

Dermira, Inc.
Form 424B5
March 18, 2019
Table of Contents

**Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
Registration No. 333-228249**

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission and is effective. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell the securities and we are not soliciting an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, dated March 18, 2019

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To the Prospectus dated November 21, 2018)

\$110,000,000

COMMON STOCK

We are offering an aggregate of \$110.0 million in shares of our common stock pursuant to this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

Our common stock is quoted on The Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol **DERM**. The last reported sale price of our common stock on March 18, 2019 was \$12.61 per share.

An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Please read Risk Factors on page S-9 of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement before investing in our securities.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

| | Per Share | Total |
|---|----------------------|--------------|
| Public offering price | \$ | \$ |
| Underwriting discounts and commissions ⁽¹⁾ | \$ | \$ |
| Proceeds, before expenses, to us | \$ | \$ |

⁽¹⁾ We refer you to Underwriting beginning on page S-20 of this prospectus supplement for information regarding underwriting compensation.

We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to an additional \$16.5 million in shares of our common stock from us at the public offering price, less the underwriting discounts and commissions, within 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement.

The underwriters expect to deliver the shares against payment on or about _____, 2019.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Citigroup

Cowen

**Cantor
Co-Managers**

Guggenheim Securities

Needham & Company

The date of this prospectus supplement is _____, 2019.

H.C. Wainwright & Co.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

| | |
|---|------|
| <u>About This Prospectus Supplement</u> | S-1 |
| <u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u> | S-3 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | S-9 |
| <u>Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | S-10 |
| <u>Use Of Proceeds</u> | S-11 |
| <u>Dilution</u> | S-13 |
| <u>Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences For Non-U.S. Holders Of Our Common Stock</u> | S-15 |
| <u>Underwriting</u> | S-20 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | S-27 |
| <u>Experts</u> | S-27 |
| <u>Where You Can Find Additional Information</u> | S-27 |
| <u>Incorporation Of Certain Information By Reference</u> | S-28 |

Prospectus

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | 1 |
| <u>Summary</u> | 2 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | 5 |
| <u>Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 6 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 7 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 8 |
| <u>Description of Capital Stock</u> | 10 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 15 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 23 |
| <u>Description of Subscription Rights</u> | 25 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 26 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 27 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 27 |
| <u>Where You Can Find Additional Information</u> | 27 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u> | 28 |

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is the prospectus supplement, including the documents incorporated by reference herein, which describes the specific terms of this offering and also adds to and updates the information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference therein. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference therein, provides more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. Generally, when we refer to this prospectus, we are referring to both parts of this document combined. Before you invest, you should carefully read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the information incorporated by reference herein and therein, as well as the additional information described in this prospectus supplement under **Where You Can Find Additional Information**. This prospectus supplement may add, update or change information contained in the accompanying prospectus. To the extent that any statement we make in this prospectus supplement is inconsistent with statements made in the accompanying prospectus or any documents incorporated by reference therein, the statements made in this prospectus supplement will be deemed to modify or supersede those made in the accompanying prospectus and such documents incorporated by reference therein. However, if any statement in one of these documents is inconsistent with a statement in another document with a later date that is incorporated by reference herein, the statement in the document having the later date modifies and supersedes the earlier statement. Before buying any of the shares of common stock that we are offering, we urge you to carefully read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any related free writing prospectus and all of the information incorporated by reference herein and therein, as well as the additional information described under the headings **Where You Can Find Additional Information** and **Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference**. These documents contain important information that you should consider when making your investment decision.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, and any related free writing prospectus filed by us with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC. Neither we nor the underwriters have authorized any other person to provide you with any information that is different. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it.

This prospectus supplement does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the shares of common stock described in this prospectus supplement or an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy such securities in any circumstances in which such offer or solicitation is unlawful. Persons outside the United States who come into possession of this prospectus supplement must inform themselves about, and observe any restrictions relating to, the offering of the shares of common stock and the distribution of this prospectus supplement outside the United States.

You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any related free writing prospectus is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed materially since those dates.

We further note that the representations, warranties and covenants made by us in any agreement that is filed as an exhibit to any document that is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus were made solely for the benefit of the parties to such agreement, including, in some cases, for the purpose of allocating risk among the parties to such agreements, and should not be deemed to be a representation, warranty or covenant to you. Moreover, such representations, warranties or covenants were accurate only as of the date when made. Accordingly, such representations, warranties and covenants should not be relied on as accurately representing the current state of our affairs.

Edgar Filing: Dermira, Inc. - Form 424B5

Unless the context indicates otherwise, as used in this prospectus, the terms Company, Dermira, Registrant, we, our refer to Dermira, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its sole subsidiary, taken as a whole, unless otherwise noted. When we refer to you, we mean the holders of our common stock.

S-1

Table of Contents

This prospectus supplement and the information incorporated herein by reference may include trademarks, service marks and trade names owned by us or others. Dermira is a registered trademark in Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland and the United States. Dermira and logo and D and logo are registered trademarks in China, the European Union, Hong Kong, Japan and Mexico and are pending trademark applications in Canada and the United States. Qbrexza is a registered trademark in Japan, Mexico and the United States and is a pending trademark application in Canada, China, European Union, Hong Kong and South Korea. All other service marks, trademarks and tradenames appearing in this prospectus supplement are the property of their respective owners. Solely for convenience, the trademarks and tradenames referred to in this prospectus supplement appear without the ® and symbols, but those references are not intended to indicate, in any way, that we will not assert, to the fullest extent under applicable law, our rights, or the right of the applicable licensor to these trademarks and tradenames.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights information contained in other parts of this prospectus supplement or incorporated by reference from our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018 and our other filings with the SEC listed under the section of the prospectus titled "Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference" contained in this prospectus supplement. This summary does not contain all of the information you should consider in making your investment decision. Before deciding to invest in our common stock, you should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, any related free writing prospectus and the information incorporated by reference herein and therein in their entirety. You should carefully consider, among other things, the matters discussed under the section titled "Risk Factors" contained in this prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in the other documents that are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Some of the statements in this prospectus supplement constitute forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. See the section titled "Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements."

Company Overview

We are a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to bringing biotech ingenuity to medical dermatology by delivering differentiated, new therapies to the millions of patients living with chronic skin conditions. We are committed to understanding the needs of both patients and physicians and using our insight to identify, develop and commercialize leading-edge medical dermatology products. Our approved treatment, QBREXZA (glycopyrronium) cloth, or QBREXZA, is indicated for pediatric and adult patients (ages nine and older) with primary axillary hyperhidrosis (excessive underarm sweating). In March 2019, we announced positive topline results from our Phase 2b dose-ranging study of lebrikizumab in adult patients for the treatment of moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (a severe form of eczema) and have early-stage research and development programs in other areas of dermatology.

We are focused on the development of therapeutic solutions in medical dermatology to treat skin conditions, such as hyperhidrosis and atopic dermatitis. These diseases impact millions of people worldwide and can have significant, multidimensional effects on patients' quality of life, including their physical, functional and emotional well-being. According to multiple published studies, patients report that medical dermatology conditions affect quality of life in ways comparable to other serious diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and arthritis.

Our portfolio consists of:

QBREXZA, a topical, once-daily anticholinergic cloth that was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, in June 2018 for the treatment of primary axillary hyperhidrosis in adult and pediatric patients nine years of age and older. Primary axillary hyperhidrosis is a medical condition with no known cause that results in underarm sweating beyond what is needed for normal body temperature regulation. Anticholinergics are a class of pharmaceutical products that exert their effect by blocking the action of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that transmits signals within the nervous system that are responsible for the activation of sweat glands. QBREXZA is applied directly to the skin and is designed to block underarm sweat production by inhibiting sweat gland activation. We began shipping QBREXZA to wholesalers and a preferred dispensing partner in September 2018, and QBREXZA became commercially available in pharmacies nationwide on October 1, 2018. We estimate peak sales potential for QBREXZA to be in the range of \$500 million to \$600 million in approximately six to seven years from our launch in October 2018.

Lebrikizumab, a novel, injectable, humanized monoclonal antibody targeting interleukin 13, or IL-13, that we are developing for the treatment of moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis. IL-13 is a naturally occurring cytokine that is thought to play an important role in promoting allergic inflammation and

S-3

Table of Contents

mediating its effects on bodily tissues, including in patients with atopic dermatitis. Lebrikizumab is designed to bind to IL-13 with high affinity, specifically preventing formation of the IL-13 receptor/interleukin 4 receptor complex and subsequent signaling. In August 2017, we entered into a license agreement with F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd and Genentech, Inc., collectively, Roche, pursuant to which we obtained exclusive, worldwide rights to develop and commercialize lebrikizumab for atopic dermatitis and all other therapeutic indications. Based on the results of two exploratory Phase 2 clinical trials conducted by Roche in atopic dermatitis patients, we initiated a Phase 2b clinical trial in January 2018 to evaluate the safety and efficacy of lebrikizumab as a monotherapy compared with placebo and to establish the dosing regimen for a potential Phase 3 program in patients with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis. We completed enrollment of 280 patients ages 18 years and older in the Phase 2b clinical trial in October 2018 and we announced positive topline results in March 2019. All three doses of lebrikizumab met the primary endpoint, demonstrating greater improvements in the Eczema Area and Severity Index, or EASI, score compared to placebo. The safety profile for lebrikizumab observed in the study was consistent with prior studies evaluating this investigational therapy. Following an end-of-Phase 2 meeting with the FDA, we plan to initiate a Phase 3 clinical development program for lebrikizumab by the end of 2019.

Early-stage research and development programs in other areas of dermatology.

Dermira was founded by Thomas G. Wiggans, Eugene A. Bauer, M.D., Christopher M. Griffith and Luis C. Peña with the vision of building a leading dermatology company. Our management team has extensive experience within the dermatology field. This experience brings us significant insight into product and commercial opportunities, as well as a broad network of relationships with leaders within the industry and medical community.

Recent Developments

Topline Results from Phase 2b Dose-Ranging Study of Lebrikizumab

In March 2019, we announced positive topline results from our Phase 2b dose-ranging study of lebrikizumab in adult patients with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis, which enrolled 280 patients at 57 sites in the United States. Across all of the doses evaluated, lebrikizumab showed a dose-dependent and statistically significant improvement in the primary endpoint, the mean percent change in EASI score from baseline to week 16. The improvement in EASI score was 62.3% for patients receiving lebrikizumab, 125 milligrams (mg), every four weeks ($p=0.0165$), 69.2% for patients receiving lebrikizumab, 250 mg, every four weeks ($p=0.0022$) and 72.1% for patients receiving lebrikizumab, 250 mg, every two weeks ($p=0.0005$) compared to 41.1% for patients receiving placebo.

Patients treated with lebrikizumab at the 250 mg dose every two or four weeks achieved statistically significant improvements in other key efficacy measures compared to placebo after 16 weeks of treatment, including:

Lebrikizumab 250 mg every four weeks:

33.7% of lebrikizumab-treated patients achieved clearing or near-clearing of skin lesions, as measured by an investigator's global assessment (IGA) score of 0 or 1, and a reduction of at least 2 points from baseline, compared to 15.3% with placebo ($p=0.0392$).

56.1% of lebrikizumab treated patients achieved a reduction of at least 75% from baseline in EASI score (EASI-75), compared to 24.3% on placebo (p=0.0021).

36.1% of lebrikizumab treated patients achieved a reduction of at least 90% from baseline in EASI score (EASI-90), compared to 11.4% on placebo (p=0.0062).

S-4

Table of Contents

Lebrikizumab 250 mg every two weeks:

44.6% of lebrikizumab-treated patients achieved clearing or near-clearing of skin lesions, as measured by an IGA score of 0 or 1, and a reduction of at least 2 points from baseline, compared to 15.3% with placebo (p=0.0023).

60.6% of lebrikizumab treated patients achieved a reduction of at least 75% from baseline in EASI-75, compared to 24.3% on placebo (p=0.0005).

44.0% of lebrikizumab treated patients achieved a reduction of at least 90% from baseline in EASI-90, compared to 11.4% on placebo (p=0.0006).

The secondary endpoints for the 125 mg lebrikizumab dosing arm did not meet statistical significance.

In addition, 47.4% and 70.0% of the patients at the 250 Q2W and 250 Q4W doses, respectively, achieved a four point or greater drop in their itch on the 11-point pruritus numerical rating scale compared to 27.3% of patients on placebo. We are continuing to evaluate several other secondary efficacy measures including the overall improvement in sleep, onset of action and durability.

The most common adverse events reported across all three lebrikizumab dosing arms were upper respiratory tract infection (7.5% vs. 5.8% for placebo), nasopharyngitis (6.6% vs. 3.8% for placebo), headache (3.1% vs. 5.8% for placebo) and injection site pain (3.1% vs. 1.9% for placebo). Rates of conjunctivitis (2.6% compared to no reports for placebo) and herpes infections (2.2% compared to no reports for placebo) were low. Overall, adverse events observed in lebrikizumab-treated patients were primarily mild to moderate in severity and infrequently led to study discontinuation.

Key inclusion criteria for the study included: chronic atopic dermatitis that had been present for ³¹ year before the screening visit; an EASI score ³¹⁶ at the screening and the baseline visit; an IGA score of 3 or 4 at the screening and the baseline visit; and ³¹⁰% body surface area of atopic dermatitis involvement at the screening and the baseline visit. Over the course of the 16-week treatment period, patients were seen by the investigators a total of 8 times.

For the primary analysis and key secondary analyses, all statistical tests were two-sided and performed at the 0.05 level of significance, and the primary method of handling missing efficacy data was the method of MCMC multiple imputation.

