

Verastem, Inc.
Form 424B5
July 16, 2013

Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424b(5)
Registration No. 333-186393

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is not complete and may be changed. A registration statement relating to the securities has become effective under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended. This preliminary prospectus supplement together with the accompanying prospectus is not an offer to sell the securities and it is not soliciting an offer to buy the securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

Subject to Completion, Dated July 16, 2013

Preliminary Prospectus Supplement

(To Prospectus dated February 14, 2013)

Shares

Common Stock

We are offering _____ shares of our common stock. Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "VSTM." On July 15, 2013, the last reported sale price of our common stock on The NASDAQ Global Market was \$17.17 per share.

We are an "emerging growth company" as defined under the federal securities laws and, as such, we may elect to comply with certain reduced public company reporting requirements.

Investing in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Please read "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-5 of this prospectus supplement and in the documents incorporated by reference into this 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 supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

	PER SHARE	TOTAL
Public offering price	\$	\$
Underwriting discounts and commissions	\$	\$
Proceeds to us (before expenses)	\$	\$

Delivery of the shares of common stock is expected to be made on or about July _____, 2013. We have granted the underwriters an option for a period of 30 days to purchase up to an additional _____ shares of our common stock. If the underwriters exercise the option in full, the total underwriting discounts and commissions payable by us will be \$ _____, and the total proceeds to us, before expenses, will be \$ _____.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Jefferies

Leerink Swann

Prospectus Supplement dated July , 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prospectus Supplement

<u>About This Prospectus Supplement</u>	S-1
<u>Prospectus Supplement Summary</u>	S-2
<u>The Offering</u>	S-4
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-5
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	S-10
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-11
<u>Dilution</u>	S-12
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-13
<u>Notice to Investors</u>	S-17
<u>Material United States Federal Income and Estate Tax Consequences for Non-U.S. Holders of Shares of our Common Stock</u>	S-20
<u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u>	S-24
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-25
<u>Experts</u>	S-25
Prospectus	
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Our Company</u>	2
<u>Risk Factors</u>	4
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	5
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	6
<u>Retrospective Presentation for Change in Accounting Principle</u>	7
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	8
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	9
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	11
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	13
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	14
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	16
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	23
<u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u>	24
<u>Legal Matters</u>	25
<u>Experts</u>	25

You should rely only on the information contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to give you information different from that contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer is not permitted. The information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate only as of the date of this prospectus supplement or the date of the accompanying prospectus, and the information in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate only as of the date of those respective documents, regardless of the time of delivery of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or of any sale of shares of our common stock. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus relate to part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, using a shelf registration process. Both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus include or incorporate by reference important information about us, our common stock and other information you should know before investing. You should read both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus as well as additional information described under "Where You Can Find More Information" in the accompanying prospectus before making an investment decision.

We have not authorized any dealer, agent or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference, even though this prospectus supplement and any accompanying prospectus is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

This prospectus supplement may add to, update or change the information in the accompanying prospectus. If information in this prospectus supplement is inconsistent with information in the accompanying prospectus, this prospectus supplement will apply and will supersede that information in the accompanying prospectus.

Unless otherwise indicated or unless the context requires otherwise, all references in this prospectus supplement to "Verastem," "we," "us" and "our" refer to Verastem, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiary.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

This summary highlights selected information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and does not contain all of the information that may be important to you. You should carefully review this entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the risk factors and financial statements included and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

We are focused on discovering and developing drugs to treat cancer by the targeted killing of cancer stem cells. We also develop proprietary companion diagnostics. A cancer stem cell is a particularly aggressive type of tumor cell, resistant to conventional cancer therapy, that we believe is an underlying cause of tumors, their recurrence and metastasis. We have proprietary technology to create a stable population of cancer stem cells that we use to screen for and identify small molecule compounds that target cancer stem cells. Our most advanced programs target the Focal Adhesion Kinase, or FAK, and the PI3K/mTOR signaling pathways. Our lead FAK inhibitor, VS-6063, is currently in Phase 1/1b testing in ovarian cancer and we expect to initiate a potentially pivotal trial of VS-6063 in mesothelioma in the third quarter of 2013. We have received orphan drug designation for the use of VS-6063 in mesothelioma in the European Union and have applied for orphan drug designation for this indication in the United States. We plan to initiate a Phase 1 study of VS-6063 in Japan in the third quarter of 2013 with the goal of including Japanese sites into the potentially pivotal mesothelioma trial. In addition we expect to start a Phase 2 study of VS-6063 in non-small cell lung cancer in the third quarter of 2013. In addition to VS-6063, our FAK inhibitor VS-4718 is in a Phase 1 clinical trial in patients with advanced cancers and we expect our dual mTORC1/2 and PI3K inhibitor VS-5584 to enter a Phase 1 clinical trial in patients with advanced cancers in the second half of 2013.

Cancer is a group of diseases characterized by uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. The American Cancer Society estimated that in the United States in 2011, approximately 1.6 million new cases of cancer would be diagnosed and nearly 600,000 people would die from the disease. Current treatments for cancer include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and targeted therapy. According to estimates by the National Institutes of Health, in the United States in 2010, the direct medical costs of cancer of all types exceeded \$100 billion. IMS Health estimates that in the United States in 2010, approximately \$22 billion was spent on drugs to treat cancer, representing the largest class of drug spending in the United States. Despite years of intensive research and clinical use, current treatments often fail to cure cancer.

We believe that a key reason for the ultimate failure of many current cancer therapies to achieve a durable clinical response is the presence of cancer stem cells, or CSCs, which are also sometimes referred to as tumor-initiating cells, within tumors. CSCs have been identified in many types of cancer, including mesothelioma, ovarian, breast, pancreatic, colon, brain, lung and leukemia. Following many cancer treatments, the tumor can remain with a high percentage of CSCs and become more aggressive and resistant to further treatment. In addition, patients who relapse often develop metastatic disease in which the cancer spreads to other sites in the body. Tumor metastasis to critical organs is the cause of more than 90% of cancer deaths. We believe that it is the drug resistance and ability of CSCs to spread to other sites in the body that may be the root causes of these therapies failing. Accordingly, our mission is to develop drugs targeting CSCs that either in combination with other cancer treatments or alone can target all of the cells comprising a tumor and, thus, create a durable clinical response.

Our most advanced product candidates are VS-6063, VS-4718 and VS-5584. We are currently evaluating these compounds in both preclinical and clinical studies as potential therapies for certain cancers, including mesothelioma, ovarian and lung. We believe that these compounds may be especially beneficial as therapeutics in aggressive cancers driven by CSCs that have a poorer prognosis and lower overall survival rate than other types of cancer.

Table of Contents

An important element of our business strategy is the development and use of proprietary, companion diagnostics in connection with the development of our therapeutic drug candidates. We plan to use these diagnostics as part of a personalized medicine approach to identify patients that we believe will benefit most from our therapies. We also believe that our diagnostics may be used to monitor patients' progress on therapy and aid physicians' ongoing treatment decisions.

Recent developments

On June 27, 2013, we announced the completion of the Phase 1 portion of a Phase 1/1b trial of VS-6063 in combination with paclitaxel for the treatment of advanced ovarian cancer. VS-6063 is a potent inhibitor of FAK and has previously demonstrated signs of clinical activity in ovarian cancer in a single agent, Phase 1 clinical trial. The recently completed Phase 1 portion of the combination study demonstrated that the combination of VS-6063 and weekly paclitaxel was tolerated at all dose levels with no dose-limiting toxicities observed. In this early stage of the trial, we also observed a significant decrease in the CA-125 biomarker in several patients, and one patient, currently in her fourth cycle, has had a complete response in her CA-125, which has returned to normal levels. In addition, she had a radiological complete response at the end of cycle 2 which will be reconfirmed at the end of cycle 4. The Phase 1b portion of the study is now open and recruiting patients. The Phase 1b trial is an open-label, multicenter trial of VS-6063 and weekly paclitaxel following an initial 10-day treatment with VS-6063 alone. Paired tumor biopsies to evaluate the effect of VS-6063 on biomarkers and cancer stem cells will be collected both before and following this treatment. Patients will then continue on VS-6063 in combination with weekly paclitaxel and anti-tumor activity will be assessed by Response Evaluation Criteria for Solid Tumors (RECIST) and safety and pharmacokinetics will be monitored. Up to 15 additional patients will be enrolled in this Phase 1b portion of the study at three U.S. locations.

Corporate information

We were incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in August 2010. We are headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and our principal offices are located at 215 First Street, Suite 440, Cambridge, Massachusetts and our telephone number is (617) 252-9300.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

Common stock offered by us	Shares
Common stock to be outstanding after this offering	Shares
Use of proceeds	We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for preclinical and clinical development of our lead product candidates, discovery, research and preclinical studies of our other product candidates, additional compounds and companion diagnostics, and other general corporate purposes.
Risk factors	See "Risk Factors" beginning on page S-5 and other information included in this prospectus supplement for a discussion of factors you should carefully consider before deciding to invest in shares of our common stock.
Underwriters' option	The underwriters have an option for a period of 30 days to purchase additional shares of our common stock.
NASDAQ Global Market symbol	VSTM
The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding after this offering is based on 21,282,247 actual shares of our common stock outstanding as of March 31, 2013, including 642,569 shares of unvested restricted stock subject to repurchase by us.	

