

CYTRX CORP
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Registration No. 333-208803

PROSPECTUS

\$100,000,000

We may offer and sell from time to time up to \$100,000,000 in the aggregate of shares of our common stock, shares of our preferred stock and warrants in amounts, at prices and on terms that we will decide at the time of the offering. These securities may be offered and sold separately, together or as units with other securities. Each share of our common stock to be offered and sold is accompanied by one Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock Purchase Right that trades with our common stock.

We will provide the specific terms of these offers and sales in supplements to this prospectus. This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement. You should read this prospectus and the prospectus supplement carefully before you invest. We may offer securities directly to investors or through agents, underwriters or dealers. If any agents, underwriters or dealers are involved in the sale of any of our securities, their names and any applicable purchase prices, fees, commissions or discount arrangements will be set forth in the prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is traded on The NASDAQ Capital Market under the symbol "CYTR." On March 17, 2017, the last reported sale price of our common stock was \$0.40 per share. The aggregate market value of our outstanding common stock held by non-affiliates as of the date of this prospectus is approximately \$52.5 million, calculated based upon 114,141,078 shares of outstanding common stock held by non-affiliates and a per share price of \$0.46, the closing sale price of our common stock as reported on The NASDAQ Capital Market on February 21, 2017 (a date within 60 days of the date hereof). Pursuant to General Instruction I.B.6 of Form S-3, in no event will we sell securities registered on the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part in a public primary offering with a value exceeding more than one-third of our public float in any 12-month period if our public float, measured in accordance with such instruction, remains below \$75 million. As of the date hereof, we have not offered any securities pursuant to General Instruction I.B.6 of Form S-3 during the 12-month period prior to and including the date of this prospectus.

An investment in our securities involves significant risks. Before purchasing any securities, you should consider carefully the risks referred to under “Risk Factors” on page 3 of this prospectus and in the prospectus supplement.

NEITHER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR ANY STATE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAS APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED THESE SECURITIES OR DETERMINED THAT THIS PROSPECTUS IS COMPLETE OR ACCURATE. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

The date of this prospectus is March 30, 2017

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement (Reg. No. 333-208803) utilizing the “shelf registration” process that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, to permit us to offer and sell the securities described in this prospectus in one or more transactions. The plan of distribution of the securities is described in this prospectus under the heading “Plan of Distribution.”

As permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC, the registration statement filed by us includes additional information not contained in this prospectus. You may read the registration statement and the other reports we file with the SEC at the SEC’s web site or at the SEC’s offices described below under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information.”

This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time securities are sold, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and the prospectus supplement, together with additional information described in this prospectus under the heading “Where You Can Find More Information.”

You should rely only on the information provided in this prospectus and in the prospectus supplement, including any information incorporated by reference. For more details on information incorporated herein by reference, you should review the discussion contained under the heading “Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference.” We have not authorized anyone to provide you with information different from that contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in the prospectus supplement. We are offering the securities only in jurisdictions where offers are permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or the prospectus supplement is accurate at any date other than the date indicated on the cover page of these documents.

NOTE ON FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Some of the statements contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or in the prospectus supplement may include forward-looking statements that reflect our current views with respect to our research and development activities, business strategy, business plan, financial performance and other future events. These statements include forward-looking statements both with respect to us, specifically, and the biotechnology sector, in general. We make these statements pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Statements that include the words “expect,” “intend,” “plan,” “believe,” “project,” “estimate,” “may,” “should,” “anticipate,” “similar statements of a future or forward-looking nature identify forward-looking statements for purposes of the

federal securities laws or otherwise.

All forward-looking statements involve inherent risks and uncertainties, and there are or will be important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated in these statements. We believe that these factors include, but are not limited to, those factors set forth under the caption "Risk Factors" in this prospectus and in any prospectus supplement and under the captions "Business," "Legal Proceedings," "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations," "Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk" and "Controls and Procedures" in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K incorporated herein by reference, all of which you should review carefully. Please consider our forward-looking statements in light of those risks as you read this prospectus and the prospectus supplement. We undertake no obligation to publicly update or review any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future developments or otherwise.

If one or more of these or other risks or uncertainties materializes, or if our underlying assumptions prove to be incorrect, actual results may vary materially from what we anticipate. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or individuals acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by this Note. Before purchasing any of our securities, you should consider carefully all of the factors set forth or referred to in this prospectus and in the prospectus supplement that could cause actual results to differ.