Patients requiring rescue therapy were permitted to use topical corticosteroids or systemic therapy. Any patient who required topical corticosteroids treatment was eligible to remain in the study and advised to continue the topical corticosteroids for as brief a period as possible. Any patient who required systemic therapy for atopic dermatitis during the study was discontinued from the study. Across the treatment arms, 12.7% of the patients in the lebrikizumab dosing arms recorded rescue therapy, compared to 34.6% of patients in the placebo arm.

During the first 16 weeks of the study, 21.9% of patients in the lebrikizumab dosing arms discontinued the study compared to 55.8% in the placebo arm.

Following an end-of-Phase 2 meeting with the FDA, we plan to initiate a Phase 3 clinical development program for lebrikizumab by the end of 2019. Once we enroll the first patient in the Phase 3 program, we estimate that topline data will be available 15 to 18 months later. Based on comparable biologics phase 3 trials in chronic skin diseases, a reasonable estimate of costs to conduct the Phase 3 clinical development program for lebrikizumab is approximately \$200 million.

S-5

Table of Contents

Current research projections suggest that the atopic dermatitis market will continue to grow and is projected to be approximately \$14.8 billion by 2025, making it the largest market segment in dermatology. Approximately 7 million people in the United States suffer from moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis, and the impact of this condition on a patient's quality of life is significant.

Almirall Option and License Agreement

Our option and license agreement with Almirall, S.A., or Almirall, provides Almirall with an option to exclusively license rights to develop lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of dermatology indications, including but not limited to atopic dermatitis, and commercialize lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of all indications in Europe. Pursuant to the option and license agreement, we will provide a data package to Almirall consisting of topline and additional data from our Phase 2b clinical study of lebrikizumab in moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis, along with a development plan, after which Almirall will have 45 days to exercise its option to exclusively license rights to develop lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of dermatology indications and commercialize lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of all indications in Europe. If exercised, we are entitled to a \$50.0 million option exercise fee.

Corporate Information

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware in August 2010 under the name Skintelligence, Inc. We changed our name to Dermira, Inc. in September 2011. Our principal executive offices are located at 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025, and our telephone number is (650) 421-7200. Our website address is www.dermira.com. The information contained on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. Investors should not rely on any such information in deciding whether to purchase our common stock.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

| | |
|--|---|
| Common stock offered by us | 8,723,235 shares |
| Option to purchase additional shares | We have granted the underwriters an option to purchase up to an additional 1,308,485 shares of our common stock for a period of 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement. |
| Common stock to be outstanding after this offering | 51,051,402 shares (or 52,359,887 shares if the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares is exercised in full) |
| Use of proceeds | We currently intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to continue to commercialize QBREXZA, to fund our planned Phase 3 clinical program for lebrikizumab, to fund our other research and development programs, and for working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes. Additionally, we may use a portion of the net proceeds from this offering to expand our business by in-licensing or acquiring, as the case may be, commercial products, product candidates, technologies, compounds, other assets or complementary businesses; however, we have no current commitments or obligations to do so. See the section titled "Use of Proceeds" for a more complete description of the intended use of the proceeds from this offering. |
| Risk factors | You should read the "Risk Factors" section of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement for a discussion of factors that you should read and consider before investing in our common stock. |

Nasdaq Global Select Market symbol DERM

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding immediately following this offering as shown above is based on 42,328,167 shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2018 and excludes:

6,950,215 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options under our 2010 Equity Incentive Plan, 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018, with a weighted-average exercise price of \$19.06 per share;

1,571,504 shares of our common stock issuable upon the settlement of outstanding restricted stock units under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018;

931,075 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan granted after December 31, 2018, with a weighted average exercise price of \$7.35 per share;

1,112,100 shares of our common stock issuable upon the settlement of outstanding restricted stock units granted under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan after December 31, 2018; and

2,236,564 shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under our equity compensation plans, consisting of (1) 999,551 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance under the 2014 Equity Incentive Plan as of December 31, 2018, (2) 1,229,558 shares of our common stock reserved for

S-7

Table of Contents

issuance under the 2014 Employee Stock Purchase Plan as of December 31, 2018 and (3) 7,455 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance under the 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018, as well as any future automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under the 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2014 Employee Stock Purchase Plan.

Except as otherwise indicated, all information in this prospectus supplement reflects and assumes:

that the underwriters do not exercise their option to purchase an additional \$16.5 million in shares of our common stock from us at the public offering price;

no exercise of the outstanding stock options or settlement of the restricted stock units described above subsequent to December 31, 2018;

the number of shares to be offered by us is calculated based on an assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019; and

that no at-the-market sales of our common stock are placed pursuant to the sales agreement between us and Cowen and Company, LLC, which allows for the sale of shares of our common stock with an aggregate offering price of up to \$75.0 million.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should consider carefully the risk factors described below together with all of the risks, uncertainties and assumptions discussed under Part I, Item 1A, the section titled Risk Factors, in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018, 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, before deciding whether to invest in shares of our common stock. The risks and uncertainties described below and incorporated by reference herein are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties that we are unaware of or that we deem immaterial may also become important factors that adversely affect our business. If any of the following risks actually occur, our business, financial condition, results of operations and future prospects could be materially and adversely affected. In that event, the market price of our common stock could decline, and you could lose part or all of your investment.

Risks Related to this Offering

Because management has broad discretion as to the use of the net proceeds from this offering, you may not agree with how we use them, and such proceeds may not be applied successfully.

Our management will have considerable discretion over the use of proceeds from this offering. We currently intend to use the net proceeds from this offering to continue to commercialize QBREXZA, to fund our planned Phase 3 clinical program for lebrizumab, to fund our other research and development programs, and for working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes. Additionally, we may use a portion of the net proceeds to us from the sale of our common stock under this prospectus to expand our business by in-licensing or acquiring, as the case may be, commercial products, product candidates, technologies, compounds, other assets or complementary businesses. However, our management will have broad discretion in the application of the net proceeds from this offering and could spend the proceeds in ways that do not necessarily improve our operating results or enhance the value of our common stock, or with which you otherwise do not agree. You will be relying on the judgment of our management concerning these uses and you will not have the opportunity, as part of your investment decision, to assess whether the proceeds are being used appropriately. The failure of our management to apply these funds effectively could, among other things, result in unfavorable returns and uncertainty about our prospects, each of which could cause the price of our common stock to decline. Pending their use, we may invest the net proceeds from this offering in a manner that does not produce income or that loses value. These investments may not yield a favorable return to our investors.

If you purchase shares of common stock sold in this offering, you will incur immediate and substantial dilution.

If you purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you will experience immediate and substantial dilution in the pro forma net tangible book value per share after giving effect to this offering of \$10.80 per share as of December 31, 2018, at an assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019, because the price that you pay will be substantially greater than the pro forma net tangible book value per share of the common stock that you acquire. This dilution is due in large part to the fact that our earlier investors paid substantially less than the offering price when they purchased shares of our capital stock. You will experience additional dilution upon exercise of the outstanding stock options and other equity awards that may be granted under our equity incentive plans, and when we otherwise issue additional shares of our common stock. See the section titled Dilution for more information.

Table of Contents

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any related free writing prospectus contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. All statements contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein other than statements of historical fact, including statements regarding our future consolidated results of operations and financial position, our business strategy and plans, market growth, and our objectives for future operations, are forward-looking statements. The words believe, may, will, estimate, potentially, continue, anticipate, intend, expect, could, would, similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. We have based these forward-looking statements largely on our current expectations and projections about future events and trends that we believe may affect our consolidated financial condition, consolidated results of operations, business strategy, short-term and long-term business operations and objectives and financial needs. These forward-looking statements are subject to a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions, including those described under the section titled Risk Factors in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018, as well as those discussed in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any related free writing prospectus. All subsequent written or oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or any person acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section.

Moreover, we operate in a very competitive and rapidly changing environment. New risks emerge from time to time. It is not possible for our management to predict all risks, nor can we assess the impact of all factors on our business or the extent to which any factor, or combination of factors, may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in any forward-looking statements we may make. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, the future events and trends discussed in this prospectus supplement and the documents incorporated by reference herein may not occur and actual results could differ materially and adversely from those anticipated or implied in the forward-looking statements.

You should not rely upon forward-looking statements as predictions of future events. The events and circumstances reflected in the forward-looking statements may not be achieved or occur. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements are reasonable, we cannot guarantee future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements. We undertake no obligation to update any of these forward-looking statements for any reason after the date of this prospectus supplement, or in the case of documents referred to or incorporated by reference herein or in the accompanying prospectus, the date of those documents, or to conform such statements to actual results or revised expectations, except as may be required under applicable U.S. securities laws. If we do update one or more forward-looking statements, no inference should be drawn that we will make additional updates with respect to those or other forward-looking statements.

You should read this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, any related free writing prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein with the understanding that our actual future results, levels of activity, performance and events and circumstances may be materially different from what we expect.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

At the assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019, we estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$103.0 million (or \$118.5 million if the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full), after deducting the underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us.

Each \$1.00 increase (decrease) in the assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, which was the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019, would increase (decrease) the net proceeds to us from this offering by approximately \$8.2 million, assuming that the number of shares offered by us, as set forth in Prospectus Supplement Summary The Offering, remains the same, and after deducting the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. The net proceeds information discussed above is illustrative only. We may increase or decrease the aggregate amount of the offering and the net proceeds to us from this offering is subject to adjustment based terms of this offering determined at pricing.

As of December 31, 2018, we had \$316.0 million in cash, cash equivalents and investments, plus \$90.0 million available under our credit agreement with Athyrium Opportunities III Acquisition LP, or Athyrium, \$40.0 million of which may be borrowed in a single draw at our option on or before July 1, 2019 and \$50.0 million of which may be borrowed in a single draw on or before March 2, 2020 provided that our consolidated net revenues from QBREXZA sales in the United States for the four fiscal quarter period then most recently ended, as calculated in accordance with the terms of the credit agreement were at least \$45.0 million, and subject to certain other covenants and closing conditions set forth in the credit agreement. We currently intend to use the net proceeds we receive from this offering, together with our existing cash, cash equivalents and investments, as follows:

to continue to commercialize QBREXZA;

to fund our planned Phase 3 clinical program for lebrizumab;

to fund our other research and development programs; and

for working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes.

Additionally, we may use a portion of the net proceeds from this offering to expand our current business by in-licensing or acquiring, as the case may be, commercial products, product candidates, technologies, compounds, other assets or complementary businesses, using cash or shares of our common stock. However, we have no current commitments or obligations to do so.

Based on (a) our planned use of the net proceeds from this offering, (b) the \$90.0 million available under our credit agreement with Athyrium, assuming that we meet the net revenues covenant and subject to other covenants and closing conditions set forth in the credit agreement, and (c) our existing cash, cash equivalents and investments as described above, we expect that such funds will be sufficient to fund our operations into the first half of 2021 and to enable us to fund our planned Phase 3 clinical program for lebrizumab through receipt of topline results.

The preceding:

- (i) does not reflect the potential exercise by Almirall, S.A., or Almirall, of its option under our option and license agreement with Almirall pursuant to which Almirall may, at its sole discretion, exercise an option to exclusively license rights to develop lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of dermatology indications and commercialize lebrikizumab for the treatment or prevention of all indications in Europe, which, if exercised, will entitle us to a \$50.0 million option exercise fee; and
- (ii) assumes that we achieve our internal forecast regarding future revenue from QBREXZA and future operating expenses.

S-11

Table of Contents

The expected use of the net proceeds from this offering represents our intentions based upon our current plans and business conditions. We cannot specify with certainty all of the particular uses of the net proceeds that we will receive from this offering, or the amounts that we will actually spend on the uses set forth above. The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures will depend on numerous factors, including the ongoing status of and results from clinical trials and other studies, the timing of potential regulatory submissions, the successful performance of QBREXZA, as well as any strategic collaborations that we may enter into with third parties for our product candidates, any in-licensing transactions or acquisitions, any unforeseen cash needs and the performance of our investments.

We will have broad discretion over the uses of the net proceeds of this offering and investors will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding the application of the proceeds. Pending these uses, we intend to invest the net proceeds in investment-grade, interest-bearing securities such as money market funds, certificates of deposit, commercial paper, repurchase agreements, corporate debt and guaranteed obligations of the U.S. government.

S-12

Table of Contents**DILUTION**

If you invest in our common stock, your ownership interest will be diluted to the extent of the difference between the public offering price per share of our common stock and the as adjusted net tangible book value per share of our common stock immediately after our public offering.

As of December 31, 2018, our net tangible book value (deficit) was \$(10.8) million, or \$(0.25) per share. Net tangible book value per share represents the amount of our tangible assets less our liabilities divided by the total number of shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2018.

Our as adjusted net tangible book value as of December 31, 2018 would be \$92.2 million, or \$1.81 per share. As adjusted net tangible book value per share reflects the sale by us of 8,723,235 shares of our common stock in this offering, assuming the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares is not exercised, at an assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019, after deducting the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. This represents an immediate increase in as adjusted net tangible book value of \$2.06 per share to existing stockholders and immediate dilution of \$10.80 per share to new investors purchasing shares in this offering.