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding after this offering excludes:

1,987,012 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options outstanding as of March 31, 2013 at a weighted average price of \$7.90 per share;

1,804,947 shares of our common stock available for future issuance as of March 31, 2013 under our 2012 equity incentive plan, plus up to a maximum of 417,296 shares of our common stock subject to outstanding awards under our 2010 equity incentive plan that could expire, be terminated or otherwise be surrendered, cancelled, forfeited or repurchased;

644,337 shares of our common stock issuable pursuant to unvested restricted stock units outstanding as of March 31, 2013; and

142,857 shares of our common stock as of March 31, 2013 issuable upon exercise of a warrant, with an exercise price equal to the average closing price of our common stock during the five days preceding the date of issuance, that we have agreed to issue to Poniard Pharmaceuticals, Inc. upon the first dosing of the first patient in the first Phase 1 clinical trial of a licensed product, including VS-4718. On June 26, 2013 we announced the initiation of a Phase 1 trial of VS-4718.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Risks Related to Our Business

An investment in our common stock involves significant risks. For a discussion of the factors that you should carefully consider before deciding to purchase any of our common stock, please review the risk factors included in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, including Item 1A. Risk Factors included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012. In addition, please read "About This Prospectus Supplement" and "Forward-Looking Statements" in this prospectus supplement, where we describe additional uncertainties associated with our business and the forward-looking statements included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Please note that additional risks not currently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also impair our business and operations.

Additional Risks Related to This Offering and Our Common Stock

Our executive officers, directors and principal stockholders maintain the ability to control all matters submitted to stockholders for approval.

As of March 25, 2013, our executive officers, directors and stockholders who owned more than 5% of our outstanding common stock, in the aggregate, beneficially owned shares representing approximately 55.6% of our capital stock. As a result, if these stockholders were to choose to act together, they would be able to exercise significant influence over all matters submitted to our stockholders for approval, as well as our management and affairs. For example, these persons, if they chose to act together, could significantly influence the election of directors and approval of any merger, consolidation or sale of all or substantially all of our assets. This concentration of voting power could delay or prevent an acquisition of our company on terms that other stockholders may desire.

Provisions in our corporate charter documents and under Delaware law could make an acquisition of us, which may be beneficial to our stockholders, more difficult and may prevent attempts by our stockholders to replace or remove our current management.

Provisions in our corporate charter and our bylaws may discourage, delay or prevent a merger, acquisition or other change in control of us that stockholders may consider favorable, including transactions in which you might otherwise receive a premium for your shares. These provisions could also limit the price that investors might be willing to pay in the future for shares of our common stock, thereby depressing the market price of our common stock. In addition, because our board of directors is responsible for appointing the members of our management team, these provisions may frustrate or prevent any attempts by our stockholders to replace or remove our current management by making it more difficult for stockholders to replace members of our board of directors. Among other things, these provisions:

establish a classified board of directors such that not all members of the board are elected at one time;

allow the authorized number of our directors to be changed only by resolution of our board of directors;

limit the manner in which stockholders can remove directors from the board;

establish advance notice requirements for stockholder proposals that can be acted on at stockholder meetings and nominations to our board of directors;

require that stockholder actions must be effected at a duly called stockholder meeting and prohibit actions by our stockholders by written consent;

limit who may call stockholder meetings;

Table of Contents

authorize our board of directors to issue preferred stock without stockholder approval, which could be used to institute a "poison pill" that would work to dilute the stock ownership of a potential hostile acquirer, effectively preventing acquisitions that have not been approved by our board of directors; and

require the approval of the holders of at least 75% of the votes that all our stockholders would be entitled to cast to amend or repeal certain provisions of our charter or bylaws.

Moreover, because we are incorporated in Delaware, we are governed by the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, which prohibits a person who owns in excess of 15% of our outstanding voting stock from merging or combining with us for a period of three years after the date of the transaction in which the person acquired in excess of 15% of our outstanding voting stock, unless the merger or combination is approved in a prescribed manner.

The market price of our common stock has been, and may continue to be, highly volatile.

Our stock price has been volatile. Since January 27, 2012, when we became a public company, the price for one share of our common stock has reached a high of \$18.82 and a low of \$6.25. We cannot predict whether the price of our common stock will rise or fall. The market price for our common stock may be influenced by many factors, including:

the success of competitive products or technologies;

results of clinical trials of our product candidates or those of our competitors;

regulatory or legal developments in the United States and other countries;

developments or disputes concerning patent applications, issued patents or other proprietary rights;

the recruitment or departure of key personnel;

the level of expenses related to any of our product candidates or clinical development programs;

the results of our efforts to discover, develop, acquire or in-license additional product candidates or products;

actual or anticipated changes in estimates as to financial results, development timelines or recommendations by securities analysts;

variations in our financial results or those of companies that are perceived to be similar to us;

changes in the structure of healthcare payment systems;

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

market conditions in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors;

general economic, industry and market conditions; and

the other factors described in and incorporated by reference into this "Risk Factors" section.

In addition, the stock market in general, and the market for small pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies in particular, have experienced extreme price and volume fluctuations that have often been unrelated or disproportionate to the operating performance of these companies. Broad market and industry factors may negatively affect the market price of our common stock, regardless of our actual operating performance. In the past, following periods of volatility in the market, securities class-action litigation has often been instituted against companies. Such litigation, if instituted against us, could result in substantial costs and diversion of management's attention and resources, which could materially and adversely affect our business and financial condition.

We may allocate the net proceeds from this offering in ways that you and other stockholders may not approve.

We currently intend to use the net proceeds of this offering for preclinical and clinical development of our lead product candidates, discovery, research and preclinical studies of our other product candidates, additional compounds and companion diagnostics and to fund working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes, which may include the acquisition or in-license of additional compounds, product candidates or technology. This expected use of the net proceeds from this offering represents our

Table of Contents

intentions based upon our current plans and business conditions. The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures may vary significantly depending on numerous factors, including the progress of our development efforts, the status of and results from clinical trials, as well as any collaborations that we may enter into with third parties for our product candidates, and any unforeseen cash needs. Because the number and variability of factors that will determine our use of the proceeds from this offering, their ultimate use may vary substantially from their currently intended use. As a result, our management will retain broad discretion over the allocation 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. See "Use of Proceeds."

If you purchase our common stock in this offering, you will incur immediate and substantial dilution in the book value of your shares.

The public offering price of our common stock is substantially higher than the net tangible book value per share of our common stock. Therefore, if you purchase shares of our common stock in this offering, you will pay a price per share that substantially exceeds our net tangible book value per share after this offering. After giving effect to the sale of _____ shares of our common stock in this offering, based on a public offering price of \$ _____ per share, and net tangible book value per share of our common stock of \$4.63 as of March 31, 2013, if you purchase shares in this offering, you will suffer immediate and substantial dilution of \$ _____ per share in the net tangible book value of common stock purchased. To the extent shares are issued under outstanding options or restricted stock units or the warrant issuable pursuant to our license agreement with Poniard, you will incur further dilution. See "Dilution" for a more detailed description of the dilution to new investors in the offering.

A significant portion of our total outstanding shares may be sold into the market at any time, which could cause the market price of our common stock to drop significantly, even if our business is doing well.

Sales of a substantial number of shares of our common stock in the public market could occur at any time. These sales, or the perception in the market that the holders of a large number of shares intend to sell shares, could reduce the market price of our common stock.

Upon the completion of this offering, approximately 6.6 million shares of our common stock beneficially owned by our officers and directors and certain of our significant stockholders will be subject to lock-up agreements with the underwriters that prohibit, subject to certain exceptions, the disposal or pledge of, or the hedging against, any of their common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable for shares of common stock for a period of 90 days after the date of this prospectus supplement. However, all of the shares sold in this offering and the remaining shares of our common stock outstanding prior to this offering will not be subject to lock-up agreements with the underwriters and, except to the extent such shares are held by our affiliates, will be freely tradable. In addition, the holders of approximately 11.7 million of the shares outstanding, as of our initial public offering, have registration rights pursuant to which they may require us, upon request of holders of at least 30% of such shares, to register their securities for resale under the Securities Act of 1933 (including prior to the expiration of the 90-day lock up period referenced above). The market price of our common stock could decline as a result of sales by our stockholders in the market following completion of this offering or the perception that these sales could occur. These factors could also make it difficult for us to raise additional capital by selling stock.

We will continue to need substantial additional funding. If we are unable to raise capital when needed, we would be forced to delay, reduce or eliminate our product development programs or commercialization efforts.

We expect our expenses to increase in connection with our ongoing activities, particularly as we continue the research and development, initiate clinical trials of, and seek marketing approval for, our product candidates. In addition, if we obtain marketing approval for any of our product candidates, we expect to incur significant commercialization expenses related to product sales, marketing, manufacturing and distribution. Accordingly, we will need to obtain substantial additional funding in connection with our continuing operations. If we are unable to raise capital when needed or on attractive terms, we would be

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

Table of Contents

forced to delay, reduce or eliminate our research and development programs or any future commercialization efforts.

We expect our existing cash, cash equivalents and investments, together with the net proceeds to us from this offering, will enable us to fund our current operating plan and capital expenditure requirements into late 2016. Our future capital requirements will depend on many factors, including:

the scope, progress, results and costs of compound discovery, preclinical development, laboratory testing and clinical trials for our product candidates;

the extent to which we acquire or in-license other products and technologies;

the costs, timing and outcome of regulatory review of our product candidates;

the costs of future commercialization activities, including product sales, marketing, manufacturing and distribution, for any of our product candidates for which we receive marketing approval;

revenue, if any, received from commercial sales of our product candidates, should any of our product candidates receive marketing approval;

the costs of preparing, filing and prosecuting patent applications, maintaining and enforcing our intellectual property rights and defending intellectual property-related claims; and

our ability to establish collaborations on favorable terms, if at all.

Identifying potential product candidates and conducting preclinical testing and clinical trials is a time-consuming, expensive and uncertain process that takes years to complete, and we may never generate the necessary data or results required to obtain marketing approval and achieve product sales. In addition, our product candidates, if approved, may not achieve commercial success. Our commercial revenues, if any, will be derived from sales of products that we do not expect to be commercially available for many years, if at all. Accordingly, we will need to continue to rely on additional financing to achieve our business objectives. Adequate additional financing may not be available to us on acceptable terms, or at all.