INDUSTRY DATA

Unless otherwise indicated, information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus concerning our industry, including our general expectations and market opportunity, is based on information from our own management estimates and research, as well as from industry and general publications and research, surveys and studies conducted by third parties. Management estimates are derived from publicly available information, our knowledge of our industry and assumptions based on such information and knowledge, which we believe to be reasonable. In addition, assumptions and estimates of our and our industry's future performance are necessarily subject to a high degree of uncertainty and risk due to a variety of factors, including those referred to under "Risk Factors" below in this prospectus. These and other factors could cause our future performance to differ materially from our assumptions and estimates.

TRADEMARKS

CytRx and LADR are some of our trademarks used in this prospectus. This prospectus also includes trademarks, trade names and service marks that are the property of other organizations. Solely for convenience, trademarks and trade names referred to in this prospectus sometimes appear without the ® and ™ symbols, but those references are not intended to indicate that we will not assert, to the fullest extent under applicable law, our rights, or that the applicable owner will not assert its rights, to these trademarks and trade names.

ABOUT CYTRX

Company Overview

CytRx Corporation (“we,” “us,” “our” or the “company”) is a biopharmaceutical research and development company specializing in oncology. We currently are focused on the clinical development of aldoxorubicin, our modified version of doxorubicin. We are also developing new anti-cancer drug conjugates that utilize our Linker Activated Drug Release (LADR™) technology.

We are a Delaware corporation, incorporated in 1985. Our corporate offices are located at 11726 San Vicente Boulevard, Suite 650, Los Angeles, California 90049, and our telephone number is (310) 826-5648. Our web site is located on the worldwide web at <http://www.cytrx.com>. We do not incorporate by reference into this prospectus the information on, or accessible through, our website, and you should not consider it as part of this prospectus.

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves significant risks, including those set forth under the caption “Risk Factors” in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K incorporated herein by reference. The prospectus supplement relating to a particular offering will contain a discussion of risks applicable to an investment in the securities offered. Prior to making a decision about investing in our securities, you should carefully consider the specific factors discussed under the heading “Risk Factors” in the applicable prospectus supplement together with all of the other information contained in the prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we state otherwise in the accompanying prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities offered by this prospectus for working capital and general corporate purposes, including the clinical trials of our product candidates. General corporate purposes also may include funding of capital expenditures, payments in connection with possible future acquisitions and strategic investments and repayment of future indebtedness.

We have not determined the amounts we plan to spend on any of the areas listed above or the timing of these expenditures. As a result, our management will have broad discretion to allocate the net proceeds from this offering. Pending application of the net proceeds as described above, we expect to invest the net proceeds in short-term, interest-bearing, investment-grade securities pursuant to our investment policy.

FINANCIAL RATIOS

If required in connection with any offer of preference equity securities, we will provide a ratio of preference dividends to earnings in the related prospectus supplement.

DIVIDEND POLICY

Our board of directors sets our dividend policy. We have never paid any cash dividends on our common stock and do not intend to declare cash dividends on our common stock in the foreseeable future. We currently intend to retain all available funds and any future earnings for use in the operation and expansion of our business, but we may determine in the future to declare or pay cash dividends on our common stock. Any future determination as to the declaration and payment of dividends will be at the discretion of our board of directors and will be dependent upon our results of operations and cash flows, our financial position and capital requirements, general business conditions, legal, tax, regulatory and any contractual restrictions on the payment of dividends, and any other factors our board of directors deems relevant.

THE SECURITIES THAT WE MAY OFFER

We, directly or through agents, dealers or underwriters designated from time to time, may offer, issue and sell, together or separately, up to \$100,000,000 in the aggregate of:

- shares of our common stock, par value \$0.001 per share;
- shares of our preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share;
- warrants to purchase our common stock or preferred stock; and

• any combination of the securities listed above, separately or as units, each on terms to be determined at the time of sale.

The common stock, preferred stock, warrants and units collectively are referred to in this prospectus as the “securities.”

