancy.¹⁵

"We are inspired by Caroline's tenacity and winning mindset in the face of her health challenges. We are proud to partner with her on this exciting new program and be a part of her rheumatoid arthritis journey," said Emmanuel Caeymaex, Executive Vice President Immunology Solutions and Head of US, UCB. "The *Advantage Hers* campaign reflects our commitment to understanding and addressing the unique needs of women with these chronic inflammatory diseases around the world, and helping to make a meaningful difference to their lives."

As part of the program, Caroline will be sharing her rheumatoid arthritis journey across her social channels and encouraging others to become a part of the conversation by using #AdvantageHers.

She also plans to make appearances at high-profile events to share her story and drive awareness of the unmet needs of women with these chronic inflammatory diseases.

To get involved, follow Caroline's journey on her social channels (Instagram: [@carowozniacki](#); Twitter: [@CaroWozniacki](#); Facebook: [Caroline Wozniacki](#)), using #AdvantageHers. More information and resources on living with these chronic inflammatory diseases can be found at: [AdvantageHers.com](#).

About the *Advantage Hers* campaign

Advantage Hers is a global campaign designed to highlight the unmet needs and unique challenges of women living with a particular subset of chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis. Tennis champion Caroline Wozniacki is sharing her journey with rheumatoid arthritis on her social channels – from her initial struggles for a diagnosis, through the adjustments she is making in her life right now, to what goals she has for the future – to inspire, encourage and empower other women living with these chronic inflammatory diseases to take more active roles in their care. To learn more, please visit the campaign website: [AdvantageHers.com](#).

About chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis

Chronic inflammation is long-term inflammation – when the immune system recognizes and removes harmful stimuli – lasting anywhere from several months to years.¹² Chronic inflammatory disease is a broad and evolving description for conditions associated with chronic inflammation. UCB focuses particularly on rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis.

- Rheumatoid arthritis causes pain and stiffness in the joints;¹⁶
- Axial spondyloarthritis (including ankylosing spondylitis and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis) causes swelling in the sacroiliac joints or spine, which can lead to lower back pain and stiffness;¹⁷
- Psoriatic arthritis causes swelling, pain, fatigue and stiffness in the joints;¹⁸
- Psoriasis causes raised, red, scaly patches on the skin.¹⁹

These diseases have a high prevalence in the western world,^{1,2,20,21} particularly in women,^{4,5,6} and can lead to permanent joint damage, functional impairment and an increased risk of depression and anxiety.^{11,12}

An often-overlooked dimension of these chronic inflammatory diseases are unique challenges and gender disparities that women with these conditions face. For example, some women experience greater delays than men in receiving an accurate diagnosis in some of the conditions, which can affect their disease outcomes.^{13,14} Different chronic inflammatory diseases can also cause women to experience greater pain, fatigue,⁷ loss of function¹¹ and stress⁸ than men with these conditions. In addition, women living with these chronic inflammatory diseases may have gaps in their knowledge and unaddressed healthcare concerns, such as family planning, and may not feel empowered to ask the right questions to their doctor.¹⁵

About Caroline Wozniacki

Caroline Wozniacki is a 30-year-old former professional tennis player from Denmark who was born into a family of athletes; her father – and tennis coach – is a former footballer in Poland and Denmark, and her mother is a former member of the Polish national volleyball team. Caroline began playing tennis at the age of nine and her professional career took off at the age of 15 when she joined the World Tennis Association (WTA) tour, one year before she made the junior singles final at the Australian Open.²²

Caroline was at the peak of her tennis career in 2018 when she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. She has been a Grand Slam Champion and the world's top ranked female player on the court and is now taking on the title of patient advocate – sharing her personal rheumatoid arthritis journey with the world. Having retired from her tennis career in January 2020, Caroline plans to focus on other things, including advancing her studies, supporting women living with chronic inflammatory diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis and psoriasis, and to consider building a family.

About UCB

UCB, Brussels, Belgium (www.ucb.com) is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the discovery and development of innovative medicines and solutions to transform the lives of people living with severe diseases in immunology and neurology. With 7,500 people in approximately 40 countries, the company generated revenue of € 4.6 billion in 2018. UCB is listed on Euronext Brussels (symbol: UCB). Follow us on Twitter: @UCB_news

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Forward looking statements – UCB

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