Because we do not anticipate paying any cash dividends on our capital stock in the foreseeable future, capital appreciation, if any, will be the source of gain for our stockholders.

We have never declared or paid cash dividends on our capital stock. We currently intend to retain all of our future earnings, if any, to finance the growth and development of our business. In addition, the terms of any future debt agreements may preclude us from paying dividends. As a result, capital appreciation, if any, of our common stock will be the sole source of gain for our stockholders for the foreseeable future.

We are an "emerging growth company," and our election to delay adoption of new or revised accounting standards applicable to public companies may result in our financial statements not being comparable to those of other public companies. As a result of this and other reduced disclosure requirements applicable to emerging growth companies, our common stock may be less attractive to investors.

We are an "emerging growth company," as defined in the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act, or JOBS Act, and may remain an emerging growth company until December 31, 2017, although if the market value of our common stock that is held by non-affiliates exceeds \$700 million as of any June 30 before that time or if we have annual gross revenues of \$1 billion or more in any fiscal year, we would cease to be an emerging growth company as of December 31 of the applicable year. For so long as we remain an emerging growth company, we are permitted and intend to rely on exemptions from certain reporting requirements that are applicable to other public companies that are not emerging growth companies. These exemptions include not being required to comply with the auditor attestation requirements of Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

2002, not being required to comply with any requirement that may be adopted by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board regarding mandatory audit firm rotation or a supplement to the auditor's report providing additional information about the audit and the financial statements, reduced disclosure obligations regarding executive compensation in our periodic reports and proxy statements, and exemptions from the requirements of holding a nonbinding advisory vote on executive compensation and shareholder approval of any golden parachute payments not previously approved.

S-8

Table of Contents

Among other provisions, the JOBS Act provides that an emerging growth company can take advantage of the extended transition period provided in Section 7(a)(2)(B) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, for complying with new or revised accounting standards. This allows an emerging growth company to delay the adoption of certain accounting standards until those standards would otherwise apply to private companies. We are electing to delay such adoption of new or revised accounting standards, and as a result, we may not comply with new or revised accounting standards on the relevant dates on which adoption of such standards is required for public companies that are not emerging growth companies. As a result of such election, our financial statements may not be comparable to the financial statements of other public companies.

We cannot predict whether investors will find our common stock less attractive because we will rely on these exemptions. If some investors find our common stock less attractive as a result, there may be a less active trading market for our common stock and our stock price may be more volatile.

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement and the other documents we have filed with the SEC that are incorporated herein by reference contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, including statements regarding our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenues, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management, are forward-looking statements. The words "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "may," "plan," "predict," "project," "target," "potential," "will," "would," "could," "should," "continue," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. We may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations disclosed in our forward-looking statements, and you should not place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties because they relate to events and depend on circumstances that may or may not occur in the future. We believe that these risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to, those described in the "Risk Factors" section of this prospectus supplement and under "Risk Factors" in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, each incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

Although we believe the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements are reasonable, we cannot guarantee future results, level of activity, performance or achievements. You should not rely upon forward-looking statements as predictions of future events. Unless required by law, we will not undertake and we specifically disclaim any obligation to release publicly the result of any revisions which may be made to any forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of such statements or to reflect the occurrence of events, whether or not anticipated. In that respect, we wish to caution readers not to place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date they are made.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds we will receive from this offering will be approximately \$ million, after deducting the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us. If the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares in full, we estimate that the net proceeds from this offering will be approximately \$ million.

We currently estimate that we will use the net proceeds from this offering as follows:

for preclinical and clinical development of our lead product candidates, discovery, research and preclinical studies of our other product candidates, additional compounds and companion diagnostics; and

the balance to fund working capital, capital expenditures and other general corporate purposes, which may include the acquisition or in-license of additional compounds, product candidates or technology.

This expected use of the net proceeds from this offering represents our intentions based upon our current plans and business conditions. The amounts and timing of our actual expenditures may vary significantly depending on numerous factors, including the progress of our development efforts, the status of and results from clinical trials, as well as any collaborations that we may enter into with third parties for our product candidates, and any unforeseen cash needs. As a result, our management will retain broad discretion over the allocation of the net proceeds from this offering. We have no current understandings, agreements or commitments for any material acquisitions or licenses of any compounds, product candidates or technology.

Pending our use of the net proceeds from this offering, we intend to invest the net proceeds in a variety of capital preservation investments, including short-term, investment grade, interest bearing instruments and U.S. government securities.

Table of Contents

DILUTION

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

Our historical net tangible book value as of March 31, 2013 was \$95.6 million, or \$4.63 per share of our common stock. Historical net tangible book value per share represents the amount of our total tangible assets less total liabilities, divided by 20,639,678 shares of our common stock outstanding, which excludes 642,569 shares of unvested restricted stock subject to repurchase by us.

After giving effect to the sale of _____ shares of common stock by us, at a public offering price of \$ _____ per share, less the estimated underwriting discounts and commissions and estimated offering expenses payable by us, our pro-forma net tangible book value as of March 31, 2013 would have been \$ _____ million, or \$ _____ per share. This represents an immediate increase in pro forma net tangible book value per share of \$ _____ to existing stockholders and immediate dilution of \$ _____ in pro forma net tangible book value per share to new investors purchasing common stock in this offering.

Dilution per share to new investors is determined by subtracting pro forma net tangible book value per share after this offering from the public offering price per share paid by new investors. The following table illustrates this dilution on a per share basis.

Public offering price per share	\$
Net tangible book value per share as of March 31, 2013	4.63
Increase in net tangible book value per share attributable to new investors	

Pro forma net tangible book value per share after this offering

Dilution per share to new investors

If the underwriters exercise their option to purchase additional shares or if any additional shares are issued in connection with outstanding options, you will experience further dilution.

The number of shares of our common stock to be outstanding excludes:

1,987,012 shares of our common stock issuable upon the exercise of stock options outstanding as of March 31, 2013 at a weighted average price of \$7.90 per share;

1,804,947 shares of our common stock available for future issuance as of March 31, 2013 under our 2012 equity incentive plan, plus up to a maximum of 417,296 shares of our common stock subject to outstanding awards under our 2010 equity incentive plan that could expire, be terminated or otherwise be surrendered, cancelled, forfeited or repurchased;

644,337 shares of our common stock issuable pursuant to unvested restricted stock units outstanding as of March 31, 2013; and

142,857 shares of our common stock issuable upon exercise of a warrant as of March 31, 2013, with an exercise price equal to the average closing price of our common stock during the five days preceding the date of issuance, that we have agreed to issue to Poniard Pharmaceuticals, Inc. upon the first dosing of the first patient in the first Phase 1 clinical trial of a licensed product, including VS-4718. On June 26, 2013 we announced the initiation of a Phase 1 trial of VS-4718.

Table of Contents

UNDERWRITING

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement, dated July , 2013, between us and Jefferies LLC and Leerink Swann LLC, as the representatives of the underwriters named below and the joint book-running managers of this offering, we have agreed to sell to the underwriters, and each of the underwriters has agreed, severally and not jointly, to purchase from us, the respective number of shares of common stock shown opposite its name below:

Underwriter	Number of Shares
Jefferies LLC	
Leerink Swann LLC	
Total	

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligations of the several underwriters are subject to certain conditions precedent such as the receipt by the underwriters of officers' certificates and legal opinions and approval of certain legal matters by their counsel. The underwriting agreement provides that the underwriters will purchase all of the shares of common stock if any of them are purchased. If an underwriter defaults, the underwriting agreement provides that the purchase commitments of the nondefaulting underwriters may be increased or the underwriting agreement may be terminated. We have agreed to indemnify the underwriters and certain of their controlling persons against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to contribute to payments that the underwriters may be required to make in respect of those liabilities.

The underwriters have advised us that, following the completion of this offering, they currently intend to make a market in the common stock as permitted by applicable laws and regulations. However, the underwriters are not obligated to do so, and the underwriters may discontinue any market-making activities at any time without notice in their sole discretion. Accordingly, no assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading market for the common stock, that you will be able to sell any of the common stock held by you at a particular time or that the prices that you receive when you sell will be favorable.

The underwriters are offering the shares of common stock subject to their acceptance of the shares of common stock from us and subject to prior sale. The underwriters reserve the right to withdraw, cancel or modify offers to the public and to reject orders in whole or in part.

Commission and Expenses

The underwriters have advised us that they propose to offer the shares of common stock to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to certain dealers, which may include the underwriters, at that price less a concession not in excess of \$ per share of common stock. The underwriters may allow, and certain dealers may reallow, a discount from the concession not in excess of \$ per share of common stock to certain brokers and dealers. After the offering, the public offering price, concession and reallowance to dealers may be reduced by the representatives. No such reduction will change the amount of proceeds to be received by us as set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement.

The following table shows the public offering price, the underwriting discounts and commissions that we are to pay the underwriters and the proceeds, before expenses, to us in connection with this offering. Such

Table of Contents

amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares.

	Per Share		Total	
	Without Option to Purchase Additional Shares	With Option to Purchase Additional Shares	Without Option to Purchase Additional Shares	With Option to Purchase Additional Shares
Public offering price	\$	\$	\$	\$
Underwriting discounts and commissions paid by us	\$	\$	\$	\$
Proceeds to us, before expenses	\$	\$	\$	\$

We estimate expenses payable by us in connection with this offering, other than the underwriting discounts and commissions referred to above, will be approximately \$243,000.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Market under the trading symbol "VSTM".