We have summarized below the material terms of the various types of securities that we may offer. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement the detailed terms of the securities offered by that supplement. If indicated in the prospectus supplement, the terms of the offered securities may differ from the terms summarized below.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

As of March 15, 2017, our authorized capital stock consisted of 250,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.001 par value per share, of which 117,322,895 shares were outstanding, and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.01 par value per share, of which 25,000 shares have been designated as Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock and 3,900 shares have been designated as Series B Convertible Preferred Stock. There were 3,108 shares of our Series B Convertible Preferred Stock outstanding as of December 31, 2016, of which 2,712 shares had been converted into shares of our common stock and retired as of March 15, 2017. We have reserved all of the shares of our Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock for issuance upon the exercise of the rights under our Shareholder Protection Rights Agreement described below.

The following summary of certain provisions of our common stock and preferred stock does not purport to be complete. You should refer to our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and our restated bylaws, which are filed with or incorporated by reference in the registration statement relating to this offering filed by us with the SEC. The summary below is also qualified by reference to the provisions of applicable Delaware corporation law.

Common Stock

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote per share on matters on which our stockholders vote, including with respect to the election of directors. Holders of common stock are entitled to receive dividends, if declared by our board of directors, out of funds that we may legally use to pay dividends. See the section of this prospectus entitled “Dividend Policy” for further information. If we liquidate or dissolve, holders of common stock are entitled to share ratably in our assets once our debts and any liquidation preference owed to holders of any then-outstanding preferred stock are paid. No shares of preferred stock will be outstanding immediately after the closing of this offering. All shares of common stock that are outstanding as of the date of this prospectus supplement are, and all shares we are selling in this offering, upon their issuance and sale, will be, fully-paid and nonassessable. Holders of our common stock have no preemptive, conversion or subscription rights, and there are no redemption or sinking fund provisions with respect to our common stock.

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors has the authority to issue shares of our authorized and unissued preferred stock in one or more series and to fix the rights of each series. These rights may include dividend rights, dividend rates, conversion rights, voting rights, terms of redemption, redemption prices, liquidation preferences, sinking fund terms, and the number of shares that constitute any series. The board of directors may exercise this authority without any further action by our stockholders.

Our board of directors will fix the rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications and restrictions of the preferred stock of each series that we sell under this prospectus in the certificate of designation relating to each such series. We will incorporate by reference as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part or as an exhibit to one or more current reports on Form 8-K, the form of any certificate of designation that describes the terms of the series of preferred stock we are offering before the issuance of the related series of preferred stock. This description will include:

- the title and stated value;
- the number of shares we are offering;
- the liquidation preference per share;
- the purchase price per share;
- the dividend rate per share, dividend period, payment date or dates and method of calculation of dividends;
- whether dividends will be cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends will accumulate;
- our right, if any, to defer payment of dividends and the maximum length of any such deferral period;
- the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any;
- the provisions for a sinking fund, if any;

• the provisions for redemption or repurchase, if applicable, and any restrictions on our ability to exercise those redemption and repurchase rights;

- any listing of the preferred stock on any securities exchange or market;

• whether the preferred stock will be convertible into our common stock or other securities of ours, including warrants, and, if applicable, the conversion price, or how it will be calculated, and under what circumstances and the mechanism by which it may be adjusted, and the conversion period;

• whether the preferred stock will be exchangeable into debt securities or other securities of ours, and, if applicable, the exchange price, or how it will be calculated, and under what circumstances it may be adjusted, and the exchange period;

- voting rights, if any;

- preemptive rights, if any;

- restrictions on transfer, sale or other assignment, if any;

- a discussion of any material United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock;

• the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights if we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our affairs;

• any limitations on issuances of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior or on a parity with the series of preferred stock being issued as to dividend rights and rights if we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our affairs; and

• any other specific terms, rights, preferences, privileges, qualifications or limitations of, or restrictions on, the preferred stock.

If we issue and sell shares of preferred stock pursuant to this prospectus, the shares will be fully paid and nonassessable and will not have, or be subject to, any preemptive or similar rights.

The laws of the State of Delaware, the state of our incorporation, provide that the holders of preferred stock will have the right to vote separately as a class on any proposal involving fundamental changes in the rights of holders of such preferred stock. This right is in addition to any voting rights that may be provided for in the applicable certificate of

designation.

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We believe the power to issue preferred stock will provide our board of directors with flexibility in connection with certain possible corporate transactions. The issuance of preferred stock, however, could adversely affect the voting power of holders of our common stock, restrict their rights to receive payment upon liquidation, and have the effect of delaying, deferring, or preventing a change in control which may be beneficial to our stockholders.

