Speaker: W. Joseph Herring, M.D., Ph.D.

Title: “Clinical Profile of the Orexin Receptor Antagonist Suvorexant for the Treatment of Insomnia in Phase-3 Clinical Trials”

Brief Talk Description:
In 1998 the gene encoding the hypothalamic orexin/hypocretin neuropeptides OX-1 and OX-2 was described. In the relatively short interval since its discovery, the body of knowledge surrounding the orexin system has grown remarkably, and promises to continue to provide opportunities for better understanding of the physiology and pathophysiology of orexin biology in sleep and related neuropsychiatric disorders. In this talk, Dr. W. Joseph Herring will present key efficacy and safety results from 3 large, randomized placebo-controlled studies of up to one year in duration conducted with suvorexant (MK-4305), an orexin receptor antagonist that recently completed phase 3 studies in insomnia patients.

1 de Lecea L, Kilduff TS et al. PNAS 1998

Biographical Information:
W. Joseph Herring, M.D., Ph.D., is Executive Director of Neuroscience Clinical Research at Merck Research Laboratories. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in genetics from the University of Georgia, and earned his Ph.D. degree in human genetics and M.D. degree from Emory University. After internship in medicine at Emory University hospitals, Dr. Herring subsequently completed neurology residency training and a molecular neuroscience fellowship at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He went on to serve on the neurology faculty at Johns Hopkins until his departure to industry research, where his most recent work has focused primarily on the development of novel therapeutic mechanisms for the treatment of sleep and wake disorders.