The following table illustrates this per share dilution to new investors:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Assumed public offering price per share | \$ 12.61 |
| Net tangible book value (deficit) per share as of December 31, 2018, before giving effect to this offering | \$ (0.25) |
| Increase in as adjusted net tangible book value per share attributable to investors purchasing our common stock in this offering | 2.06 |
| As adjusted net tangible book value per share, after giving effect to this offering | 1.81 |
| Dilution per share to investors purchasing our common stock in this offering | \$ 10.80 |

Each \$1.00 increase (decrease) in the assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the last reported sale price per share of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on March 18, 2019, would increase (decrease) our as adjusted net tangible book value, after giving effect to this offering, by approximately \$8.2 million, assuming that the number of shares offered by us, as set forth in Prospectus Supplement Summary The Offering, remains the same, and after deducting the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. The as adjusted information discussed above is illustrative only and will be adjusted based on the actual public offering price and other terms of this offering determined at pricing.

If the underwriters exercise in full their option to purchase an additional \$16.5 million in shares of our common stock from us at an assumed public offering price of \$12.61 per share, the as adjusted net tangible book value after this offering would be \$2.06 per share, representing an increase in net tangible book value of \$2.31 per share to existing stockholders and immediate dilution in net tangible book value of \$10.55 per share to investors participating in this offering.

Edgar Filing: Dermira, Inc. - Form 424B5

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding immediately following this offering is based on 42,328,167 shares of our common stock outstanding as of December 31, 2018 and excludes:

6,950,215 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options under our 2010 Equity Incentive Plan, 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018, with a weighted-average exercise price of \$19.06 per share;

S-13

Table of Contents

1,571,504 shares of our common stock issuable upon the settlement of outstanding restricted stock units under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018;

931,075 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of outstanding stock options under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan granted after December 31, 2018, with a weighted average exercise price of \$7.35 per share;

1,112,100 shares of our common stock issuable upon the settlement of outstanding restricted stock units granted under our 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2018 Equity Inducement Plan after December 31, 2018; and

2,236,564 shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under our equity compensation plans, consisting of (1) 999,551 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance under the 2014 Equity Incentive Plan as of December 31, 2018, (2) 1,229,558 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance under the 2014 Employee Stock Purchase Plan as of December 31, 2018 and (3) 7,455 shares of our common stock reserved for issuance under the 2018 Equity Inducement Plan as of December 31, 2018, as well as any future automatic increases in the number of shares of our common stock reserved for future issuance under the 2014 Equity Incentive Plan and 2014 Employee Stock Purchase Plan.

Table of Contents

**MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES
FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF OUR COMMON STOCK**

This section summarizes the material U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock by non-U.S. holders (as defined below) pursuant to this offering. This summary does not provide a complete analysis of all potential U.S. federal income tax considerations relating thereto. The information provided below is based upon provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code, Treasury regulations promulgated thereunder, administrative rulings and judicial decisions currently in effect. These authorities may change at any time, possibly retroactively, or the Internal Revenue Service, or the IRS, might interpret the existing authorities differently. In either case, the tax considerations of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock could differ from those described below. As a result, we cannot assure you that the tax consequences described in this discussion will not be challenged by the IRS or will be sustained by a court if challenged by the IRS.

This summary does not address the tax considerations arising under the laws of any non-U.S., state or local jurisdiction, or under U.S. federal generation-skipping, gift and estate tax laws, except to the limited extent provided below. In addition, this discussion does not address tax considerations applicable to an investor's particular circumstances or to investors that may be subject to special tax rules, including:

banks, insurance companies or other financial institutions;

partnerships or entities or arrangements treated as partnerships or other pass-through entities for U.S. federal tax purposes (or investors in such entities);

corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid U.S. federal income tax;

persons subject to the alternative minimum tax or Medicare contribution tax;

tax-exempt organizations or tax-qualified retirement plans;

controlled foreign corporations or passive foreign investment companies;

persons who acquired our common stock as compensation for services;

dealers in securities or currencies;

traders in securities that elect to use a mark-to-market method of accounting for their securities holdings;

persons required for U.S. federal income tax purposes to conform the timing of income accruals to their financial statements under Section 451(b) of the Code;

persons that own, or are deemed to own, more than 5% of our capital stock (except to the extent specifically set forth below);

certain former citizens or long-term residents of the United States;

persons whose functional currency for tax purposes is not the U.S. dollar;

persons who hold our common stock as a position in a hedging transaction, straddle, conversion transaction or other risk reduction transaction;

persons who do not hold our common stock as a capital asset within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code (generally, for investment purposes); or

persons deemed to sell our common stock under the constructive sale provisions of the Code.

In addition, if a partnership or entity classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes is a beneficial owner of our common stock, the tax treatment of a partner in the partnership or an owner of the entity will depend upon the status of the partner or other owner and the activities of the partnership or other entity. Accordingly, this summary does not address tax consideration applicable to partnerships that hold our common stock. Partnerships and partners in such partnerships should consult their tax advisors.

Table of Contents

INVESTORS CONSIDERING THE PURCHASE OF OUR COMMON STOCK SHOULD CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISORS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS TO THEIR PARTICULAR SITUATIONS AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN, GENERATION-SKIPPING, GIFT, ESTATE, STATE OR LOCAL TAX LAWS, AND TAX TREATIES.

Non-U.S. Holder Defined

For purposes of this summary, a non-U.S. holder is any holder of our common stock, other than a partnership, that is not:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation, or other entity taxable as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes, created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state therein or the District of Columbia;

a trust if it (1) is subject to the primary supervision of a U.S. court and one of more U.S. persons have authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (2) has a valid election in effect under applicable U.S. Treasury regulations to be treated as a U.S. person; or

an estate whose income is subject to U.S. income tax regardless of source.

If you are a non-U.S. citizen individual, you may, in some cases, be deemed to be a resident alien, as opposed to a nonresident alien, by virtue of being present in the United States for at least 31 days in the calendar year and for an aggregate of at least 183 days during a three-year period ending in the current calendar year. For these purposes, all the days present in the current year, one-third of the days present in the immediately preceding year, and one-sixth of the days present in the second preceding year are counted. Resident aliens are subject to U.S. federal income tax as if they were U.S. citizens. Such an individual is urged to consult his or her own tax advisor regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock.

Dividends

We do not expect to declare or make any distributions on our common stock in the foreseeable future. If we do pay dividends on shares of our common stock, however, such distributions will constitute dividends for U.S. federal income tax purposes to the extent paid from our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under U.S. federal income tax principles. Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will constitute a return of capital that is applied against and reduces, but not below zero, a non-U.S. holder's adjusted tax basis in shares of our common stock. Any remaining excess will be treated as gain realized on the sale or other disposition of our common stock. See Sale or Other Disposition of Common Stock.

Any dividend paid to a non-U.S. holder on our common stock that is not effectively connected with a non-U.S. holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States will generally be subject to U.S. withholding tax at a 30% rate. The withholding tax might apply at a reduced rate, however, under the terms of an applicable income tax treaty between the United States and the non-U.S. holder's country of residence. You should consult your tax advisors regarding your entitlement to benefits under a relevant income tax treaty. Generally, in order for us or our paying

agent to withhold tax at a lower treaty rate, a non-U.S. holder must certify its entitlement to treaty benefits. A non-U.S. holder generally can meet this certification requirement by providing a Form W-8BEN or Form W-8BEN-E (or any successor form) or any other appropriate Form W-8 or appropriate substitute form to us or our paying agent. If the non-U.S. holder holds the stock through a financial institution or other agent acting on the holder's behalf, the holder will be required to provide appropriate documentation to the agent. The holder's agent will then be required to provide certification to us or our paying agent, either directly or through other intermediaries. If you are eligible for a reduced rate of U.S. federal withholding tax under an income tax treaty, you may obtain a refund or credit of any excess amounts withheld by filing an appropriate claim for a refund with the IRS in a timely manner.

Table of Contents

Dividends received by a non-U.S. holder that are effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business conducted by the non-U.S. holder, and if required by an applicable income tax treaty between the United States and the non-U.S. holder's country of residence, are attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States, are not subject to U.S. withholding tax. To obtain this exemption, a non-U.S. holder must provide us or our paying agent with a Form W-8ECI properly certifying such exemption. Such effectively connected dividends, although not subject to withholding tax, are taxed at the same graduated rates applicable to U.S. persons, net of certain deductions and credits. In addition to being taxed at graduated tax rates, dividends received by corporate non-U.S. holders that are effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business of the corporate non-U.S. holder may also be subject to a branch profits tax at a rate of 30% or such lower rate as may be specified by an applicable tax treaty.

For additional withholding rules that may apply to dividends paid to certain foreign entities, see the discussion below under the section titled "Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act."

Sale or Other Disposition of Common Stock

Subject to the discussion below regarding Backup Withholding and Information Reporting, non-U.S. holders will generally not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on any gains realized on the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock unless:

the gain (1) is effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. holder of a U.S. trade or business and (2) if required by an applicable income tax treaty between the United States and the non-U.S. holder's country of residence, is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the non-U.S. holder in the United States (in which case the special rules described below apply);

the non-U.S. holder is an individual who is present in the United States for a period or periods aggregating 183 days or more, as determined under special rules in the Code, during the calendar year in which the sale or disposition occurs and certain other conditions are met; or

the rules of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act, or FIRPTA, treat the gain as effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business.

The FIRPTA rules may apply to a sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock if we are, or were within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition and the non-U.S. holder's holding period, a U.S. real property holding corporation, or USRPHC. In general, we would be a USRPHC if interests in U.S. real estate comprised at least half of the value of our business assets. We do not believe that we are a USRPHC and we do not anticipate becoming one in the future. Even if we become a USRPHC, as long as our common stock is regularly traded on an established securities market, such common stock will be treated as U.S. real property interests only if beneficially owned by a non-U.S. holder that actually or constructively owned more than 5% of our outstanding common stock at some time within the five-year period preceding the disposition.

If you are an individual Non-U.S. Holder described in the second bullet above, you will be required to pay a flat 30% tax on the gain derived from the sale, which gain may be offset by certain U.S. source capital losses (even though you are not considered a resident of the United States), provided you have timely filed U.S. federal income tax returns with respect to such losses. If any gain from the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock, (1) is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business conducted by a non-U.S. holder and (2) if required by an

applicable income tax treaty between the United States and the non-U.S. holder's country of residence, is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by such non-U.S. holder in the United States, then the gain generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at the same graduated rates applicable to U.S. persons, net of certain deductions and credits. If the non-U.S. holder is a corporation, under certain circumstances, that portion of its earnings and profits that is effectively connected with its U.S. trade or business, subject to certain adjustments, generally would be subject also to a branch profits tax. The branch profits tax rate is 30%, although an applicable income tax treaty between the United States and the non-U.S. holder's country of residence might provide for a lower rate.

Table of Contents

Backup Withholding and Information Reporting

We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. holder the entire amount of a distribution on our common stock (whether or not the distribution represents a dividend or is subject to U.S. federal withholding tax) and the tax withheld, if any. Copies of these reports may be made available to tax authorities in the country where the non-U.S. holder resides.

The information reporting and backup withholding rules that apply to payments of dividends to certain U.S. shareholders of our common stock generally will not apply to dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder so long as the non-U.S. holder certifies its foreign status or otherwise establishes an exemption (and we or our paying agent do not have actual knowledge or reason to know the holder is a U.S. person or that the conditions of any other exemption are not, in fact, satisfied).

Under the Treasury regulations, the payment of proceeds from the disposition of shares of our common stock by a non-U.S. holder made to or through a U.S. office of a broker generally will be subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless the beneficial owner certifies, under penalties of perjury, among other things, its status as a non-U.S. holder (and the broker does not have actual knowledge or reason to know the holder is a U.S. person) or otherwise establishes an exemption. The payment of proceeds from the disposition of shares of our common stock by a non-U.S. holder made to or through a non-U.S. office of a broker generally will not be subject to backup withholding and information reporting, except as noted below. Information reporting, but not backup withholding, will apply to a payment of proceeds, even if that payment is made outside of the United States, if you sell our common stock through a non-U.S. office of a broker that is:

a U.S. person (including a foreign branch or office of such person);

a controlled foreign corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes;

a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income from certain periods is effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business; or

a foreign partnership if at any time during its tax year (a) one or more of its partners are U.S. persons who, in the aggregate, hold more than 50% of the income or capital interests of the partnership or (b) the foreign partnership is engaged in a U.S. trade or business;

unless the broker has documentary evidence that the beneficial owner is a non-U.S. holder and certain other conditions are satisfied, or the beneficial owner otherwise establishes an exemption (and the broker has no actual knowledge or reason to know to the contrary).

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld from a payment to a holder of common stock under the backup withholding rules can be credited against any U.S. federal income tax liability of the holder and may entitle the holder to a refund, provided that the required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act

The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or FATCA, imposes a U.S. federal withholding tax of 30% on certain withholdable payments (including dividends on our common stock) to foreign financial institutions (as specifically defined for this purpose) and other non-U.S. entities that fail to comply with certain certification and information reporting requirements. The obligation to withhold under FATCA currently applies to, among other items, dividends on our common stock. Foreign financial institutions located in jurisdictions that have an intergovernmental agreement with the United States governing these withholding and reporting requirements may be subject to different rules. The withholding tax described above will not apply if the foreign financial institution or non-financial foreign entity otherwise qualifies for an exemption from the rules. Under the applicable Treasury Regulations and administrative guidance, withholding under FATCA generally also would apply to payments of gross proceeds from the sale or other disposition of common stock on or after January 1, 2019.

Table of Contents

Under recently proposed regulations, however, no withholding will apply with respect to payments of gross proceeds. The preamble to the proposed regulations specifies that taxpayers are permitted to rely on such proposed regulations pending finalization.