Anti-Takeover Measures

Delaware Law

Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law is applicable to takeovers of certain Delaware corporations, including us. Subject to exceptions enumerated in Section 203, Section 203 provides that a corporation shall not engage in any business combination with any “interested stockholder” for a three-year period following the date that the stockholder becomes an interested stockholder unless:

- prior to that date, the board of directors of the corporation approved either the business combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder;

- upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced, though some shares may be excluded from the calculation; or

- on or subsequent to that date, the business combination is approved by the board of directors of the corporation and by the affirmative votes of holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Except as specified in Section 203, an interested stockholder is generally defined to include any person who, together with any affiliates or associates of that person, beneficially owns, directly or indirectly, 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation, or is an affiliate or associate of the corporation and was the owner of 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation, any time within three years immediately prior to the relevant date. Under certain circumstances, Section 203 makes it more difficult for an interested stockholder to effect various business combinations with a corporation for a three-year period, although the stockholders may elect not to be governed by this section, by adopting an amendment to the certificate of incorporation or by-laws, effective 12 months after adoption. Our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and by-laws do not opt out from the restrictions imposed under Section 203. We anticipate that the provisions of Section 203 may encourage companies interested in acquiring us to negotiate in advance with the board because the stockholder approval requirement would be avoided if a majority of the directors then in office excluding an interested stockholder approve either the business

combination or the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder. These provisions may have the effect of deterring hostile takeovers or delaying changes in control, which could depress the market price of our common stock and deprive stockholders of opportunities to realize a premium on shares of common stock held by them.

Charter and By-Law Provisions

In addition to the board of directors' ability to issue shares of preferred stock, our amended and restated certificate of incorporation and restated by-laws contain the following provisions that may have the effect of discouraging unsolicited acquisition proposals:

- our restated by-laws classify the board of directors into three classes with staggered three-year terms;
- under our restated by-laws, our board of directors may enlarge the size of the board and fill the vacancies;

our restated by-laws provide that a stockholder may not nominate candidates for the board of directors at any annual or special meeting unless that stockholder notifies us of its intention a specified period in advance and provides us with certain required information;

stockholders who wish to bring business before the stockholders at our annual meeting must provide advance notice; and

our restated by-laws provide that special meetings of stockholders may only be called by our board of directors or by an officer so instructed by our board.

Our restated by-laws also provide that, unless we consent in writing to the selection of an alternative forum, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will be the sole and exclusive forum for:

- any derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf;

- any action asserting a claim of breach of a fiduciary duty owed by any director, officer or other employee of the company to us or our stockholders;

- any action asserting a claim arising pursuant to any provision of the Delaware General Corporation Law; or

- any action asserting a claim governed by the internal affairs doctrine.

Our restated by-laws further provide that any person or entity purchasing or otherwise acquiring any interest in shares of capital stock of the company is deemed to have notice of and consented to the foregoing provision.

Shareholder Protection Rights Agreement

Our board of directors adopted a Shareholder Protection Rights Agreement, or Rights Agreement, dated April 16, 1997, as amended, between us and American Stock Transfer & Trust Co., as Rights Agent. The Rights Agreement will expire on April 16, 2022, unless renewed or extended by our board of directors. A series of our preferred stock, designated as Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock, par value \$0.01 per share, was created in accordance with the Rights Agreement. The Rights Agreement is designed to deter coercive takeover tactics, including the accumulation of shares in the open market or through private transactions, and to prevent an acquirer from gaining control of us without offering a fair and adequate price and terms to all of our stockholders. As such, the Rights Agreement is intended to enhance our board of directors' ability to protect stockholder interests and help to assure that stockholders receive fair and equal treatment in the event any proposed takeover of CytRx is made in the future. Pursuant to the Rights Agreement, our board of directors declared a dividend distribution of one preferred stock purchase right for each outstanding share of our common stock. The preferred stock purchase rights are attached to, and trade with, our common stock. The purchase rights are exercisable only upon the occurrence of certain triggering events described in the Rights Agreement.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, 40 Wall Street, New York, New York 10005.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may offer and issue warrants to purchase shares of our common stock or preferred stock. The warrants may be issued independently or as a part of units consisting of shares of our common stock or preferred stock and warrants to purchase additional shares of our common stock or preferred stock. If the warrants are issued pursuant to warrant agreements, we will so specify in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants being offered pursuant to the prospectus supplement.