Option to Purchase Additional Shares

We have granted to the underwriters an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase, from time to time, in whole or in part, up to an aggregate of additional shares of common stock from us at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement, less underwriting discounts and commissions. If the underwriters exercise this option, each underwriter will be obligated, subject to specified conditions, to purchase a number of additional shares of common stock proportionate to that underwriter's initial purchase commitment as indicated in the table above.

No Sales of Similar Securities

We, our executive officers and directors and certain of our significant shareholders have agreed, subject to specified exceptions, not to directly or indirectly:

sell, offer, contract or grant any option to sell (including any short sale), pledge, transfer, establish an open "put equivalent position" within the meaning of Rule 16a-1(h) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or

otherwise dispose of any shares of common stock, options or warrants to acquire shares of common stock, or securities exchangeable or exercisable for or convertible into shares of common stock currently or hereafter owned either of record or beneficially, or

publicly announce an intention to do any of the foregoing for a period of 90 days after the date of this prospectus supplement without the prior written consent of the representatives.

These restrictions terminate after the close of trading of the common stock on and including the 90th day after the date of this prospectus supplement.

The representatives may, in their sole discretion and at any time or from time to time before the termination of the 90-day period release all or any portion of the securities subject to lock-up agreements. There are no existing agreements between the underwriters and any of our shareholders who will execute a lock-up agreement, providing consent to the sale of shares prior to the expiration of the lock-up period.

Table of Contents

Not all of our shares of common stock outstanding prior to this offering will be subject to the lock-up agreements described above. In addition, certain holders of our common stock have registration rights pursuant to which they may request that we register their securities for resale under the Securities Act of 1933 (including prior to the expiration of the 90-day lock-up period). See "Risk Factors A significant portion of our total outstanding shares may be sold into the market at any time, which could cause the market price of our common stock to drop significantly, even if our business is doing well."

Stabilization

The underwriters have advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, certain persons participating in the offering may engage in short sale transactions, stabilizing transactions, syndicate covering transactions or the imposition of penalty bids in connection with this offering. These activities may have the effect of stabilizing or maintaining the market price of the common stock at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. Establishing short sales positions may involve either "covered" short sales or "naked" short sales.

"Covered" short sales are sales made in an amount not greater than the underwriters' option to purchase additional shares of our common stock in this offering. The underwriters may close out any covered short position by either exercising their option to purchase additional shares of our common stock or purchasing shares of our common stock in the open market. In determining the source of shares to close out the covered short position, the underwriters will consider, among other things, the price of shares of common stock available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which they may purchase shares through the option to purchase additional shares.

"Naked" short sales are sales in excess of the option to purchase additional shares of our common stock. The underwriters must close out any naked short position by purchasing 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 of our common stock in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering.

A stabilizing bid is a bid for the purchase of shares of common stock on behalf of the underwriters for the purpose of fixing or maintaining the price of the common stock. A syndicate covering transaction is the bid for or the purchase of shares of common stock on behalf of the underwriters to reduce a short position incurred by the underwriters in connection with the offering. Similar to other purchase transactions, the underwriters' purchases to cover the syndicate short sales may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of our common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of our common stock. As a result, the price of our common stock may be higher than the price that might otherwise exist in the open market. A penalty bid is an arrangement permitting the underwriters to reclaim the selling concession otherwise accruing to a syndicate member in connection with the offering if the common stock originally sold by such syndicate member are purchased in a syndicate covering transaction and therefore have not been effectively placed by such syndicate member.

Neither we, nor any of the underwriters make any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the price of our common stock. The underwriters are not obligated to engage in these activities and, if commenced, any of the activities may be discontinued at any time.

The underwriters may also engage in passive market-making transactions in our common stock on The NASDAQ Global Market in accordance with Rule 103 of Regulation M during a period before the commencement of offers or sales of shares of our common stock in this offering and extending through the completion of distribution. A passive market maker must display its bid at a price not in excess of the highest independent bid of that security. However, if all independent bids are lowered below the passive market maker's bid, that bid must then be lowered when specified purchase limits are exceeded.

Table of Contents

Electronic Distribution

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format may be made available by e-mail or on the web sites or through online services maintained by one or more of the underwriters or their affiliates. In those cases, prospective investors may view offering terms online and may be allowed to place orders online. The underwriters may agree with us to allocate a specific number of shares of common stock for sale to online brokerage account holders. Any such allocation for online distributions will be made by the underwriters on the same basis as other allocations. Other than this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in electronic format, the information on the underwriters' web sites and any information contained in any other web site maintained by any of the underwriters is not part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, has not been approved and/or endorsed by us or the underwriters and should not be relied upon by investors.

Other Activities and Relationships

The underwriters and certain of their affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities. The underwriters and certain of their affiliates have, from time to time, performed, and may in the future perform, various commercial and investment banking and financial advisory services for us and our affiliates, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses.

In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriters and certain of their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers, and such investment and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments issued by us and our affiliates. If the underwriters or their respective affiliates have a lending relationship with us, they routinely hedge their credit exposure to us consistent with their customary risk management policies. The underwriters and their respective affiliates may hedge such exposure by entering into transactions which consist of either the purchase of credit default swaps or the creation of short positions in our securities or the securities of our affiliates, including potentially the common stock offered hereby. Any such short positions could adversely affect future trading prices of the common stock offered hereby. The underwriters and certain of their respective affiliates may also communicate independent investment recommendations, market color or trading ideas and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or instruments and may at any time hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Table of Contents

NOTICE TO INVESTORS

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:

A.

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; or

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

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

B.

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

European Economic Area

In relation to each Member State of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a "Relevant Member State"), an offer to the public of any Ordinary Shares may not be made in that Relevant Member State, except that the Ordinary Shares may be offered to the public in that Relevant Member State at any time under the following exemptions under the Prospectus Directive, if it has been implemented in that Relevant Member State:

a)

to legal entities which are "qualified investors" as defined in the Prospectus Directive;

b)

to fewer than 100, or, if the Relevant Member State has implemented the relevant provisions of the 2010 PD Amending Directive, 150, natural or legal persons (other than "qualified investors" as defined in the Prospectus Directive) as permitted under the Prospectus Directive; or

c)

in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive,

provided that no such offer of Ordinary Shares shall result in a requirement for, the publication by the Company or either of the Joint Sponsors of a Prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive, or supplementing a Prospectus pursuant to Article 16 of the Prospectus Directive, and each person who initially acquires Ordinary Shares or to whom any offer is made will be deemed to have represented, warranted to and agreed with the Joint Sponsors and the Company that it is a "qualified investor" within the meaning of the law in that Relevant Member State implementing Article 2(1)(e) of the Prospectus Directive.

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

For the purposes of this provision, the expression an "offer to the public" in relation to any Ordinary Shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information on the terms of the offer and the Ordinary Shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase any Ordinary Shares, as the same may be varied in that Member State by any measure

S-17

Table of Contents

implementing the Prospectus Directive in that Member State and the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71/EC (and amendments thereto, including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, to the extent implemented in the Relevant Member State) and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State and the expression "2010 PD Amending Directive" means Directive 2010/73/EU.

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 and any rules made under that Ordinance; or in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a "prospectus" as defined in the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) of Hong Kong or which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) of Hong Kong. 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 Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571) of Hong Kong 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.

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, unless otherwise provided herein, 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 a 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.

Singapore

This prospectus supplement has not been and will not be lodged or registered with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or the invitation for subscription or purchase of the securities may not be issued, circulated or distributed, nor may the securities be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to the public or any member of the public in Singapore other than (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore, or the SFA, (ii) to a relevant person as defined under Section 275(2), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A) of the SFA, 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

Table of Contents

applicable provision of the SFA. Where the securities are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is:

- a) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor as defined under 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
- b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary is an accredited investor, shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest in that trust shall not be transferable for six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired such securities under Section 275 of the SFA except:
 - i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person pursuant to an offer that is made on terms that such shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or such rights and interest in that trust are acquired at a consideration of not less than \$200,000 (or its equivalent in a foreign currency) for each transaction, whether such amount is to be paid for in cash or by exchange of securities or other assets, and further for corporations, in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA;
 - ii) where no consideration is given for the transfer; or
 - iii) where the transfer is by operation of law.

Switzerland

The securities may not be publicly offered in Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange, or SIX, or on any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. This prospectus supplement has been prepared without regard to the disclosure standards for issuance prospectuses under art. 652a or art. 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or the disclosure standards for listing prospectuses under art. 27 ff. of the SIX Listing Rules or the listing rules of any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the securities or the offering may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, the Company or the securities have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. In particular, this prospectus supplement will not be filed with, and the offer of securities will not be supervised by, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority, or FINMA, and the offer of securities has not been and will not be authorized under the Swiss Federal Act on Collective Investment Schemes, or CISA. The investor protection afforded to acquirers of interests in collective investment schemes under the CISA does not extend to acquirers of securities.

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, which is referred to as 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.

Table of Contents

**MATERIAL UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME AND ESTATE TAX CONSEQUENCES
FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF SHARES OF OUR COMMON STOCK**

The following is a summary of certain material United States federal income and estate tax considerations relating to the purchase, ownership, and disposition of shares of our common stock by a non-U.S. holder (as defined below) that acquires our common stock in this offering and holds it as a capital asset within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"). For purposes of this summary, a "non-U.S. holder" is a beneficial owner of our common stock that, for United States federal income tax purposes, is an individual, corporation, estate or trust other than:

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

a corporation, or any other organization taxable as a corporation for United States federal income tax purposes, that is created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state thereof, or the District of Columbia;

an estate the income of which is subject to United States federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

a trust if (1) a court within the United States is able to exercise primary supervision over the trust's administration and one or more United States persons (as defined in the Code) have the authority to control all substantial decisions of that trust, or (2) the trust has in effect a valid election under the applicable Treasury regulations to be treated as a United States person.