U.S. Federal Estate Tax

The estates of nonresident alien individuals generally are subject to U.S. federal estate tax on property with a U.S. situs. Because we are a U.S. corporation, our common stock will be U.S. situs property and therefore will be included in the taxable estate of a nonresident alien decedent, unless an applicable estate tax treaty between the United States and the decedent's country of residence provides otherwise.

EACH PROSPECTIVE INVESTOR SHOULD CONSULT ITS OWN TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE PARTICULAR U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL AND FOREIGN TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE ACQUISITION, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF OUR COMMON STOCK, INCLUDING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ANY PROPOSED CHANGE IN APPLICABLE LAWS.

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Cowen and Company, LLC are acting as representatives of each of the underwriters named below. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, each underwriter named below has severally agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to that underwriter, the number of shares of common stock set forth opposite the underwriter's name in the following table.

| Underwriters | Number of Shares |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Citigroup Global Markets Inc. | |
| Cowen and Company, LLC | |
| Cantor Fitzgerald & Co. | |
| Guggenheim Securities, LLC | |
| Needham & Company, LLC | |
| H.C. Wainwright & Co., LLC | |
| Total | |

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the shares included in this offering are subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriters are obligated to purchase all the shares (other than those covered by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares described below) if they purchase any of the shares.

Shares sold by the underwriters to the public will be offered at the public offering price set forth on the cover of this prospectus supplement. Any shares sold by the underwriters to securities dealers may be sold at a discount from the public offering price not to exceed \$ _____ per share. If all the shares are not sold at the offering price, the underwriters may change the offering price and the other selling terms.

If the underwriters sell more shares than the total number set forth in the table above, we have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to _____ additional shares at the public offering price less the underwriting discount. To the extent the option is exercised, each underwriter must purchase a number of additional shares approximately proportionate to that underwriter's initial purchase commitment. Any shares issued or sold under the option will be issued and sold on the same terms and conditions as the other shares that are the subject of this offering.

We, our officers, directors and certain of our securityholders have agreed that, subject to specified limited exceptions, for a period of 90 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, and 60 days from the date of this prospectus supplement for certain of our securityholders, we and they will not, without the prior written consent of Citigroup Global Markets Inc. dispose of or hedge any shares or any securities convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our common stock. Citigroup Global Markets Inc., in its sole discretion, may release any of the securities subject to these lock-up agreements at any time without notice.

The shares are listed on The Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol **DERM**.

Edgar Filing: Dermira, Inc. - Form 424B5

The following table shows the underwriting discounts and commissions that we are to pay to the underwriters in connection with this offering. These amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

| | Paid by Dermira, Inc. | |
|-----------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| | No Exercise | Full Exercise |
| Per share | \$ | \$ |
| Total | \$ | \$ |

S-20

Table of Contents

We estimate that our portion of the total expenses of this offering will be \$450,000. We have also agreed to reimburse the underwriters for certain FINRA-related and other expenses incurred by them in connection with this offering in an amount up to \$30,000.

In connection with the offering, the underwriters may purchase and sell shares in the open market. Purchases and sales in the open market may include short sales, purchases to cover short positions, which may include purchases pursuant to the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares, and stabilizing purchases.

Short sales involve secondary market sales by the underwriters of a greater number of shares than they are required to purchase in the offering.

Covered short sales are sales of shares in an amount up to the number of shares represented by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

Naked short sales are sales of shares in an amount in excess of the number of shares represented by the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

Covering transactions involve purchases of shares either pursuant to the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares or in the open market in order to cover short positions.

To close a naked short position, the underwriters must purchase shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriters are concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering.

To close a covered short position, the underwriters must purchase shares in the open market or must exercise the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares. In determining the source of shares to close the covered short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase shares through the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

Stabilizing transactions involve bids to purchase shares so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum.

Purchases to cover short positions and stabilizing purchases, as well as other purchases by the underwriters for their own accounts, may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the shares. They may also cause the price of the shares to be higher than the price that would otherwise exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. The underwriters may conduct these transactions on The Nasdaq Global Select Market, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise. If the underwriters commence any of these transactions, they may discontinue them at any time.

Relationships

The underwriters are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities. Certain of the underwriters and their respective affiliates have in the past performed commercial banking, investment banking and advisory services for us from time to time for which they have received customary fees and reimbursement of expenses and may, from time to time, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of their business for which they may receive customary fees and reimbursement of expenses. In November 2015, we entered into an at-the-market program and sales agreement with Cowen and Company, LLC, under which we may, from time to time, offer and sell common stock having an aggregate offering value of up to \$75.0 million. In addition, in December 2018, Cowen and Company, LLC served as sole lead arranger and financial advisor on our credit agreement with Athyrium. In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriters and their respective affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (which may include bank loans and credit default

Table of Contents

swaps) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers and may at any time hold long and short positions in such securities and instruments. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and instruments of ours or our affiliates. The underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and short positions in such securities and instruments.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, or to contribute to payments the underwriters may be required to make because of any of those liabilities.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area, no offer of shares which are the subject of the offering has been, or will be made to the public in that Member State, other than under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive:

- a) to any legal entity which is a qualified investor as defined in the Prospectus Directive;
- b) to fewer than 150 natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- c) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of shares referred to in (a) to (c) above shall result in a requirement for the company or any representative to publish a prospectus supplement pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive, or supplement a prospectus pursuant to Article 16 of the Prospectus Directive.

Each person located in a Member State to whom any offer of shares is made or who receives any communication in respect of an offer of shares, or who initially acquires any shares will be deemed to have represented, warranted, acknowledged and agreed to and with each representative and the company that (1) it is a qualified investor within the meaning of the law in that Member State implementing Article 2(1)(e) of the Prospectus Directive; and (2) in the case of any shares acquired by it as a financial intermediary as that term is used in Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, the shares acquired by it in the offer have not been acquired on behalf of, nor have they been acquired with a view to their offer or resale to, persons in any Member State other than qualified investors, as that term is defined in the Prospectus Directive, or in circumstances in which the prior consent of the representatives has been given to the offer or resale; or where shares have been acquired by it on behalf of persons in any Member State other than qualified investors, the offer of those shares to it is not treated under the Prospectus Directive as having been made to such persons.

The company, the representatives and their respective affiliates will rely upon the truth and accuracy of the foregoing representations, acknowledgments and agreements.

This prospectus supplement has been prepared on the basis that any offer of shares in any Member State will be made pursuant to an exemption under the Prospectus Directive from the requirement to publish a prospectus supplement for offers of shares. Accordingly, any person making or intending to make an offer in that Member State of shares which

are the subject of the offering contemplated in this prospectus supplement may only do so in circumstances in which no obligation arises for the company or any of the representatives to publish a prospectus supplement pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive in relation to such offer. Neither the company nor the representatives have authorized, nor do they authorize, the making of any offer of shares in circumstances in which an obligation arises for the company or the representatives to publish a prospectus supplement for such offer. For the purposes of this provision, the expression an offer of shares to the public in relation to any shares in any Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase

S-22

Table of Contents

or subscribe the shares, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State, the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71/EC (as amended) and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Member State.

The above selling restriction is in addition to any other selling restrictions set out below.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Canada

The shares may be sold only to purchasers purchasing, or deemed to be purchasing, as principal that are accredited investors, as defined in National Instrument 45-106 *Prospectus Exemptions* or subsection 73.3(1) of the *Securities Act* (Ontario), and are permitted clients, as defined in National Instrument 31-103 *Registration Requirements, Exemptions and Ongoing Registrant Obligations*. Any resale of the shares must be made in accordance with an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the prospectus supplement requirements of applicable securities laws.

Securities legislation in certain provinces or territories of Canada may provide a purchaser with remedies for rescission or damages if this prospectus supplement (including any amendment thereto) contains a misrepresentation, provided that the remedies for rescission or damages are exercised by the purchaser within the time limit prescribed by the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory. The purchaser should refer to any applicable provisions of the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory for particulars of these rights or consult with a legal advisor.

Pursuant to section 3A.3 (or, in the case of securities issued or guaranteed by the government of a non-Canadian jurisdiction, section 3A.4) of National Instrument 33-105 *Underwriting Conflicts* (NI 33-105), the underwriters are not required to comply with the disclosure requirements of NI 33-105 regarding underwriter conflicts of interest in connection with this offering.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom

This prospectus supplement is only being distributed to, and is only directed at, persons in the United Kingdom that are qualified investors within the meaning of Article 2(1)(e) of the Prospectus Directive that are also (i) investment professionals falling within Article 19(5) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order 2005, as amended (the "Order") and/or (ii) high net worth entities falling within Article 49(2)(a) to (d) of the Order and other persons to whom it may lawfully be communicated (each such person being referred to as a "relevant person").

This prospectus supplement and its contents are confidential and should not be distributed, published or reproduced (in whole or in part) or disclosed by recipients to any other persons in the United Kingdom. Any person in the United Kingdom that is not a relevant person should not act or rely on this document or any of its contents.

Notice to Prospective Investors in France

Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering material relating to the shares described in this prospectus supplement has been submitted to the clearance procedures of the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers* or of the competent authority of another member state of the European Economic Area and notified to the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers*. The shares have not been offered or sold and will not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, to the public in France. Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering material relating to the shares has been or will be:

released, issued, distributed or caused to be released, issued or distributed to the public in France; or

used in connection with any offer for subscription or sale of the shares to the public in France.

S-23

Table of Contents

Such offers, sales and distributions will be made in France only:

to qualified investors (*investisseurs qualifiés*) or to a restricted circle of investors (*cercle restreint d'investisseurs*), in each case investing for their own account, all as defined in, and in accordance with articles L.411-2, D.411-1, D.411-2, D.734-1, D.744-1, D.754-1 and D.764-1 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*;

to investment services providers authorized to engage in portfolio management on behalf of third parties; or

in a transaction that, in accordance with article L.411-2-II-1°-or-2°-or 3° of the French *Code monétaire et financier* and article 211-2 of the General Regulations (*Règlement Général*) of the *Autorité des Marchés Financiers*, does not constitute a public offer (*appel public à l'épargne*).

The shares may be resold directly or indirectly, only in compliance with articles L.411-1, L.411-2, L.412-1 and L.621-8 through L.621-8-3 of the French *Code monétaire et financier*.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Hong Kong

No securities have been offered or sold, and no securities may be offered or sold, in Hong Kong, by means of any document, other than to persons whose ordinary business is to buy or sell shares or debentures, whether as principal or agent; or to professional investors, as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571) of Hong Kong (SFO) and any rules made under that Ordinance; or in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus supplement, as defined in the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) of Hong Kong (CO) or which do not constitute an offer or invitation to the public for the purpose of the CO or the SFO. No document, invitation or advertisement relating to the securities has been issued or may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public of Hong Kong (except if permitted under the securities laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to securities which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors, as defined in the SFO and any rules made under that Ordinance.

This prospectus supplement has not been registered with the Registrar of Companies in Hong Kong. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement may not be issued, circulated or distributed in Hong Kong, and the securities may not be offered for subscription to members of the public in Hong Kong. Each person acquiring the securities will be required, and is deemed by the acquisition of the securities, to confirm that he is aware of the restriction on offers of the securities described in this prospectus supplement and the relevant offering documents and that he is not acquiring, and has not been offered any securities in circumstances that contravene any such restrictions.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Japan

The offering has not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (Law No. 25 of 1948 of Japan, as amended), or FIEL, and the underwriters will not offer or sell any securities, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the FIEL and any other

applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore

This prospectus supplement has not been and will not be lodged or registered as a prospectus supplement with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement and any other document or

S-24

Table of Contents

material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (ii) to a relevant person pursuant to Section 275(1), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275, of the SFA, or (iii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

Where the shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is:

a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or

a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of the trust is an individual who is an accredited investor, securities (as defined in Section 239(1) of the SFA) of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the shares pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except:

to an institutional investor or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person arising from an offer referred to in Section 275(1A) or Section 276(4)(i)(B) of the SFA;

where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer;

where the transfer is by operation of law;

as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA; or

as specified in Regulation 32 of the Securities and Futures (Offers of Investments) (Shares and Debentures) Regulations 2005 of Singapore.

Solely for the purposes of its obligations pursuant to Section 309B of the SFA, we have determined, and hereby notify all relevant persons (as defined in the CMP Regulations 2018), that the shares are prescribed capital markets products (as defined in the CMP Regulations 2018) and Excluded Investment Products (as defined in MAS Notice SFA 04-N12: Notice on the Sale of Investment Products and MAS Notice FAA-N16: Notice on Recommendations on Investment Products).

Notice to Prospective Investors in Australia

This prospectus supplement is not a disclosure document for the purposes of Australia's Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) of Australia, or Corporations Act, has not been lodged with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission and is only directed to the categories of exempt persons set out below. Accordingly, if you receive this prospectus supplement in Australia:

You confirm and warrant that you are either:

- a sophisticated investor under section 708(8)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act;

- a sophisticated investor under section 708(8)(c) or (d) of the Corporations Act and that you have provided an accountant's certificate to the Company which complies with the requirements of section 708(8)(c)(i) or (ii) of the Corporations Act and related regulations before the offer has been made;

- a person associated with the Company under Section 708(12) of the Corporations Act; or

- a professional investor within the meaning of section 708(11)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act.

S-25

Table of Contents

To the extent that you are unable to confirm or warrant that you are an exempt sophisticated investor, associated person or professional investor under the Corporations Act any offer made to you under this prospectus supplement is void and incapable of acceptance.

You warrant and agree that you will not offer any of the securities issued to you pursuant to this prospectus supplement for resale in Australia within 12 months of those securities being issued unless any such resale offer is exempt from the requirement to issue a disclosure document under section 708 of the Corporations Act.