The following description will apply to the warrants offered by this prospectus unless we provide otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement for a particular series of warrants may specify different or additional terms. The forms of any warrant certificates or warrant agreements evidencing the warrants that we issue will be filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference into this prospectus, and you should carefully review such documents.

The prospectus supplement will describe the following terms of warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities to the extent applicable:

- the title of the warrants;
- the common stock or preferred stock for which the warrants are exercisable;
- the price at which the warrants will be issued and the exercise price of the warrants;
- the aggregate number of warrants offered;
- the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock that may be purchased upon the exercise of each warrant;
- whether the warrants are being offered separately or as a part of units consisting of shares of our common stock or preferred stock and warrants to purchase additional shares of our common stock or preferred stock;
- the terms of any right by us to redeem the warrants;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence and the date on which this right will expire;
- the procedures for exercising the warrants;

- the terms on which the warrants may be amended;

the terms of any adjustments in the warrant exercise price and the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock purchasable upon the exercise of each warrant to be made in certain events, including the issuance of a stock dividend to holders of common stock or preferred stock or a stock split, reverse stock split, combination, subdivision or reclassification of common stock;

the effect on the warrants of our merger or consolidation with another entity or our sale of all or substantially all of our assets;

- the maximum or minimum number of warrants which may be exercised at any time; and
- the material United States federal income tax consequences applicable to the warrants and their exercise.

Holders of warrants to purchase common stock or preferred stock will not be entitled, by virtue of being such holders, to vote, consent, receive dividends, receive notice as stockholders with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter, or to exercise any rights whatsoever as our stockholders.

Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the warrants offered thereby. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void. Upon our receipt of the exercise price of the warrants upon the due exercise of the warrants, we will, as soon as practicable, forward the securities purchasable upon exercise. If less than all of the warrants represented by such warrant certificate are exercised, a new warrant certificate will be issued for the remaining warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may offer and issue units that consist of shares of our common stock or preferred stock and warrants to purchase additional shares of our common stock or preferred stock. For example, we may elect to issue units for a specified price per unit, with each unit consisting of one share of our common stock or preferred stock and one warrant to purchase an additional share of our common stock or preferred stock at a specified price. The holder of a unit will also hold each of the securities that is included in the unit.

We have provided in the preceding sections of this prospectus a general description of our common stock, preferred stock, and warrants that we may offer. If we elect to offer units, we will describe the specific terms of the units in a supplement to this prospectus. Among other things, the prospectus supplement will describe, to the extent applicable:

- the price of each unit;
- the securities comprising each unit;
- the exercise price of the warrants comprising part of the units;
- the aggregate number of units offered;
- the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock that may be purchased upon the exercise of each warrant comprising part of a unit;
- the terms of any right by us to redeem any of the securities comprising the units;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants forming part of the units will commence and the date on which this right will expire;
- any transfer restrictions on the units, including whether the securities comprising the units may be transferred separately;
- the terms on which the units or warrants forming part of the units may be amended;
- with respect to preferred stock forming part of the units, the other matters listed above under “Description of Capital Stock—Preferred Stock”;
- with respect to warrants forming part of the units, the other matters listed above under “Description of Warrants”; and
- the material United States federal income tax consequences applicable to the units.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities being offered hereby in one or more of the following ways from time to time:

- through agents to the public or to investors;
- to one or more underwriters for resale to the public or to investors;

in “at the market” offerings, within the meaning of Rule 415(a)(4) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market, on an exchange or otherwise;

- directly to investors; or
- through a combination of these methods of sale.

We will set forth in a prospectus supplement the terms of an offering of shares of our securities, including.

- the name or names of any agents or underwriters;
- the purchase price of the securities being offered and the proceeds we will receive from the sale;
- any over-allotment options under which underwriters may purchase additional securities from us;
- any agency fees or underwriting discounts and other items constituting agents’ or underwriters’ compensation;
- the public offering price; and
- any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers.

We may distribute the securities from time to time in one or more transactions;

- at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;
- at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;
- at prices related to such prevailing market prices; or
- at negotiated prices.

We may also, from time to time, authorize dealers, acting as our agents, to offer and sell securities upon the terms and conditions set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. We, or the purchasers of securities for whom the underwriters may act as agents, may compensate underwriters in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions, in connection with the sale of securities. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent. Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, an agent will be acting on a “best efforts” basis and a dealer will purchase securities as a principal, and may then resell the common stock at varying prices to be determined by the dealer.