A modified definition of "non-U.S. holder" applies for United States federal estate tax purposes (as discussed below).

This summary is based upon the Code, Treasury regulations promulgated or proposed thereunder, judicial decisions, rulings, and administrative interpretations thereof, all as of the date hereof and all of which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect. The foregoing are subject to differing interpretations which could affect the tax consequences described herein. This summary does not purport to be a complete analysis of all the potential tax considerations relevant to non-U.S. holders of our common stock. In addition, this summary does not address all aspects of United States federal income and estate taxation that may be applicable to non-U.S. holders in light of their particular circumstances or status, nor does it address specific tax considerations that may be relevant to particular persons (including, for example, financial institutions, broker-dealers, insurance companies, partnerships or other pass-through entities, certain United States expatriates, tax-exempt organizations, pension plans, "controlled foreign corporations," "passive foreign investment companies," corporations that accumulate earnings to avoid United States federal income tax, persons in special situations, such as those who have elected to mark securities to market or those who hold shares of our common stock as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction, synthetic security or other integrated investment, persons that have a "functional currency" other than the U.S. dollar, or holders subject to the alternative minimum tax or the unearned income Medicare contribution tax). In addition, except as explicitly addressed herein with respect to estate tax, this summary does not address certain estate and any gift tax considerations or considerations under the tax laws of any state, local or non-United States jurisdiction.

If a partnership (including any entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for United States federal income tax purposes) owns our common stock, the tax treatment of a person treated as a partner in the partnership for United States federal income tax purposes generally will depend upon the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partnerships and other entities that are treated as partnerships for United States federal income tax purposes and persons holding our common stock through a partnership or other entity treated as a partnership for United States federal income tax purposes should consult their tax advisors.

Table of Contents

There can be no assurance that the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") will not challenge one or more of the tax consequences described herein, and we have not obtained, nor do we intend to obtain, a ruling from the IRS or an opinion of counsel with respect to the United States federal income or estate tax consequences to a non-U.S. holder of the purchase, ownership or disposition of our common stock.

THIS SUMMARY IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE TAX ADVICE. YOU ARE URGED TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME AND ESTATE TAXATION, STATE, LOCAL, AND NON-UNITED STATES TAXATION AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP, AND DISPOSITION OF OUR COMMON STOCK, INCLUDING THE CONSEQUENCES UNDER ANY APPLICABLE TAX TREATY.

Distributions on our shares of our common stock

We do not currently expect to pay dividends. In the event we do make a distribution of cash or property with respect to our common stock, any such distributions generally will constitute dividends for United States federal income tax purposes to the extent of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, as determined under United States federal income tax principles, and will be subject to withholding as described in the next paragraph below. If a distribution exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits, the excess will be treated as a tax-free return of the non-U.S. holder's investment, up to such holder's adjusted tax basis in shares of our common stock. Any remaining excess will be treated as capital gain, subject to the tax treatment described below in "Gain on Sale, Exchange or Other Taxable Disposition of Our Common Stock." Any distribution described in this paragraph would also be subject to the discussion below in "Additional Withholding and Reporting Requirements."

Any dividends paid to a non-U.S. holder with respect to shares of our common stock generally will be subject to withholding of United States federal tax at a 30% rate unless such non-U.S. holder provides us or our agent, as the case may be, with the appropriate IRS Form W-8 prior to the payment of dividends, such as:

IRS Form W-8BEN (or successor form) certifying, under penalties of perjury, that such non-U.S. holder is entitled to a reduction in withholding under an applicable income tax treaty, or

IRS Form W-8ECI (or successor form) certifying, under penalties of perjury that a dividend paid on our common stock is not subject to withholding tax because it is effectively connected with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States of the non-U.S. holder (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained in the U.S.) (in which case such dividend generally will be subject to graduated United States federal income tax rates on a net income basis as described below).

The certification requirement described above also may require a non-U.S. holder that provides an IRS form or that claims treaty benefits to provide its United States taxpayer identification number.

Each non-U.S. holder is urged to consult its own tax advisor about the specific methods for satisfying these requirements. A claim for exemption will not be valid if the person receiving the applicable form has actual knowledge or reason to know that the statements on the form are false.

If dividends are "effectively connected" with the conduct of a trade or business in the United States of a non-U.S. holder (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, are attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained by such non-U.S. holder in the United States), the non-U.S. holder, although exempt from the withholding tax described above (provided that the certifications described above are satisfied), will generally be subject to United States federal income tax on such dividends on a net income basis in the same manner as if it were a resident of the United States. In addition, if the non-U.S. holder is taxable as a corporation for United States federal income tax purposes, such holder may, under certain circumstances, be subject to an additional "branch profits tax" equal to 30% (unless reduced by an applicable income tax treaty) of its effectively connected earnings and profits for the taxable year.

Table of Contents

If a non-U.S. holder is eligible for a reduced rate of United States federal withholding tax pursuant to an applicable income tax treaty, such holder may obtain a refund or credit of any amounts withheld in excess of that rate by timely filing an appropriate refund claim with the IRS.

Gain on sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of shares of our common stock

Subject to the discussion below under "Additional Withholding and Reporting Requirements," a non-U.S. holder generally will not be subject to United States federal income tax or withholding tax on gain realized upon a sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of shares of our common stock (including a redemption, but only if the redemption would be treated as a sale or exchange rather than a distribution for United States federal income tax purposes) unless:

- (1) the gain is "effectively connected" with the conduct of a trade or business of the non-U.S. holder in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the gain is attributable to a permanent establishment or fixed base maintained in the United States);
- (2) the non-U.S. holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 or more days in the taxable year of the disposition and meets certain other conditions; or
- (3) we are or have been a "United States real property holding corporation" ("USRPHC") for United States federal income tax purposes at any time within the shorter of the five-year period preceding the disposition and the non-U.S. holder's holding period for our common stock (the "relevant period").

If the first exception applies, the non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to United States federal income tax on a net income basis with respect to such gain in the same manner as if such holder were a resident of the United States. In addition, if the non-U.S. holder is a corporation for United States federal income tax purposes, such gains may, under certain circumstances, also be subject to an additional "branch profits tax" at a 30% rate (or at a lower rate under an applicable income tax treaty).

If the second exception applies, the non-U.S. holder generally will be subject to United States federal income tax at a rate of 30% (unless an applicable income tax treaty provides otherwise) on the amount by which such non-U.S. holder's capital gains allocable to United States sources exceed capital losses allocable to United States sources during the taxable year of the disposition.

With respect to the third exception above, although there can be no assurances, we believe we currently are not, and we do not anticipate becoming, a USRPHC for United States federal income tax purposes. However, because the determination of whether we are a USRPHC depends on the fair market value of our United States real property interests relative to the fair market value of our other trade or business assets and our foreign real property interests, there can be no assurance that we will not become a USRPHC in the future. Generally, a corporation is a USRPHC only if the fair market value of its United States real property interests (as defined in the Code) equals or exceeds 50% of the sum of the fair market value of its worldwide real property interests plus its other assets used or held for use in a trade or business. Even if we are or become a USRPHC, a non-U.S. holder would not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on a sale, exchange or other taxable disposition of our common stock by reason of our status as a USRPHC so long as (i) our common stock continues to be regularly traded on an established securities market (within the meaning of Section 897(c)(3) of the Code) during the calendar year in which such disposition occurs and (ii) such non-U.S. holder does not own and is not deemed to own (directly, indirectly or constructively) more than 5% of our common stock at any time during the relevant period. If we are a USRPHC and the requirements of (i) or (ii) are not met, gain on the disposition of shares of our common stock generally will be taxed in the same manner as gain that is effectively connected with the conduct of a U.S. trade or business, except that the "branch profits tax" will not apply.

Table of Contents

Additional withholding and reporting requirements

Legislation enacted in March 2010 (commonly referred to as "FATCA") will impose United States federal withholding at a rate of 30% on payments to certain non-U.S. entities (including financial intermediaries), including dividends on and the gross proceeds from dispositions of our common stock, unless various information reporting and due diligence requirements, which are different from and in addition to the certification requirements described elsewhere in this discussion, have been satisfied (generally relating to ownership by U.S. persons of interests in or accounts with those entities). The withholding rules applicable to payments of dividends on our common stock are expected to be phased in beginning July 1, 2014. The withholding rules will apply to gross proceeds from dispositions of our common stock beginning January 1, 2017. Although Treasury regulations implementing FATCA were recently finalized, these rules remain unclear in several respects and are subject to material changes. Non-U.S. holders should consult their tax advisors regarding the possible implications of FATCA on their investment in our common stock.

Information reporting and backup withholding

We must report annually to the IRS and to each non-U.S. holder the gross amount of the distributions on our common stock paid to such holder and the tax withheld, if any, with respect to such distributions, regardless of whether withholding was required. A non-U.S. holder will generally be subject to backup withholding on dividends paid to such holder unless such holder furnishes a valid IRS Form W-8BEN (or such other applicable form and documentation as required by the Code or the Treasury regulations) certifying under penalties of perjury that it is a non-U.S. holder (and the payor does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that such holder is a United States person as defined under the Code), or such holder otherwise establishes an exemption. Dividends paid to non-U.S. holders subject to the United States federal withholding tax, as described above in "Distributions on Shares of Our Common Stock," generally will be exempt from U.S. backup withholding.