S-26

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of common stock offered hereby will be passed upon for us by Fenwick & West LLP, San Francisco, California, which together with an employee of Fenwick & West LLP, beneficially owns an aggregate of 43,134 shares of our common stock, representing approximately 0.1% of our outstanding shares of capital stock as of December 31, 2018. Certain legal matters relating to this offering will be passed upon for the underwriters by Cooley LLP, San Francisco, California.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018, and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2018, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our consolidated financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, and are required to file annual, quarterly and other reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. The SEC maintains an Internet site (www.sec.gov) that contains reports, proxy and information statements, and various other information about us. You may also inspect the documents described herein at our principal executive offices, 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025, during normal business hours.

Information about us is also available at our website at <http://www.dermira.com>. However, the information on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus and is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information from other documents that 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 part of this prospectus. Information in this prospectus supersedes information incorporated by reference that we filed with the SEC prior to the date of this prospectus. A Current Report (or portion thereof) furnished, but not filed, on Form 8-K shall not be incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below that we have filed with the SEC or may file with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the termination of any offering of common stock made by this prospectus:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2018, filed with the SEC on February 26, 2019;

the information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017 from our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 24, 2018;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K, filed with the SEC on February 12, 2019, February 28, 2019 and March 18, 2019 (with film numbers of 19686794 and 19688219); and

the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on September 29, 2014 under Section 12 of the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description.

We will furnish without charge to you, on written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents. You should direct any requests for documents to Dermira, Inc., 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025. Copies of the above reports may also be accessed from our website at www.investor.dermira.com. We do not incorporate the information from our website into this prospectus supplement and you should not consider any information on, or that can be accessed through, our website as part of this prospectus supplement.

Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, will be deemed modified, superseded or replaced for purposes of this prospectus supplement to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus supplement modifies, supersedes or replaces such statement.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

\$300,000,000

**Common Stock, Preferred Stock,
Debt Securities, Warrants, Subscription Rights and Units**

From time to time, we or selling security holders may offer our common stock or preferred stock, debt securities, warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities and/or units consisting of some or all of these securities, in any combination, together or separately, in one or more offerings, in amounts, at prices and on the terms that we will determine at the time of the offering and which will be set forth in a prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. The total amount of these securities will have an initial aggregate offering price of up to \$300,000,000.

You should read this prospectus, the information incorporated, or deemed to be incorporated, by reference in this prospectus, and any applicable prospectus supplement and related free writing prospectus carefully before you invest.

Our common stock is listed on The Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol **DERM**. The last reported sale price of our common stock on The Nasdaq Global Select Market on November 6, 2018 was \$12.21 per share. None of the other securities we may offer are currently traded on any securities exchange. The applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will contain information, where applicable, as to any other listing on The Nasdaq Global Select Market or any securities market or exchange of the securities covered by the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus.

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. You should review carefully the risks and uncertainties described under the heading Risk Factors beginning on page 5 of this prospectus and in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

The securities may be sold by us or selling security holders to or through underwriters or dealers, directly to purchasers or through agents designated from time to time. For additional information on the methods of sale, you should refer to the discussion under the heading **Plan of Distribution** in this prospectus. If any underwriters, dealers or agents are involved in the sale of any securities with respect to which this prospectus is being delivered, the names of such underwriters or agents and any applicable fees, discounts or commissions, details regarding over-allotment options, if any, and the net proceeds to us will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. The price to the public of such securities and the net proceeds we expect to receive from such sale will also be set forth in a prospectus supplement.

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 November 21, 2018.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| <u>About this Prospectus</u> | 1 |
| <u>Summary</u> | 2 |
| <u>Risk Factors</u> | 5 |
| <u>Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements</u> | 6 |
| <u>Use of Proceeds</u> | 7 |
| <u>Plan of Distribution</u> | 8 |
| <u>Description of Capital Stock</u> | 10 |
| <u>Description of Debt Securities</u> | 15 |
| <u>Description of Warrants</u> | 23 |
| <u>Description of Subscription Rights</u> | 25 |
| <u>Description of Units</u> | 26 |
| <u>Legal Matters</u> | 27 |
| <u>Experts</u> | 27 |
| <u>Where You Can Find Additional Information</u> | 27 |
| <u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u> | 28 |

Table of Contents

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 registration process, from time to time, we may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings, up to an aggregate dollar amount of \$300,000,000. We have provided to you in this prospectus a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities under this shelf registration process, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of the offering. We may also add, update or change in the applicable prospectus supplement any of the information contained in this prospectus. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, you should rely on the information in the applicable prospectus supplement; provided that, if any statement in one of these documents is inconsistent with a statement in another document having a later date (for example, a document incorporated by reference in this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement), the statement in the document having the later date modifies or supersedes the earlier statement. You should read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find Additional Information**.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement. No dealer, salesperson or any other person is authorized to give any information or to make any representation other than the information and representations contained in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus or any applicable prospectus supplement. If different information is given or different representations are made, you may not rely on that information or those representations as having been authorized by us. You may not imply from the delivery of this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, nor from a sale made under this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement, that our affairs are unchanged since the date of this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement or that the information contained in any document incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date of the document incorporated by reference, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement or any sale of a security. This prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement may only be used where it is legal to sell the securities.

THIS PROSPECTUS MAY NOT BE USED TO OFFER AND SELL SECURITIES UNLESS IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY A PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, as used in this prospectus, the terms **Company**, **Dermira**, **Registrant**, **we**, **u** and **our** refer to Dermira, Inc., a Delaware corporation, and its sole subsidiary, taken as a whole, unless otherwise noted.

This prospectus and the information incorporated herein by reference may include trademarks, service marks and trade names owned by us or others. **Dermira** is a registered trademark in Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Mexico, Switzerland and the United States. **Dermira** and logo is a registered trademark in the European Union, Hong Kong, Japan and Mexico and is a pending trademark application in Canada, China and the United States. A trademark application for **Qbrexza** is pending in Canada, China, European Union, Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, South Korea and the United States. All other service marks, trademarks and tradenames appearing in this prospectus and the information incorporated herein by reference are the property of their respective owners. Solely for convenience, the trademarks and tradenames referred to in this prospectus and the information incorporated herein by reference appear without the ® and symbols, but those references are not intended to indicate, in any way, that we will not assert, to the fullest extent under applicable law, our rights, or the right of the applicable licensor to these trademarks and tradenames.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

This summary highlights information contained in other parts of this prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus from our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, and our other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission listed in the section of the prospectus entitled "Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference." This summary does not contain all of the information you should consider in making your investment decision. Before deciding to invest in our securities, you should read the entire prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and the information incorporated by reference herein in their entirety. You should carefully consider, among other things, the matters discussed in the section entitled "Risk Factors" contained in the applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus, and under similar headings in the other documents that are incorporated by reference into this prospectus. Some of the statements in this prospectus constitute forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. See "Special Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements."

Our Company

We are a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to bringing biotech ingenuity to medical dermatology by delivering differentiated, new therapies to the millions of patients living with chronic skin conditions. Our management team has extensive experience in product development and commercialization, having served in leadership roles at several leading dermatology companies. Our strategy is to leverage this experience to identify, develop and commercialize leading-edge medical dermatology clinical programs. Our approved product, QBREXZA (glycopyrronium) cloth, or QBREXZA, is an anticholinergic indicated for the topical treatment of primary axillary hyperhidrosis in adult and pediatric patients nine years of age and older. Primary axillary hyperhidrosis is a medical condition with no known cause that results in sweating beyond what is needed for normal body temperature regulation. We are also evaluating lebrikizumab in a Phase 2b clinical trial for the treatment of moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis (a severe form of eczema) and have early-stage research programs in other areas of dermatology.

Skin conditions such as hyperhidrosis and atopic dermatitis impact millions of people worldwide and can have significant, multidimensional effects on patients' quality of life, including their physical, functional and emotional well-being. According to multiple published studies, patients report that medical dermatology conditions affect quality of life in ways comparable to other serious diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and arthritis.

We believe that medical dermatology represents a particularly attractive segment of the biopharmaceutical industry for multiple reasons:

Dermatology represents a large, growing, specialty market supported by strong patient demand.

The dermatology market is ripe for innovation with significant commercial opportunities.

The development of dermatology products can be relatively efficient in terms of time and cost.

Dermatology products can be commercialized at relatively low cost.

The needs of dermatologists and their patients have been underserved as a result of the significant consolidation of dermatology-focused companies.

We believe that these industry dynamics present an opportunity for us to establish our company as a leader in dermatology product development and commercialization, and we plan to capitalize on that opportunity for the benefit of patients and dermatologists.

Table of Contents

Our portfolio consists of:

QBREXZA, a topical, once-daily anticholinergic wipe that was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or the FDA, in June 2018 for the treatment of primary axillary hyperhidrosis in adult and pediatric patients nine years of age and older. Primary axillary hyperhidrosis is a medical condition with no known cause that results in sweating beyond what is needed for normal body temperature regulation. Anticholinergics are a class of pharmaceutical products that exert their effect by blocking the action of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that transmits signals within the nervous system that are responsible for a range of bodily functions, including the activation of sweat glands. QBREXZA is applied directly to the skin and is designed to block sweat production by inhibiting sweat gland activation. We began shipping QBREXZA to wholesalers and a preferred dispensing partner, collectively, Customers, in September 2018, and QBREXZA became commercially available in pharmacies nationwide on October 1, 2018.

Lebrikizumab, a novel, injectable, humanized monoclonal antibody targeting interleukin 13, or IL-13, that we are developing for the treatment of moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis. IL-13 is a naturally occurring cytokine that is thought to play an important role in mediating effects of inflammation on bodily tissues, including in patients with atopic dermatitis. Lebrikizumab is designed to bind to IL-13 with high affinity, specifically preventing formation of the IL-13 receptor/interleukin 4, or IL-4, receptor complex and subsequent signaling. In August 2017, we entered into a license agreement, or the Roche Agreement, with F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd and Genentech, Inc., collectively, Roche, pursuant to which we obtained exclusive, worldwide rights to develop and commercialize lebrikizumab for atopic dermatitis and all other indications, except Roche retained certain rights, including exclusive rights to develop and promote lebrikizumab for interstitial lung diseases, such as idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, which we refer to as the Retained Field, and rights to use lebrikizumab for internal research purposes and for in vitro diagnostic purposes. The Roche Agreement became effective in September 2017 upon the early termination of the waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976, as amended. Pursuant to the terms of the Roche Agreement, Roche relinquished its rights in the Retained Field effective July 13, 2018 and all of Roche's rights and all of our obligations with respect to the Retained Field expired. Accordingly, we have exclusive, worldwide rights to develop and commercialize lebrikizumab for all indications. Roche's rights to use lebrikizumab for internal research purposes and for in vitro diagnostic purposes remain. Based on the results of two exploratory Phase 2 clinical trials conducted by Roche in atopic dermatitis patients, we initiated a Phase 2b clinical trial in January 2018 to evaluate the safety and efficacy of lebrikizumab as a monotherapy compared with placebo and to establish the dosing regimen for a potential Phase 3 program in patients with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis. We completed enrollment of a total of 280 patients ages 18 years and older in the Phase 2b clinical trial in October 2018 and expect to announce topline results by early April 2019.

Dermira was founded by Thomas G. Wiggans, Eugene A. Bauer, M.D., Christopher M. Griffith and Luis C. Peña with the vision of building a leading dermatology company. Our management team has extensive experience within the dermatology field. This experience brings us significant insight into product and commercial opportunities, as well as a broad network of relationships with leaders within the industry and medical community.

The Securities We May Offer

With this prospectus, we may offer common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities, subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt

securities, and/or units consisting of some or all of these securities in any combination. The aggregate offering price of securities that we offer with this prospectus will not exceed \$300,000,000. Each time

Table of Contents

we offer securities with this prospectus, we will provide offerees with a prospectus supplement that will contain the specific terms of the securities being offered. The following is a summary of the securities we may offer with this prospectus.

Common Stock

We may offer shares of our common stock, par value \$0.001 per share.

Preferred Stock

We may offer shares of our preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share, in one or more series. Our board of directors or a committee designated by our board of directors will determine the rights, preferences and privileges of the series of shares of preferred stock being offered. The rights, preferences and privileges of each series of preferred stock will be more fully described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Debt Securities

We may offer general obligations, which may be secured or unsecured, senior or subordinated and convertible into shares of our common stock or preferred stock. In this prospectus, we refer to the all debt securities together as the debt securities. Our board of directors will determine the terms of each series of debt securities being offered.

We will issue the debt securities under an indenture between us and a trustee. In this document, we have summarized general features of the debt securities from the indenture. We encourage you to read the indenture, which is an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Warrants

We may offer warrants to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities. We may issue warrants independently or together with other securities. Our board of directors or a committee designated by our board of directors will determine the terms of the warrants.

Subscription Rights

We may offer subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities. We may issue subscription rights independently or together with other securities. Our board of directors or a committee designated by our board of directors will determine the terms of the subscription rights.

Units

We may offer units consisting of some or all of the securities described above, in any combination, including common stock, preferred stock, warrants and/or debt securities. The terms of these units will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. The description of the terms of these units in the related prospectus supplement will not necessarily be complete. You should refer to the applicable form of unit and unit agreement for complete information with respect to these units.