We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement any compensation we will pay to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers. The dealers and agents participating in the distribution of securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions. We may enter into agreements to indemnify underwriters, dealers and agents against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act and to reimburse these persons for certain expenses. We may grant underwriters who participate in the distribution of securities we are offering under this prospectus an option to purchase additional shares to cover over-allotments, if any, in connection with the distribution.

To facilitate the offering of securities, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain, or otherwise affect the price of the securities. This may include over-allotments or short sales of the securities, which involve the sale by persons participating in the offering of more securities than we sold to them. In these circumstances, these persons would cover such over-allotments or short positions by making purchases in the open market or by exercising their over-allotment option, if any. In addition, these persons may stabilize or maintain the price of the securities by bidding for or purchasing securities in the open market or by imposing penalty bids, whereby selling concessions allowed to dealers participating in the offering may be reclaimed if securities sold by them is repurchased in connection with stabilization transactions. The effect of these transactions may be to stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. These transactions may be discontinued at any time.

Any underwriters who are qualified market makers on The NASDAQ Capital Market may engage in passive market making transactions in the securities on The NASDAQ Capital Market in accordance with Rule 103 of Regulation M, during the business day prior to the pricing of the offering, before the commencement of offers or sales of the securities. Passive market makers must comply with applicable volume and price limitations and must be identified as passive market makers. In general, a passive market maker must display its bid at a price not in excess of the highest independent bid for such security; if all independent bids are lowered below the passive market maker's bid, however, the passive market maker's bid must then be lowered when certain purchase limits are exceeded.

Certain underwriters, dealers or agents and their associates may engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of our business.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available to the public over the Internet at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. The SEC's website contains reports, proxy and information statements and other information regarding issuers such as us that file electronically with the SEC. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549, and may obtain copies of these documents at prescribed rates by writing to the SEC. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of its Public Reference Room.

Information about us is also available at our website at www.cytrx.com; however, information on our website is not incorporated into this prospectus and is not a part of this prospectus.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" the information we have filed with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to another document that we have filed separately with the SEC. You should read the information incorporated by reference because it is an important part of this prospectus. Any statement in a document we incorporate by reference into this prospectus will be considered to be modified or superseded to the extent a statement contained in this prospectus or any other subsequently filed document that is incorporated by reference into this prospectus modifies or supersedes that statement. The modified or superseded statement will not be considered to be a part of this prospectus, except as modified or superseded.

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We incorporate by reference the following information or documents that we have filed with the SEC (excluding those portions of any document that are “furnished” and not “filed” in accordance with SEC rules):

- our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2016 filed with the SEC on March 15, 2017;

- our Current Reports on Form 8-K and Form 8-K/A filed with the SEC on January 6, 2017, January 13, 2017, February 24, 2017 and March 15, 2017, respectively;

- the description of our securities as described in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed under the Exchange Act on March 17, 1987 (File No. 000-15327), and any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating any such description; and

- the description of our Series A Junior Participating Preferred Stock Purchase Rights as described in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed under the Exchange Act on April 17, 1997 (File No. 000 15327), and any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating any such descriptions.

We also incorporate by reference all documents filed by us pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date on which we filed the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and prior to the termination of this offering (excluding those portions of any document that are “furnished” and not “filed” in accordance with SEC rules).

Statements made in this prospectus or in any document incorporated by reference in this prospectus as to the contents of any contract or other document referred to herein or therein are not necessarily complete, and in each instance reference is made to the copy of such contract or other document filed as an exhibit to the documents incorporated by reference, each such statement being qualified in all material respects by such reference.

You may obtain a copy of the foregoing documents from us without charge by writing or calling us at the following address and telephone number: 11726 San Vicente Blvd., Suite 650 Los Angeles, California 90049, Attention: Corporate Secretary; (310) 826-5648.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities being offered hereby has been passed upon for us by TroyGould PC, Los Angeles, California. TroyGould PC and some of its attorneys own shares of our common stock constituting in the aggregate less than 1% of our outstanding shares of common stock.

EXPERTS

The financial statements and schedule as of December 31, 2016 and 2015 and for each of the three years in the period ended December 31, 2016 and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2016 incorporated by reference in this prospectus have been so incorporated in reliance on the reports of BDO USA, LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, incorporated herein by reference, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

PROSPECTUS

\$100,000,000

The date of this prospectus is March 30, 2017