Information reporting and, depending on the circumstances, backup withholding will apply to the payment of the proceeds of a sale or other disposition of shares of our common stock by a non-U.S. holder effected by or through the United States office of any broker, United States or foreign, unless the holder certifies that it is not a United States person (as defined under the Code) and satisfies certain other requirements, or otherwise establishes an exemption. Generally, information reporting and backup withholding will not apply to a payment of disposition proceeds to a non-U.S. holder where the transaction is effected outside the United States through a non-United States office of a broker. However, for information reporting purposes, dispositions effected through a non-United States office of a broker with substantial United States ownership or operations generally will be treated in a manner similar to dispositions effected through a United States office of a broker. Prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors regarding the application of the information reporting and backup withholding rules to them.

Copies of the information returns may be made available to the tax authorities in the country in which the non-U.S. holder resides or is incorporated under the provisions of an applicable treaty or agreement.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be allowed as a credit against a non-U.S. holder's United States federal income tax liability, if any, and may entitle such holder to a refund, provided that an appropriate claim is timely filed with the IRS.

Federal estate taxes

Shares of our common stock held (or treated as held) by an individual who is not a United States citizen or resident (as specifically determined for United States federal estate tax purposes) at the time of such individual's death generally will be included in the holder's gross estate for United States federal estate tax purposes, unless an applicable estate tax or other treaty provides otherwise, and, therefore, may be subject to United States federal estate tax.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" into this prospectus supplement the information 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 supplement, and information in documents that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus supplement. We incorporate by reference into this prospectus supplement the documents listed below and any future filings made by us with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, except for information "furnished" under Items 2.02, 7.01 or 9.01 on Form 8-K or other information "furnished" to the SEC which is not deemed filed and not incorporated in this prospectus supplement, until the termination of the offering of securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement. We hereby incorporate by reference the following documents:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, as filed with the SEC on March 26, 2013;

Our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2013, as filed with the SEC on May 9, 2013;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 22, 2013, March 6, 2013, May 14, 2013, June 6, 2013, and June 17, 2013; and

Description of our common stock, which is contained in the Registration Statement on Form 8-A, as filed with the SEC on January 23, 2012, as supplemented by the Description of Common Stock found on page 11 of the accompanying prospectus and including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

You may request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Investor Relations
Verastem, Inc.
215 First Street, Suite 440
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142
(617) 252-9300

Copies of these filings are also available, without charge, on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov and on our website at www.verastem.com as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed electronically with the SEC. The information contained on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the shares of common stock offered hereby is being passed upon for us by Ropes & Gray LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, New York, New York will pass upon certain legal matters relating to this offering for the underwriters.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements of Verastem, Inc. appearing in Verastem, Inc.'s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their report thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

S-25

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

\$100,000,000

**Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Warrants
Debt Securities**

We may offer and sell from time to time, in one or more series or issuances and on terms that we will determine at the time of the offering, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus, up to an aggregate amount of \$100,000,000.

We will provide specific terms of any offering in a supplement to this prospectus. Any prospectus supplement may also add, update, or change information contained in this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement as well as the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you purchase any of the securities offered hereby.

These securities may be offered and sold in the same offering or in separate offerings; to or through underwriters, dealers, and agents; or directly to purchasers. The names of any underwriters, dealers, or agents involved in the sale of our securities and their compensation will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is traded on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "VSTM." On January 31, 2013, the closing price of our common stock was \$9.96.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See "Risk Factors" on page 4.

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. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Prospectus dated February 14, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Our Company</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Retrospective Presentation for Change in Accounting Principle</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>25</u>

You should rely only on the information contained in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to give you information different from that contained in this prospectus. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer is not permitted. The information contained in this prospectus is accurate only as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus, regardless of when this prospectus is delivered or when any sale of our securities occurs. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is a part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") using a "shelf" registration process. Under this shelf registration process, we may offer to sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings up to a total dollar amount of \$100,000,000. Each time we sell securities under this shelf registration, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement, including all documents incorporated herein by reference, together with additional information described under "Where You Can Find More Information" below.

This prospectus does not include all of the information that is in the registration statement. We omitted certain parts of the registration statement from this prospectus as permitted by the SEC. We refer you to the registration statement and its exhibits for additional information about us and the securities that may be sold under this prospectus.

We have not authorized any dealer, agent or other person to give any information or to make any representation other than those contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement. You must not rely upon any information or representation not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus or an accompanying prospectus supplement. This prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, if any, do not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor do this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement, if any, is accurate on any date subsequent to the date set forth on the front of the document or that any information we have incorporated by reference is correct on any date subsequent to the date of the document incorporated by reference, even though this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement is delivered or securities are sold on a later date.

"Verastem," the "Company," "we," "us," "our" and similar names refer to Verastem, Inc. unless we state otherwise or the context otherwise requires.

Table of Contents

OUR COMPANY

We are a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on discovering and developing proprietary small molecule drugs targeting cancer stem cells along with proprietary companion diagnostics. A cancer stem cell is a particularly aggressive type of tumor cell, resistant to conventional cancer therapy, that we believe is an underlying cause of tumor recurrence and metastasis. Our scientific co-founders have made discoveries that link the epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition, or EMT, to the emergence of cancer stem cells. This transition involves the transformation of one type of cancer cell into a more aggressive and drug resistant type of cancer cell. Building on these discoveries, our scientific co-founders developed proprietary technology to create a stable population of cancer stem cells that we use to screen for and identify small molecule compounds that target cancer stem cells. We expect to initiate multiple clinical trials with our product candidates VS-6063, VS-4718 and VS-5584 in 2013, including a potentially pivotal trial of VS-6063 in mesothelioma.

Cancer is a group of diseases characterized by uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. The American Cancer Society estimated that in the United States in 2011, approximately 1.6 million new cases of cancer were diagnosed and nearly 600,000 people will die from the disease. Current treatments for cancer include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and targeted therapy. According to estimates by the National Institutes of Health, in the United States in 2010, the direct medical costs of cancer of all types exceeded \$100 billion. IMS Health estimates that in the United States in 2010, approximately \$22 billion was spent on drugs to treat cancer, representing the largest class of drug spending in the United States. Despite years of intensive research and clinical use, current treatments often fail to cure cancer.

We believe that a key reason for the ultimate failure of many current therapies to achieve a durable clinical response may be the presence of cancer stem cells, or CSCs, which are also sometimes referred to as tumor-initiating cancer cells, within tumors. CSCs have been identified in many types of cancer, including breast, pancreatic, colon, brain, lung and leukemia. Following many cancer treatments, the tumor can remain with a high percentage of CSCs and become more aggressive and resistant to further treatment. In addition, patients who relapse often develop metastatic disease in which the cancer spreads to other sites in the body. Tumor metastasis to critical organs is the cause of more than 90% of cancer deaths. We believe that it is the drug resistance and ability of CSCs to spread to other sites in the body that may be the root causes of these failed therapies. Accordingly, our mission is to develop drugs targeting CSCs that either in combination with other cancer treatments or alone can kill all of the cells comprising a tumor and, thus, create a durable clinical response.

We license our EMT technology from the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, an affiliate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or MIT, and the President and Fellows of Harvard College, or Harvard. Using our proprietary technology, we can create a stable population of CSCs in the laboratory for use in rapid and automated assays, referred to as high-throughput screening, to enable discovery of novel drugs targeting these CSCs. We are using our discovery approach to identify a pipeline of small molecule compounds with the potential to target CSCs.

Our most advanced product candidates are Focal Adhesion Kinase inhibitors VS-6063 and VS-4718, and the PI3K /mTOR inhibitor VS-5584. VS-6063 has completed a Phase I clinical trial where a good safety profile and initial signs of activity were observed. We are currently planning to initiate a potentially pivotal study of VS-6063 in mesothelioma by mid-2013 and also expect to initiate a study of VS-6063 in combination with paclitaxel for ovarian cancer in the first half of 2013. We also intend to initiate a Phase I study of VS-4718 in patients with advanced cancers in the first half of 2013. VS-5584 is currently in IND-enabling toxicity studies and we anticipate starting a Phase I study of VS-5584 in patients with advanced cancers in the second half of 2013.

An important element of our business strategy is the development and use of proprietary, companion diagnostics in connection with the development of our therapeutic drug candidates. We plan

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

Table of Contents

to use these diagnostics as part of a personalized medicine approach to identify patients with aggressive cancers that have a high percentage of CSCs, which is the group that we believe will benefit most from our therapies. We also believe that these diagnostics may be used to monitor patients' progress on therapy and aid physicians' ongoing treatment decisions.

We are developing a companion diagnostic to VS-6063 in mesothelioma to help identify patients that may benefit the most from therapy.

We are headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and our principal offices are located at 215 First Street, Suite 440, Cambridge, Massachusetts and our telephone number is (617) 252-9300.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Investing in our securities involves a high degree of risk. See "Item 1A Risk Factors" in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K incorporated by reference in this prospectus and in any subsequent Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q and the "Risk Factors" section in the applicable prospectus supplement for a discussion of the factors you should carefully consider before deciding to purchase our securities. Before you invest in our securities, you should carefully consider these risks as well as other information we include or incorporate by reference into this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement. The risks and uncertainties we have described are not the only ones facing our company. Additional risks and uncertainties not presently known to us or that we currently deem immaterial may also affect our business operations. The occurrence of any of these risks might cause you to lose all or part of your investment in the offered securities. The discussion of risks includes or refers to forward-looking statements; you should read the explanation of the qualifications and limitations on such forward-looking statements discussed elsewhere in this prospectus.

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the other documents we have filed with the SEC that are incorporated herein by reference contain forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, including statements regarding our strategy, future operations, future financial position, future revenues, projected costs, prospects, plans and objectives of management, are forward-looking statements. The words "anticipate," "believe," "estimate," "expect," "intend," "may," "plan," "predict," "project," "target," "potential," "will," "would," "could," "should," "continue," and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements, although not all forward-looking statements contain these identifying words. We may not actually achieve the plans, intentions or expectations disclosed in our forward-looking statements, and you should not place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements. Actual results or events could differ materially from the plans, intentions and expectations disclosed in the forward-looking statements we make. In particular, you should consider the numerous risks described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 and any subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, each incorporated by reference in this prospectus, and in the "Risk Factors" section in the applicable prospectus supplement. See "Where You Can Find More Information."