Corporate Information

Edgar Filing: Dermira, Inc. - Form 424B5

We were incorporated in the State of Delaware in August 2010 under the name Skintelligence, Inc. We changed our name to Dermira, Inc. in September 2011. Our principal executive offices are located at 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025, and our telephone number is (650) 421-7200. Our website address is www.dermira.com. The information contained on, or that can be accessed through, our website is not a part of this prospectus. Investors should not rely on any such information in deciding whether to purchase our securities.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. The prospectus supplement applicable to each offering of securities will contain a discussion of the risks applicable to an investment in our securities. 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 and any free writing prospectus, together with all of the other information contained or incorporated by reference in the applicable prospectus supplement or appearing or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. You should also consider the risks, uncertainties and assumptions discussed under Part II, Item 1A, **Risk Factors**, in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended September 30, 2018, or September 2018 10-Q, which is incorporated herein by reference, and may be amended, supplemented or superseded from time to time by other reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, in the future. The risks and uncertainties we have described are not the only ones we face. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our operations.

Table of Contents

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein contain forward-looking statements. All statements contained in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein other than statements of historical fact, including statements regarding our future consolidated results of operations and financial position, our business strategy and plans, market growth, and our objectives for future operations, are forward-looking statements. The words believe, may, will, estimate, potentially, continue, anticipate, intend, expect, could, project, plan and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. We have based these forward-looking statements largely on our current expectations and projections about future events and trends that we believe may affect our consolidated financial condition, consolidated results of operations, business strategy, short-term and long-term business operations and objectives and financial needs. These forward-looking statements are subject to a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions, including those described under the heading Risk Factors in our September 2018 10-Q, as well as those discussed in this prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus, the applicable prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus. All subsequent written or oral forward-looking statements attributable to us or any person acting on our behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section.

Moreover, we operate in a very competitive and rapidly changing environment. New risks emerge from time to time. It is not possible for our management to predict all risks, nor can we assess the impact of all factors on our business or the extent to which any factor, or combination of factors, may cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in any forward-looking statements we may make. In light of these risks, uncertainties and assumptions, the future events and trends discussed in this prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein may not occur and actual results could differ materially and adversely from those anticipated or implied in the forward-looking statements.

You should not rely upon forward-looking statements as predictions of future events. The events and circumstances reflected in the forward-looking statements may not be achieved or occur. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements are reasonable, we cannot guarantee future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements. We undertake no obligation to update any of these forward-looking statements for any reason after the date of this prospectus, or in the case of documents referred to or incorporated by reference, the date of those documents, or to conform such statements to actual results or revised expectations. If we do update one or more forward-looking statements, no inference should be drawn that we will make additional updates with respect to those or other forward-looking statements.

You should read this prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein, the applicable prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus, and the documents that we have filed with the SEC as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part with the understanding that our actual future results, levels of activity, performance and events and circumstances may be materially different from what we expect.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We will have broad discretion over the use of the net proceeds to us from the sale of our securities under this prospectus and investors will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding the application of the proceeds. Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities under this prospectus to continue to commercialize QBREXZA and to fund research, development and commercialization of our current and future product candidates, working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes. Additionally, we may use a portion of the net proceeds to us from the sale of our securities under this prospectus to expand our business by in-licensing or acquiring, as the case may be, commercial products, product candidates, technologies, compounds, other assets or complementary businesses. We will set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement our intended uses for the net proceeds received from the sale of any securities. Pending these uses, we intend to invest the net proceeds in investment-grade, interest-bearing securities such as money market funds, certificates of deposit, commercial paper, repurchase agreements, corporate debt and guaranteed obligations of the U.S. government.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities covered by this prospectus to one or more underwriters for public offering and sale by them, and may also sell the securities to investors directly or through agents. We will name any underwriter or agent involved in the offer and sale of securities in the applicable prospectus supplement. We have reserved the right to sell or exchange securities directly to investors on our own behalf in jurisdictions where we are authorized to do so. We may distribute the securities from time to time in one or more transactions at:

a fixed price or prices, which may be changed from time to time;

market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

prices related to such prevailing market prices; or

negotiated prices.

We may directly solicit offers to purchase the securities being offered by this prospectus. We may also designate agents to solicit offers to purchase the securities from time to time. We will name in any prospectus supplement any agent involved in the offer or sale of our securities. 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 for resale at varying prices to be determined by the dealer.

If we utilize an underwriter in the sale of the securities being offered by this prospectus, we will execute an underwriting agreement with the underwriter at the time of sale and we will provide the name of any underwriter in the applicable prospectus supplement that the underwriter will use to make resales of the securities to the public. In connection with the sale of the securities, we, or the purchasers of securities for whom the underwriter may act as agent, may compensate the underwriter in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions. The underwriter 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.

We will provide in the applicable prospectus supplement any compensation we pay to underwriters, dealers or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts, concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers. Underwriters, dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, 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 civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to reimburse them for certain expenses. We may grant underwriters who participate in the distribution of our securities under this prospectus an option to purchase additional securities to cover any over-allotments in connection with the distribution.

The securities we offer under this prospectus may or may not be listed through The Nasdaq Global Select Market or any other securities exchange. 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 short

sales of the securities, which involves the sale by persons participating in the offering of more securities than we sold to them. In these circumstances, these persons would cover such short positions by making purchases in the open market or by exercising their option to purchase additional securities. 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 are 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.

Table of Contents

We may engage in at-the-market offerings into an existing trading market in accordance with Rule 415(a)(4) under the Securities Act. In addition, we may enter into derivative transactions with third parties, or sell securities not covered by this prospectus to third parties in privately negotiated transactions. If the applicable prospectus supplement indicates, in connection with those derivatives, the third parties may sell securities covered by this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including short sale transactions. If so, the third party may use securities pledged by us or borrowed from us or others to settle those sales or to close out any related open borrowings of stock, and they may use securities received from us in settlement of those derivatives to close out any related open borrowings of stock. The third party in these sale transactions will be an underwriter and will be identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. In addition, we may otherwise loan or pledge securities to a financial institution or other third party that in turn may sell the securities short using this prospectus. The financial institution or other third party may transfer its economic short position to investors in our securities or in connection with a concurrent offering of other securities.

We will file a prospectus supplement to describe the terms of any offering of our securities covered by this prospectus. The applicable prospectus supplement will disclose:

the terms of the offer;

the name or names of any underwriters, including any managing underwriters, as well as any dealers or agents, and the amounts of securities underwritten or purchased by each of them;

the purchase price of the securities from us;

the net proceeds to us from the sale of the securities;

any delayed delivery arrangements;

the nature of the underwriters' obligations to take the securities;

any over-allotment options under which underwriters, if any, may purchase additional securities from us;

any underwriting discounts, commissions or other items constituting underwriters' compensation, and any commissions paid to agents;

in a subscription rights offering, whether we have engaged dealer-managers to facilitate the offering or subscription, including their name or names and compensation;

any securities exchanges or markets on which such securities may be listed;

any public offering price; and

other facts material to the transaction.

We will bear all or substantially all of the costs, expenses and fees in connection with the registration of our securities under this prospectus. The underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with us, or perform services for us, in the ordinary course of business.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

General

Our authorized capital stock consists of 500,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.001 par value per share, and 10,000,000 shares of undesignated preferred stock, \$0.001 par value per share. The following description summarizes the most important terms of our capital stock. Because it is only a summary, it does not contain all the information that may be important to you. For a complete description, you should refer to our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws, which are included as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part, and to the applicable provisions of Delaware law.

Common Stock

Dividend Rights

Subject to preferences that may apply to any shares of preferred stock outstanding at the time, the holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends out of funds legally available if our board of directors, in its discretion, determines to issue dividends and then only at the times and in the amounts that our board of directors may determine. For more information about our dividend policy, see *Dividend Policy* in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Voting Rights

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders. We have not provided for cumulative voting for the election of directors in our restated certificate of incorporation. Accordingly, holders of a majority of the shares of our common stock are able to elect all of our directors. We have a classified board of directors, divided into three classes with staggered three-year terms. Only one class of directors may be elected at each annual meeting of our stockholders, with the other classes continuing for the remainder of their respective three-year terms.

No Preemptive or Similar Rights

Our common stock is not entitled to preemptive rights, and is not subject to conversion, redemption or sinking fund provisions.

Right to Receive Liquidation Distributions

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding-up, the assets legally available for distribution to our stockholders would be distributable ratably among the holders of our common stock and any participating preferred stock outstanding at that time, subject to prior satisfaction of all outstanding debt and liabilities and the preferential rights of and the payment of liquidation preferences, if any, on any outstanding shares of preferred stock.

Preferred Stock

Our board of directors is authorized, subject to limitations prescribed by Delaware law, to issue preferred stock in one or more series, to establish from time to time the number of shares to be included in each series and to fix the designation, powers, preferences and rights of the shares of each series and any of their qualifications, limitations or restrictions, in each case without further vote or action by our stockholders. Our board of directors can also increase or

decrease the number of shares of any series of preferred stock, but not below the number of shares of that series then outstanding, without any further vote or action by our stockholders. 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 our common stock. The issuance of preferred stock, while providing flexibility in connection with possible acquisitions and other corporate purposes, could, among other

Table of Contents

things, have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control of our company and might adversely affect the market price of our common stock and the voting and other rights of the holders of our common stock.

We will incorporate by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part 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 of the preferred stock in the certificate of designation, any applicable prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will describe, among other things, the following terms of the preferred stock:

the number of shares in any series;

the designation for any series by number, letter or title that shall distinguish the series from any other series of preferred stock;

the dividend rate and whether dividends on that series of preferred stock will be cumulative, noncumulative or partially cumulative;

the voting rights of that series of preferred stock, if any;

the conversion provisions applicable to that series of preferred stock, if any;

the redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to that series of preferred stock, if any;

the liquidation preference per share of that series of preferred stock, if any;

the rank of that series of preferred stock relative to other series of preferred stock; and

the terms of any other preferences or rights, if any, applicable to that series of preferred stock.

The description of preferred stock set forth above and in any description of the terms of a particular series of preferred stock in the related prospectus supplement and any related free writing prospectus will not be complete. You should refer to the applicable certificate of designation for such series of preferred stock for complete information with respect to such preferred stock. The prospectus supplement will also contain a description of certain U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to that series of preferred stock.

Registration Rights

Certain of our holders of our common stock or their permitted transferees, are entitled to rights with respect to the registration of these shares under the Securities Act. These shares are referred to as registrable securities. Immediately

following this offering, there will be no change to the number of registrable securities outstanding. These rights are provided under the terms of an amended and restated investors' rights agreement between us and the holders of these shares, which was entered into in connection with our preferred stock financings, and include demand registration rights, short-form registration rights and piggyback registration rights. In any registration made pursuant to such amended and restated investors' rights agreement, all fees, costs and expenses of underwritten registrations, including fees and disbursements of one special counsel to the selling stockholders not to exceed \$50,000, will be borne by us and all selling expenses, including estimated underwriting discounts and selling commissions, will be borne by the holders of the shares being registered.

The registration rights terminate October 2019 or, with respect to any particular stockholder, at such time as that stockholder holds less than one percent of our outstanding stock and such stockholder can sell all of its shares during any three-month period pursuant to Rule 144 promulgated under the Securities Act.

Demand Registration Rights

Under the terms of the amended and restated investors' rights agreement, if we receive a written request, at any time after 90 days following the effective date of this offering, from the holders of at least $66\frac{2}{3}\%$ of the

Table of Contents

registrable securities then outstanding that we file a registration statement under the Securities Act covering the registration of outstanding registrable securities, then we will be required to use our reasonable best efforts to register, within 90 days of such written request, all of the shares requested to be registered for public resale, if the amount of registrable securities to be registered will have aggregate gross proceeds (before underwriting discounts and commissions) of at least \$10.0 million. We are required to effect only two registrations pursuant to this provision of the amended and restated investors' rights agreement. We may postpone the filing of a registration statement no more than once during any 12-month period for up to 120 days if our board of directors determines that the filing would be detrimental to us and our stockholders. We are not required to effect a demand registration under certain additional circumstances specified in the amended and restated investors' rights agreement.

Form S-3 Registration Rights

The holders of at least 30% of the registrable securities then outstanding can request that we register all or part of their shares on Form S-3 if we are eligible to file a registration statement on Form S-3 and if the aggregate price to the public of the shares offered is at least \$5.0 million. The stockholders may require us to effect at most two registration statements on Form S-3 in any 12-month period. We may postpone the filing of a registration statement on Form S-3 no more than once during any 12-month period for up to 120 days if our board of directors determines that the filing would be detrimental to us and our stockholders. We are not required to effect a registration on Form S-3 under certain additional circumstances specified in the amended and restated investors' rights agreement.

Piggyback Registration Rights

In connection with this offering, holders of our registrable securities were entitled to, and the necessary percentage of holders waived, their rights to notice of this offering and to include their registrable securities in this offering. If we register any of our securities for public sale in another offering, holders of registrable securities will have the right to include their shares in the registration statement. However, this right does not apply to a demand registration, a registration relating to employee benefit plans, a registration relating to a corporate reorganization, or a registration on any registration form which does not permit secondary sales or does not include substantially the same information as would be required to be included in a registration statement covering the sale of registrable securities. The underwriters of any underwritten offering will have the right to limit the number of shares registered by these holders if they determine in good faith that marketing factors require limitation, in which case the number of shares to be registered will be apportioned, first, to us for our own account and, second, pro rata among the holders of registrable securities requesting inclusion of their registrable securities in such registration statement, according to the total number of registrable securities held by each such holder. However, the number of shares to be registered by these holders cannot be reduced below 30% of the total shares covered by the registration statement.

Anti-Takeover Provisions

The provisions of Delaware law, our restated certificate of incorporation and our restated bylaws could have the effect of delaying, deferring or discouraging another person from acquiring control of our company. These provisions, which are summarized below, may have the effect of discouraging takeover bids. They are also designed, in part, to encourage persons seeking to acquire control of us to negotiate first with our board of directors. We believe that the benefits of increased protection of our potential ability to negotiate with an unfriendly or unsolicited acquirer outweigh the disadvantages of discouraging a proposal to acquire us because negotiation of these proposals could result in an improvement of their terms.

Delaware Law

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, or DGCL, regulating corporate takeovers. In general, DGCL Section 203 prohibits a publicly held Delaware corporation

Table of Contents

from engaging in a business combination with an interested stockholder for a period of three years following the date on which the person became an interested stockholder unless:

prior to the date of the transaction, the board of directors of the corporation approved either the business combination or the transaction which 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, excluding for purposes of determining the voting stock outstanding, but not the outstanding voting stock owned by the interested stockholder, (1) shares owned by persons who are directors and also officers and (2) shares owned by employee stock plans in which employee participants do not have the right to determine confidentially whether shares held subject to the plan will be tendered in a tender or exchange offer; or

at or subsequent to the date of the transaction, the business combination is approved by the board of directors of the corporation and authorized at an annual or special meeting of stockholders, and not by written consent, by the affirmative vote of at least $66\frac{2}{3}\%$ of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Generally, a business combination includes a merger, asset or stock sale, or other transaction or series of transactions together resulting in a financial benefit to the interested stockholder. An interested stockholder is a person who, together with affiliates and associates, owns or, within three years prior to the determination of interested stockholder status, did own 15% or more of a corporation's outstanding voting stock. We expect the existence of this provision to have an anti-takeover effect with respect to transactions our board of directors does not approve in advance. We also anticipate that DGCL Section 203 may also discourage attempts that might result in a premium over the market price for the shares of common stock held by stockholders.

Restated Certificate of Incorporation and Restated Bylaws Provisions

Our restated certificate of incorporation and our restated bylaws include a number of provisions that could deter hostile takeovers or delay or prevent changes in control of our company, including the following:

Board of Directors Vacancies. Our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws authorize only our board of directors to fill vacant directorships, including newly created seats. In addition, the number of directors constituting our board of directors is permitted to be set only by a resolution adopted by a majority vote of our entire board of directors. These provisions would prevent a stockholder from increasing the size of our board of directors and then gaining control of our board of directors by filling the resulting vacancies with its own nominees. This makes it more difficult to change the composition of our board of directors but promotes continuity of management.

Classified Board. Our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws provide that our board of directors is classified into three classes of directors, each with staggered three-year terms. A third party may be discouraged from making a tender offer or otherwise attempting to obtain control of us as it is more

difficult and time consuming for stockholders to replace a majority of the directors on a classified board of directors. See Proposal No. 1 Election of Directors appearing in our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 24, 2018, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Stockholder Action; Special Meetings of Stockholders. Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that our stockholders may not take action by written consent, but may only take action at annual or special meetings of our stockholders. As a result, a holder controlling a majority of our capital stock would not be able to amend our restated bylaws or remove directors without holding a meeting of our stockholders called in accordance with our restated bylaws. Further, our restated bylaws provide that special meetings of our stockholders may be called only by a majority of our board of directors, the chairman of our board of directors, our lead independent director, our Chief Executive

Table of Contents

Officer or our President, thus prohibiting a stockholder from calling a special meeting. These provisions might delay the ability of our stockholders to force consideration of a proposal or for stockholders controlling a majority of our capital stock to take any action, including the removal of directors.

Advance Notice Requirements for Stockholder Proposals and Director Nominations. Our restated bylaws provide advance notice procedures for stockholders seeking to bring business before our annual meeting of stockholders or to nominate candidates for election as directors at our annual meeting of stockholders. Our restated bylaws also specify certain requirements regarding the form and content of a stockholder's notice. These provisions might preclude our stockholders from bringing matters before our annual meeting of stockholders or from making nominations for directors at our annual meeting of stockholders if the proper procedures are not followed. We expect that these provisions might also discourage or deter a potential acquirer from conducting a solicitation of proxies to elect the acquirer's own slate of directors or otherwise attempting to obtain control of our company.

No Cumulative Voting. The DGCL provides that stockholders are not entitled to the right to cumulate votes in the election of directors unless a corporation's certificate of incorporation provides otherwise. Our restated certificate of incorporation and restated bylaws do not provide for cumulative voting.

Directors Removed Only for Cause. Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that stockholders may remove directors only for cause.

Amendment of Charter Provisions. Any amendment of the above provisions in our restated certificate of incorporation would require approval by holders of at least two-thirds of our outstanding common stock.

Issuance of Undesignated Preferred Stock. Our board of directors has the authority, without further action by the stockholders, to issue up to 10,000,000 shares of undesignated preferred stock with rights and preferences, including voting rights, designated from time to time by our board of directors. The existence of authorized but unissued shares of preferred stock would enable our board of directors to render more difficult or to discourage an attempt to obtain control of us by merger, tender offer, proxy contest or other means.

Choice of Forum. Our restated certificate of incorporation provides that the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware will be the exclusive forum for any derivative action or proceeding brought on our behalf; any action asserting a breach of fiduciary duty, any action asserting a claim against us arising pursuant to the DGCL, our restated certificate of incorporation or our restated bylaws; or any action asserting a claim against us that is governed by the internal affairs doctrine.

Exchange Listing

Our common stock is listed on The Nasdaq Global Select Market under the symbol **DERM**.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

Edgar Filing: Dermira, Inc. - Form 424B5

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer and Trust Company, LLC. The transfer agent's address is 6201 1st Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11219, and its telephone number is (800) 937-5449.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

General

We will issue the debt securities offered by this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement under an indenture to be entered into between us and the trustee identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms of the debt securities will include those stated in the indenture and those made part of the indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as in effect on the date of the indenture. We have filed a copy of the form of indenture as an exhibit to the registration statement in which this prospectus is included. The indenture will be subject to and governed by the terms of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939.

We may offer under this prospectus up to an aggregate principal amount of \$300,000,000 in debt securities, or if debt securities are issued at a discount, or in a foreign currency, foreign currency units or composite currency, the principal amount as may be sold for an aggregate public offering price of up to \$300,000,000. Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities will represent our direct, unsecured obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured indebtedness.

We may issue the debt securities in one or more series with the same or various maturities, at par, at a premium, or at a discount. We will describe the particular terms of each series of debt securities in a prospectus supplement relating to that series, which we will file with the SEC. The applicable prospectus supplement relating to the particular series of debt securities being offered will specify the particular amounts, prices and terms of those debt securities. These terms may include:

the title of the series;

the aggregate principal amount, and, if a series, the total amount authorized and the total amount outstanding;

the issue price or prices, expressed as a percentage of the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

any limit on the aggregate principal amount;

the date or dates on which principal is payable or the method for determining that date or dates;

the interest rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable) or, if applicable, the method used to determine such rate or rates;

the date or dates from which interest, if any, will be payable and any regular record date for the interest payable;

the place or places where principal and, if applicable, premium and interest, is payable;

the terms and conditions upon which we may, or the holders may require us to, redeem or repurchase the debt securities;

the denominations in which such debt securities may be issuable, if other than denominations of \$1,000 or any integral multiple of that number;

whether the debt securities are to be issuable in the form of certificated securities (as described below) or global securities (as described below);

the portion of principal amount that will be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity date if other than the principal amount of the debt securities;

the currency of denomination;

the designation of the currency, currencies or currency units in which payment of principal and, if applicable, premium and interest, will be made;

Table of Contents

if payments of principal and, if applicable, premium or interest, on the debt securities are to be made in one or more currencies or currency units other than the currency of denomination, the manner in which the exchange rate with respect to such payments will be determined;

if amounts of principal and, if applicable, premium and interest may be determined by reference to an index based on a currency or currencies or by reference to a commodity, commodity index, stock exchange index or financial index, then the manner in which such amounts will be determined;

the provisions, if any, relating to any collateral provided for such debt securities;

any addition to or change in the covenants and/or the acceleration provisions described in this prospectus or in the indenture;

any events of default, if not otherwise described below under **Events of Default** ;

the terms and conditions, if any, for conversion into or exchange for shares of our common stock or preferred stock;

any depositaries, interest rate calculation agents, exchange rate calculation agents or other agents;

the terms and conditions, if any, upon which the debt securities shall be subordinated in right of payment to our other indebtedness;

the applicable CUSIP number; and

any other terms specific to the debt securities.

We may issue discount debt securities that provide for an amount less than the stated principal amount to be due and payable upon acceleration of the maturity of such debt securities in accordance with the terms of the indenture. We may also issue debt securities in bearer form, with or without coupons. If we issue discount debt securities or debt securities in bearer form, we will describe material U.S. federal income tax considerations and other material special considerations which apply to these debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities denominated in or payable in a foreign currency or currencies or a foreign currency unit or units. If we do, we will describe the restrictions, elections, and general tax considerations relating to the debt securities and the foreign currency or currencies or foreign currency unit or units in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Debt securities offered under this prospectus and any prospectus supplement will be subordinated in right of payment to our senior indebtedness. In addition, we will seek the consent of the holders of any such senior indebtedness prior

to issuing any debt securities under this prospectus to the extent required by the agreements evidencing such senior indebtedness.

Registrar and Paying Agent

The debt securities may be presented for registration of transfer or for exchange at the corporate trust office of the security registrar or at any other office or agency that we maintain for those purposes. In addition, the debt securities may be presented for payment of principal, interest and any premium at the office of the paying agent or at any office or agency that we maintain for those purposes.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

Debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for shares of our common stock. The terms and conditions of conversion or exchange will be stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms will include, among others, the following:

the conversion or exchange price;

Table of Contents

the conversion or exchange period;

provisions regarding the convertibility or exchangeability of the debt securities, including who may convert or exchange;

events requiring adjustment to the conversion or exchange price;

provisions affecting conversion or exchange in the event of our redemption of the debt securities; and

any anti-dilution provisions, if applicable.

Registered Global Securities

If we decide to issue debt securities in the form of one or more global securities, then we will register the global securities in the name of the depositary for the global securities or the nominee of the depositary, and the global securities will be delivered by the trustee to the depositary for credit to the accounts of the holders of beneficial interests in the debt securities.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the depositary arrangement for debt securities of a series that are issued in global form. None of us, the trustee, any payment agent or the security registrar will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in a global debt security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to these beneficial ownership interests.

No Protection in the Event of Change of Control

The indenture does not have any covenants or other provisions providing for a put or increased interest or otherwise that would afford holders of our debt securities additional protection in the event of a recapitalization transaction, a change of control or a highly leveraged transaction. If we offer any covenants or provisions of this type with respect to any debt securities covered by this prospectus, we will describe them in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Covenants

Unless otherwise indicated in this prospectus or the applicable prospectus supplement, our debt securities will not have the benefit of any covenants that limit or restrict our business or operations, the pledging of our assets or the incurrence by us of indebtedness. We will describe in the applicable prospectus supplement any material covenants in respect of a series of debt securities.

Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets

The form of indenture provides that we will not consolidate with or merge into any other person or convey, transfer, sell or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless:

the person formed by the consolidation or into or with which we are merged or the person to which our properties and assets are conveyed, transferred, sold or leased, is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia or a corporation or comparable legal entity organized under the laws of a foreign jurisdiction and, if we are not the surviving person, the surviving person has expressly assumed all of our obligations, including the payment of the principal of and, premium, if any, and interest on the debt securities and the performance of the other covenants under the indenture; and

immediately before and immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no event of default, and no event which, after notice or lapse of time or both, would become an event of default, has occurred and is continuing under the indenture.

Table of Contents

Events of Default

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the following events will be events of default under the indenture with respect to debt securities of any series:

we fail to pay any principal or premium, if any, when it becomes due;

we fail to pay any interest within 30 days after it becomes due; however, if we extend an interest payment under the terms of the debt securities, the extension will not be a failure to pay interest;

we fail to observe or perform any other covenant in the debt securities or the indenture for 60 days after written notice specifying the failure from the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series;

certain events involving bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of us or any of our significant subsidiaries; and

any other event of default provided in the applicable resolution of our board of directors or the supplemental indenture under which we issue debt securities.

The trustee may withhold notice to the holders of the debt securities of any series of any default, except in payment of principal of or premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities of a series, if the trustee considers it to be in the best interest of the holders of the debt securities of that series to do so.

If an event of default (other than an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization) 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 any series may accelerate the maturity of the debt securities. If this happens, the entire principal amount, plus the premium, if any, of all the outstanding debt securities of the affected series plus accrued interest to the date of acceleration will be immediately due and payable. At any time after the acceleration, but before a judgment or decree based on such acceleration is obtained by the trustee, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of such series may rescind and annul such acceleration if:

all events of default (other than nonpayment of accelerated principal, premium or interest) have been cured or waived;

all lawful interest on overdue interest and overdue principal has been paid; and

the rescission would not conflict with any judgment or decree.

In addition, if the acceleration occurs at any time when we have outstanding indebtedness that is senior to the debt securities, the payment of the principal amount of outstanding debt securities may be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment of any amounts due under the senior indebtedness, in which case the holders of debt securities will be entitled to payment under the terms prescribed in the instruments evidencing the senior indebtedness and the indenture.

If an event of default resulting from certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occurs, the principal, premium and interest amount with respect to all of the debt securities of any series will be due and payable immediately without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or the holders of the debt securities of that series.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series will have the right to waive any existing default or compliance with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities of that series and to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, subject to certain limitations specified in the indenture.