Although we believe the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements are reasonable, we cannot guarantee future results, level of activity, performance or achievements. You should not rely upon forward-looking statements as predictions of future events. Unless required by law, we will not undertake and we specifically disclaim any obligation to release publicly the result of any revisions which may be made to any forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of such statements or to reflect the occurrence of events, whether or not anticipated. In that respect, we wish to caution readers not to place undue reliance on any such forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date they are made.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

Except as otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds we receive from our sale of the securities covered by this prospectus for general corporate purposes, which may include, working capital, capital expenditures, research and development expenditures, clinical trial expenditures, commercial expenditures, and possible acquisitions. Additional information on the use of net proceeds we receive from the sale of securities covered by this prospectus may be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the specific offering.

Table of Contents**RETROSPECTIVE PRESENTATION FOR CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLE**

The following table is presented to reflect the retrospective application of a new accounting pronouncement with respect to our financial information contained in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011. Effective January 1, 2012, we adopted the Financial Accounting Standards Board's ("FASB") Accounting Standards Update ("ASU") No. 2011-05, Comprehensive Income (Topic 220): Presentation of Comprehensive Income, as amended by ASU 2011-12, Comprehensive Income (Topic 220): Deferral of the Effective Date for Amendments to the Presentation of Reclassifications of Items Out of Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income in Accounting Standards Update No. 2011-05. These updates revise the manner in which entities present comprehensive income in their financial statements. The following presents the retrospective application of the new accounting standard to our historical financial statements.(1)

STATEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE LOSS

(in thousands)

	Period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to December 31, 2011	Year Ended December 31, 2011	Period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to December 31, 2010
	(in thousands)		
Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss)			
Net loss	\$ (14,467)	\$ (13,683)	\$ (784)
Other comprehensive loss:			
Unrealized losses on available-for-sale securities	\$ (2)	\$ (2)	\$
Comprehensive loss	\$ (14,469)	\$ (13,685)	\$ (784)

(1)

This data should be read in conjunction with, and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the financial statements and accompanying notes included in Item 15 of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES**

The following table sets forth, for each of the periods presented, our ratio of earnings to fixed charges. You should read this table in conjunction with the financial statements and notes incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

	Nine Months Ended September 30, 2012	December 31, 2011	Period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to December 31, 2010	Period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to September 30, 2012
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

For purposes of calculating the ratio above, earnings consist of income before income taxes plus fixed charges. Fixed charges include interest expense, non-cash interest expense, and an estimate of the interest expense within rental expense.

We did not record earnings for the nine months ended September 30, 2012, the year ended December 31, 2011, the period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to December 31, 2010 or for the period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to September 30, 2012. Accordingly, our earnings were insufficient to cover fixed charges for such periods and we are unable to disclose a ratio of earnings to fixed charges for such periods. The dollar amount of the deficiency in earnings available for fixed charges for the nine months ended September 30, 2012, the year ended December 31, 2011, the period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to December 31, 2010 and the period from August 4, 2010 (inception) to September 30, 2012 was approximately \$24.1 million, \$13.7 million, \$784,000, and \$38.6 million, respectively.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell securities in any of the ways described below or in any combination:

to or through underwriters or dealers;

through one or more agents; or

directly to purchasers or to a single purchaser.

The distribution of the securities by us may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions:

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

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

at prices related to such prevailing market prices; or

at negotiated prices.

Each prospectus supplement will describe the method of distribution of the securities and any applicable restrictions.

The prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the offering of the securities, including the following:

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

the public offering price of the securities and the proceeds to us and any discounts, commissions or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and

any securities exchanges on which the securities may be listed.

Any offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers will be specified in the applicable prospectus supplement and may be changed from time to time.

Only the agents or underwriters named in each prospectus supplement are agents or underwriters in connection with the securities being offered thereby.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or other persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by certain institutions to purchase securities from us pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the date stated in each applicable prospectus supplement. Each contract will be for an amount not less than, and the aggregate amount of securities sold pursuant to such contracts shall not be less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in each applicable prospectus supplement. Institutions with whom the contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and other institutions, but shall in all cases be subject to our approval. Delayed delivery contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in each applicable prospectus supplement, and each prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for

solicitation of these contracts.

Agents, underwriters and other third parties described above may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), or to contribution from us with respect to payments which the agents, underwriters or other third parties may be required to make in respect thereof. Agents, underwriters and such other third parties may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business. We may also use underwriters or such other third parties with whom we

Table of Contents

have a material relationship. We will describe the nature of any such relationship in the applicable prospectus supplement.

One or more firms, referred to as "remarketing firms," may also offer or sell the securities, if a prospectus supplement so indicates, in connection with a remarketing arrangement upon their purchase. Remarketing firms will act as principals for their own accounts or as our agents. These remarketing firms will offer or sell the securities in accordance with the terms of the securities. Each prospectus supplement will identify and describe any remarketing firm and the terms of its agreement, if any, with us and will describe the remarketing firm's compensation. Remarketing firms may be deemed to be underwriters in connection with the securities they remarket. Remarketing firms may be entitled under agreements that may be entered into with us to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of business.

Certain underwriters may use this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement for offers and sales related to market-making transactions in the securities. These underwriters may act as principal or agent in these transactions, and the sales will be made at prices related to prevailing market prices at the time of sale. Any underwriters involved in the sale of the securities may qualify as "underwriters" within the meaning of Section 2(a)(11) of the Securities Act. In addition, the underwriters' commissions, discounts or concessions may qualify as underwriters' compensation under the Securities Act and the rules of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Market. Underwriters may make a market in our common stock, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. We can make no assurance as to the development, maintenance or liquidity of any trading market for the securities.

Certain persons participating in an offering may engage in overallotment, stabilizing transactions, short covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with rules and regulations under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"). Overallotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Short covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution is completed to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a short covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

The following summary of the terms of our common stock does not purport to be complete. You should refer to our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, both of which are on file with the SEC as exhibits to previous filings. The summary below is also qualified by provisions of applicable law.

General

Under our certificate of incorporation, we have authority to issue up to 100,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.0001 per share. As of January 25, 2013, we had 21,111,210 shares of common stock outstanding.

Holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders and do not have cumulative voting rights. An election of directors by our stockholders shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast by the stockholders entitled to vote on the election. Holders of common stock are entitled to receive proportionately any dividends as may be declared by our board of directors, subject to any preferential dividend rights of outstanding preferred stock.

In the event of our liquidation or dissolution, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive proportionately all assets available for distribution to stockholders after the payment of all debts and other liabilities and subject to the prior rights of any outstanding preferred stock. Holders of common stock have no preemptive, subscription, redemption or conversion rights. The rights, preferences and privileges of holders of common stock are subject to and may be adversely affected by the rights of the holders of shares of any series of preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future.

Delaware Anti-Takeover Law and Certain Charter and Bylaw Provisions

Delaware law

We are subject to Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law. Subject to certain exceptions, Section 203 prevents a publicly-traded Delaware corporation from engaging in a "business combination" with any "interested stockholder" for three years following the date that the person became an interested stockholder, unless either the interested stockholder attained such status with the approval of our board of directors, the business combination is approved by our board of directors and stockholders in a prescribed manner or the interested stockholder acquired at least 85% of our outstanding voting stock in the transaction in which it became an interested stockholder. A "business combination" includes, among other things, a merger or consolidation involving us and the "interested stockholder" and the sale of more than 10% of our assets. In general, an "interested stockholder" is any entity or person beneficially owning 15% or more of our outstanding voting stock and any entity or person affiliated with or controlling or controlled by such entity or person.

Staggered board

Our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws divide our board of directors into three classes with staggered three-year terms. In addition, our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws provide that directors may be removed only for cause and only by the affirmative vote of the holders of 75% of our shares of capital stock present in person or by proxy and entitled to vote. Under our certificate of incorporation and bylaws, any vacancy on our board of directors, including a vacancy resulting from an enlargement of our board of directors, may be filled only by vote of a majority of our directors then in office. Furthermore, our certificate of incorporation provides that the authorized number of directors may be changed only by the resolution of our board of directors. The classification of our board of directors and the limitations on the ability of our stockholders to remove directors, change the

Table of Contents

authorized number of directors and fill vacancies could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire, or discourage a third party from seeking to acquire, control of our company.

Stockholder action; special meeting of stockholders; advance notice requirements for stockholder proposals and director nominations

Our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws provide that any action required or permitted to be taken by our stockholders at an annual meeting or special meeting of stockholders may only be taken if it is properly brought before such meeting and may not be taken by written action in lieu of a meeting. Our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws also provide that, except as otherwise required by law, special meetings of the stockholders can only be called by our chairman of the board, our president or chief executive officer or our board of directors. In addition, our bylaws establish an advance notice procedure for stockholder proposals to be brought before an annual meeting of stockholders, including proposed nominations of candidates for election to our board of directors. Stockholders at an annual meeting may only consider proposals or nominations specified in the notice of meeting or brought before the meeting by or at the direction of our board of directors, or by a stockholder of record on the record date for the meeting who is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has delivered timely written notice in proper form to our secretary of the stockholder's intention to bring such business before the meeting. These provisions could have the effect of delaying until the next stockholder meeting stockholder actions that are favored by the holders of a majority of our outstanding voting securities. These provisions also could discourage a third party from making a tender offer for our common stock, because even if it acquired a majority of our outstanding voting stock, it would be able to take action as a stockholder, such as electing new directors or approving a merger, only at a duly called stockholders meeting and not by written consent.