Table of Contents

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

the holder gives to the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series make a written request and offer reasonable indemnity to the trustee to institute a proceeding as trustee;

the trustee fails to institute a proceeding within 60 days after such request; and

the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the affected series do not give the trustee a direction inconsistent with such request during such 60-day period.

These limitations do not, however, apply to a suit instituted for payment on debt securities of any series on or after the due dates expressed in the debt securities.

We will periodically deliver certificates to the trustee regarding our compliance with our obligations under the indenture.

Modification and Waiver

From time to time, we and the trustee may, without the consent of holders of the debt securities of one or more series, amend the indenture or the debt securities of one or more series, or supplement the indenture, for certain specified purposes, including:

to provide that the surviving entity following a change of control permitted under the indenture will assume all of our obligations under the indenture and debt securities;

to provide for certificated debt securities in addition to uncertificated debt securities;

to comply with any requirements of the SEC under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939;

to provide for the issuance of and establish the form and terms and conditions of debt securities of any series as permitted by the indenture;

to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency, or make any other change that does not materially and adversely affect the rights of any holder; and

to appoint a successor trustee under the indenture with respect to one or more series.

From time to time we and the trustee may, with the consent of holders of at least a majority in principal amount of an outstanding series of debt securities, amend or supplement the indenture or the debt securities series, or waive compliance in a particular instance by us with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities. We may not, however, without the consent of each holder affected by such action, modify or supplement the indenture or the debt securities or waive compliance with any provision of the indenture or the debt securities in order to:

reduce the amount of debt securities whose holders must consent to an amendment, supplement, or waiver to the indenture or such debt security;

reduce the rate of or change the time for payment of interest or reduce the amount of or postpone the date for payment of sinking fund or analogous obligations;

reduce the principal of or change the stated maturity of the debt securities;

make any debt security payable in money other than that stated in the debt security;

Table of Contents

change the amount or time of any payment required or reduce the premium payable upon any redemption, or change the time before which no such redemption may be made;

waive a default in the payment of the principal of, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities or a redemption payment;

waive a redemption payment with respect to any debt securities or change any provision with respect to redemption of debt securities; or

take any other action otherwise prohibited by the indenture to be taken without the consent of each holder affected by the action.

Defeasance of Debt Securities and Certain Covenants in Certain Circumstances

The indenture permits us, at any time, to elect to discharge our obligations with respect to one or more series of debt securities by following certain procedures described in the indenture. These procedures will allow us either:

to defease and be discharged from any and all of our obligations with respect to any debt securities except for the following obligations (which discharge is referred to as "legal defeasance"):

1. to register the transfer or exchange of such debt securities;
2. to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities;
3. to compensate and indemnify the trustee;
4. to maintain an office or agency in respect of the debt securities and to hold monies for payment in trust; or

to be released from our obligations with respect to the debt securities under certain covenants contained in the indenture, as well as any additional covenants which may be contained in the applicable supplemental indenture (which release is referred to as "covenant defeasance").

In order to exercise either defeasance option, we must deposit with the trustee or other qualifying trustee, in trust for that purpose:

money;

U.S. Government Obligations (as described below) or Foreign Government Obligations (as described below) that through the scheduled payment of principal and interest in accordance with their terms will provide money; or

a combination of money and/or U.S. Government Obligations and/or Foreign Government Obligations sufficient in the written opinion of a nationally-recognized firm of independent accountants to provide money;

that, in each case specified above, provides a sufficient amount to pay the principal of, premium, if any, and interest, if any, on the debt securities of the series, on the scheduled due dates or on a selected date of redemption in accordance with the terms of the indenture.

In addition, defeasance may be effected only if, among other things:

in the case of either legal or covenant defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel, as specified in the indenture, stating that as a result of the defeasance neither the trust nor the trustee will be required to register as an investment company under the Investment Company Act of 1940;

in the case of legal defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that we have received from, or there has been published by, the Internal Revenue Service a ruling to the effect that,

Table of Contents

or there has been a change in any applicable federal income tax law with the effect that (and the opinion shall confirm that), the holders of outstanding debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes solely as a result of such legal defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner, including as a result of prepayment, and at the same times as would have been the case if legal defeasance had not occurred;

in the case of covenant defeasance, we deliver to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the outstanding debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for U.S. federal income tax purposes as a result of covenant defeasance and will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if covenant defeasance had not occurred; and

certain other conditions described in the indenture are satisfied.

If we fail to comply with our remaining obligations under the indenture and applicable supplemental indenture after a covenant defeasance of the indenture and applicable supplemental indenture, and the debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any undefeased event of default, the amount of money and/or U.S. Government Obligations and/or Foreign Government Obligations on deposit with the trustee could be insufficient to pay amounts due under the debt securities of the affected series at the time of acceleration. We will, however, remain liable in respect of these payments.

The term "U.S. Government Obligations" as used in the above discussion means securities that are direct obligations of or non-callable obligations guaranteed by the United States of America for the payment of which obligation or guarantee the full faith and credit of the United States of America is pledged.

The term "Foreign Government Obligations" as used in the above discussion means, with respect to debt securities of any series that are denominated in a currency other than U.S. dollars, (1) direct obligations of the government that issued or caused to be issued such currency for the payment of which obligations its full faith and credit is pledged or (2) obligations of a person controlled or supervised by or acting as an agent or instrumentality of such government the timely payment of which is unconditionally guaranteed as a full faith and credit obligation by that government, which in either case under clauses (1) or (2), are not callable or redeemable at the option of the issuer.

Regarding the Trustee

We will identify the trustee with respect to any series of debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the applicable debt securities. You should note that if the trustee becomes a creditor of ours, the indenture and the Trust Indenture Act of 1939 limit the rights of the trustee to obtain payment of claims in certain cases, or to realize on certain property received in respect of any such claim, as security or otherwise. The trustee and its affiliates may engage in, and will be permitted to continue to engage in, other transactions with us and our affiliates. If, however, the trustee acquires any conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, it must eliminate such conflict or resign.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the then outstanding debt securities of any series may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for exercising any remedy available to the trustee. If an event of default occurs and is continuing, the trustee, in the exercise of its rights and powers, must use the degree of care and skill of a prudent person in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to that provision, the trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under the indenture at the request of any of the holders of the debt

securities, unless they have offered to the trustee reasonable indemnity or security.

No Individual Liability of Incorporators, Stockholders, Officers or Directors

Each indenture provides that no incorporator and no past, present or future stockholder, officer or director of our company or any successor corporation in those capacities will have any individual liability for any of our obligations, covenants or agreements under the debt securities or such indenture.

Table of Contents

Governing Law

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

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

General

We may issue warrants for the purchase of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or any combination thereof. Warrants may be issued independently or together with our debt securities, preferred stock or common stock 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. The warrant agent will not have any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants. This summary of certain provisions of the warrants is not complete. For the terms of a particular series of warrants, you should refer to the applicable prospectus supplement for that series of warrants and the warrant agreement for that particular series.

Debt Warrants

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

the title of the debt warrants;

the offering price for the debt warrants, if any;

the aggregate number of the debt warrants;

the designation and terms of the debt securities, including any conversion rights, purchasable upon exercise of the debt warrants;

if applicable, the date from and after which the debt 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 debt warrant and the exercise price for the warrants, which may be payable in cash, securities or other property;

the dates on which the right to exercise the debt warrants will commence and expire;

if applicable, the minimum or maximum amount of the debt warrants that may be exercised at any one time;

whether the debt warrants represented by the debt warrant certificates or debt securities that may be issued upon exercise of the debt warrants will be issued in registered or bearer form;

information with respect 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;

the antidilution provisions of the debt warrants, if any;

the redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the debt warrants;

any provisions with respect to the holder's right to require us to repurchase the debt warrants upon a change in control or similar event; and

any additional terms of the debt warrants, including procedures and limitations relating to the exchange, exercise and settlement of the debt warrants.

Debt warrant certificates will be exchangeable for new debt warrant certificates of different denominations. Debt warrants may be exercised at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in

Table of Contents

the applicable prospectus supplement. Prior to the exercise of their debt warrants, holders of debt warrants will not have any of the rights of holders of the debt securities purchasable upon exercise and will not be entitled to payment of principal or any premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities purchasable upon exercise.

Equity Warrants

The applicable prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of warrants to purchase our common stock or preferred stock will describe the terms of the warrants, including the following:

the title of the warrants;

the offering price for the warrants, if any;

the aggregate number of warrants;

the designation and terms of the common stock or preferred stock that may be purchased upon exercise of the warrants;

if applicable, the designation and terms of the securities with which the warrants are issued 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 that may be purchased upon exercise of a warrant and the exercise price for the warrants;

the dates on which the right to exercise the warrants shall 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;

the antidilution provisions of the warrants, if any;

the redemption or call provisions, if any, applicable to the warrants;

any provisions with respect to a holder's right to require us to repurchase the warrants upon a change in control or similar event; and

any additional terms of the warrants, including procedures and limitations relating to the exchange, exercise and settlement of the warrants.

Holders of equity warrants will not be entitled:

to vote, consent or receive dividends;

receive notice as stockholders with respect to any meeting of stockholders for the election of our directors or any other matter; or

exercise any rights as stockholders.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS

We may issue subscription rights to purchase our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities. These subscription rights may be offered independently or together with any other security offered hereby and may or may not be transferable by the stockholder receiving the subscription rights in such offering. In connection with any offering of subscription rights, we may enter into a standby arrangement with one or more underwriters or other purchasers pursuant to which the underwriters or other purchasers may be required to purchase any securities remaining unsubscribed for after such offering.

The applicable prospectus supplement relating to any subscription rights we offer, if any, will, to the extent applicable, include specific terms relating to the offering, including some or all of the following:

the price, if any, for the subscription rights;

the exercise price payable for our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities upon the exercise of the subscription rights;

the number of subscription rights to be issued to each stockholder;

the number and terms of our common stock, preferred stock or debt securities which may be purchased per each subscription right;

the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;

any other terms of the subscription rights, including the 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 shall commence, and the date on which the subscription rights shall expire;

the extent to which the subscription rights may include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities or an over-allotment privilege to the extent the securities are fully subscribed; and

if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting or purchase arrangement which may be entered into by us in connection with the offering of subscription rights.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any subscription rights we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable subscription rights certificate, which will be filed with the SEC if we offer subscription rights. We urge you to read the applicable subscription rights certificate

and any applicable prospectus supplement in their entirety.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

We may issue units consisting of some or all of the securities described above, in any combination, including common stock, preferred stock, warrants and/or debt securities. The terms of these units will be set forth in a prospectus supplement. The description of the terms of these units in the related prospectus supplement will not necessarily be complete. You should refer to the applicable form of unit and unit agreement for complete information with respect to these units.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered by this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Fenwick & West LLP, San Francisco, California, which beneficially owns an aggregate of 43,103 shares of our common stock, representing approximately 0.10% of our outstanding shares of common stock as of September 30, 2018. Additional legal matters may be passed upon for us or any underwriters, dealers or agents by counsel that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2017, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our consolidated financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We are subject to the informational requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act, and are required to file annual, quarterly and other reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. The SEC maintains an Internet site (www.sec.gov) that contains reports, proxy and information statements, and various other information about us. You may also inspect the documents described herein at our principal executive offices, 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025, during normal business hours.

Information about us is also available at our website at www.dermira.com. However, the information on our website is not a part of this prospectus and is not incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference information from other documents that 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 part of this prospectus. Information in this prospectus supersedes information incorporated by reference that we filed with the SEC prior to the date of this prospectus. A Current Report (or portion thereof) furnished, but not filed, on Form 8-K shall not be incorporated by reference into this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus and the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part the information or documents listed below that we have filed with the SEC (Commission File No. 001-36668) or may file with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the termination of any offering of securities made by this prospectus:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017, filed with the SEC on February 22, 2018;

our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2018, June 30, 2018 and September 30, 2018 and filed with the SEC on May 3, 2018, August 6, 2018 and November 7, 2018, respectively;

the information specifically incorporated by reference into our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2017 from our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A, filed with the SEC on April 24, 2018;

our Current Reports on Form 8-K, filed with the SEC on March 5, 2018, May 3, 2018 (solely with respect to Item 5.02 thereof), May 24, 2018, June 18, 2018, June 29, 2018, September 5, 2018 and October 1, 2018;

the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed with the SEC on September 29, 2014 under Section 12 of the Exchange Act, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description; and

filings we make with the SEC pursuant to the Exchange Act after the date of the initial registration statement, of which this prospectus is a part, and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement.

We will furnish without charge to you, on written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents. You should direct any requests for documents to Dermira, Inc., 275 Middlefield Road, Suite 150, Menlo Park, California 94025, or via telephone at (650) 421-7200. Copies of the above reports may also be accessed from our website at www.investor.dermira.com. We do not incorporate the information from our website into this prospectus or any supplement to this prospectus and you should not consider any information on, or that can be accessed through, our website as part of this prospectus or any supplement to this prospectus (other than those filings with the SEC that we specifically incorporate by reference into this prospectus or any supplement to this prospectus). You may read and obtain copies of materials that we file with the SEC at the

SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov) or on our website investor.dermira.com under the heading "Financial Information - SEC Filings."

Any statement contained in a document incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus, will be deemed modified, superseded or replaced for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus modifies, supersedes or replaces such statement.

Table of Contents

\$110,000,000

COMMON STOCK

Citigroup

Cowen

Cantor

Guggenheim Securities

Needham & Company

H.C. Wainwright & Co.