Super-majority voting

The Delaware General Corporation Law provides generally that the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares entitled to vote on any matter is required to amend a corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, unless a corporation's certificate of incorporation or bylaws, as the case may be, requires a greater percentage. Our bylaws may be amended or repealed by a majority vote of our board of directors or the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 75% of the votes that all our stockholders would be entitled to cast in any annual election of directors. In addition, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least 75% of the votes that all our stockholders would be entitled to cast in any election of directors is required to amend or repeal or to adopt any provisions inconsistent with any of the provisions of our certificate of incorporation described above.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Computershare Trust Company, N.A.

Listing

Our common stock is listed on The NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol "VSTM."

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

Under the terms of our certificate of incorporation, our board of directors is authorized to issue up to 5,000,000 shares of our preferred stock, par value \$0.0001 per share, in one or more series without stockholder approval. Our board of directors has the discretion to determine the rights, preferences, privileges and restrictions, including voting rights, dividend rights, conversion rights, redemption privileges and liquidation preferences, of each series of preferred stock. As of January 25, 2013, we had no shares of preferred stock outstanding. It is not possible to state the actual effect of the issuance of any shares of preferred stock upon the rights of the holders of common stock until the board of directors determines the specific rights of the holders of preferred stock. However, effects of the issuance of preferred stock include restricting dividends on common stock, diluting the voting power of common stock, impairing the liquidation rights of common stock, and making it more difficult for a third party to acquire us, which could have the effect of discouraging a third party from acquiring, or deterring a third party from paying a premium to acquire, a majority of our outstanding voting stock.

If we offer a specific class or series of preferred stock under this prospectus, we will describe the terms of the preferred stock in the prospectus supplement for such offering and will file a copy of the certificate establishing the terms of the preferred stock with the SEC. To the extent required, this description will include:

the title and stated value;

the number of shares offered, the liquidation preference per share and the purchase price;

the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s), or method(s) of calculation for such dividends;

whether dividends will be cumulative or non-cumulative and, if cumulative, the date from which dividends will accumulate;

the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any;

the provisions for a sinking fund, if any;

the provisions for redemption, if applicable;

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

whether the preferred stock will be convertible into our common stock, and, if applicable, the conversion price (or how it will be calculated) and conversion period;

whether the preferred stock will be exchangeable into debt securities, and, if applicable, the exchange price (or how it will be calculated) and exchange period;

voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock;

a discussion of any material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the preferred stock;

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

the relative ranking and preferences of the preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the affairs of the Company; and

any material limitations on issuance of any class or series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with the series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company.

The preferred stock offered by this prospectus, when issued, will not have, or be subject to, any preemptive or similar rights.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for any series or class of preferred stock will be set forth in each applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We have agreed to issue a warrant for the purchase of 142,857 shares of our common stock with an exercise price equal to the average closing price of our common stock during the five days preceding the date of issuance to Poniard Pharmaceuticals, Inc. upon achievement of a milestone described in our license agreement. We may issue warrants to purchase shares of our common stock, preferred stock and/or debt securities in one or more series together with other securities or separately, as described in each applicable prospectus supplement. Below is a description of certain general terms and provisions of the warrants that we may offer. Particular terms of the warrants will be described in the applicable warrant agreements and the applicable prospectus supplement for the warrants.

The applicable prospectus supplement will contain, where applicable, the following terms of and other information relating to the warrants:

the specific designation and aggregate number of, and the price at which we will issue, the warrants;

the currency or currency units in which the offering price, if any, and the exercise price are payable;

the designation, amount and terms of the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants;

if applicable, the exercise price for shares of our common stock and the number of shares of common stock to be received upon exercise of the warrants;

if applicable, the exercise price for shares of our preferred stock, the number of shares of preferred stock to be received upon exercise, and a description of that class or series of our preferred stock;

if applicable, the exercise price for our debt securities, the amount of our debt securities to be received upon exercise, and a description of that series of debt securities;

the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will begin and the date on which that right will expire or, if the warrants may not be continuously exercised throughout that period, the specific date or dates on which the warrants may be exercised;

whether the warrants will be issued in fully registered form or bearer form, in definitive or global form or in any combination of these forms, although, in any case, the form of a warrant included in a unit will correspond to the form of the unit and of any security included in that unit;

any applicable material U.S. federal income tax consequences;

the identity of the warrant agent for the warrants and of any other depositaries, execution or paying agents, transfer agents, registrars or other agents;

the proposed listing, if any, of the warrants or any securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants on any securities exchange;

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

if applicable, the date from and after which the warrants and the common stock, preferred stock and/or debt securities will be separately transferable;

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

information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any;

the anti-dilution provisions of the warrants, if any;

any redemption or call provisions;

Table of Contents

whether the warrants are to be sold separately or with other securities as parts of units; and

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

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for any warrants will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

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 debt securities that, unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, will represent direct, unsecured obligations of the Company and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured indebtedness.

The following statements relating to the debt securities and the indenture are summaries, qualified in their entirety by reference to the detailed provisions of the indenture.

General

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 prospectus supplement will set forth, to the extent required, the following terms of the debt securities in respect of which the prospectus supplement is delivered:

the title of the series;

the aggregate principal amount;

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;

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;

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

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;

Table of Contents

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

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; and

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

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.

Exchange and/or Conversion Rights

We may issue debt securities which can be exchanged for or converted into shares of our common stock or preferred stock. If we do, we will describe the terms of exchange or conversion in the prospectus supplement relating to these debt securities.

Transfer and Exchange

We may issue debt securities that will be represented by either:

"book-entry securities," which means that there will be one or more global securities registered in the name of a depositary or a nominee of a depositary; or

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

"certificated securities," which means that they will be represented by a certificate issued in definitive registered form.

We will specify in the prospectus supplement applicable to a particular offering whether the debt securities offered will be book-entry or certificated securities.

Table of Contents

Certificated Debt Securities

If you hold certificated debt securities, you may transfer or exchange such debt securities at the trustee's office or at the paying agent's office or agency in accordance with the terms of the indenture. You will not be charged a service charge for any transfer or exchange of certificated debt securities but may be required to pay an amount sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with such transfer or exchange.

You may effect the transfer of certificated debt securities and of the right to receive the principal of, premium, and/or interest, if any, on the certificated debt securities only by surrendering the certificate representing the certificated debt securities and having us or the trustee issue a new certificate to the new holder.

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 depository for the global securities or the nominee of the depository, and the global securities will be delivered by the trustee to the depository for credit to the accounts of the holders of beneficial interests in the debt securities.

The prospectus supplement will describe the specific terms of the depository arrangement for debt securities of a series that are issued in global form. None of our Company, 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 of the Company, 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.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

We have agreed in the indenture 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 U.S., 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

Table of Contents

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.

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;

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; and

certain events involving bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization of Verastem or any of our significant subsidiaries.

The trustee may withhold notice to the holders of the debt securities of any series of any default, except in payment of principal 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 which 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 of Verastem 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;

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

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; or
- (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) which 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;

which 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.

Edgar Filing: Verastem, Inc. - Form 424B5

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;

Table of Contents

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, 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 which 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 prospectus supplement relating to the applicable debt securities. You should note that if the trustee becomes a creditor of Verastem, 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.

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We have filed a registration statement on Form S-3 with the SEC for the securities offered by this prospectus. This prospectus does not include all of the information contained in the registration statement. You should refer to the registration statement and its exhibits for additional information.

We are required to file annual and quarterly reports, current reports, proxy statements, and other information with the SEC. We make these documents publicly available, free of charge, on our website at www.verastem.com as soon as reasonably practicable after filing such documents with the SEC. The information contained on our website is not part of this prospectus. You can read our SEC filings, including the registration statement, on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. You also may read and copy any document we file with the SEC at its public reference facility at:

Public Reference Room
100 F Street N.E.
Washington, DC 20549.

Please call the SEC at 1-800-732-0330 for further information on the operation of the public reference facilities.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to "incorporate by reference" into this prospectus the information 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, and information in documents that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede information in this prospectus. We incorporate by reference into this prospectus the documents listed below and any future filings made by us with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, except for information "furnished" under Items 2.02, 7.01 or 9.01 on Form 8-K or other information "furnished" to the SEC which is not deemed filed and not incorporated in this prospectus, until the termination of the offering of securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement. We hereby incorporate by reference the following documents:

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011, as filed with the SEC on March 30, 2012;

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarterly periods ended March 31, 2012, as filed with the SEC on May 14, 2012, June 30, 2012, as filed with the SEC on August 13, 2012, and September 30, 2012, as filed with the SEC on November 13, 2012;

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on July 11, 2012, September 21, 2012, November 26, 2012 and January 22, 2013; and

Description of our common stock, which is contained in the Registration Statement on Form 8-A, as filed with the SEC on January 23, 2012, as supplemented by the Description of Common Stock found on page 11 of this prospectus and including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such description.

You may request a copy of these filings, at no cost, by writing or telephoning us at the following address:

Investor Relations
Verastem, Inc.
215 First Street, Suite 440
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142
(617) 252-9300

Copies of these filings are also available, without charge, on the SEC's website at www.sec.gov and on our website at www.verastem.com as soon as reasonably practicable after they are filed electronically with the SEC. The information contained on our website is not a part of this prospectus.

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the issuance of the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus will be passed upon for us by Ropes & Gray LLP, Boston, Massachusetts. The validity of any securities will be passed upon for any underwriters or agents by counsel that we will name in the applicable prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The financial statements of Verastem, Inc. appearing in Verastem, Inc.'s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their report thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such financial statements are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such report given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

Shares

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Joint Book-Running Managers

**Jefferies
Leerink Swann**
