



# AB International Health Care Portfolio

## Market Overview

- Global equities climbed in July despite an increase in market volatility. Favorable inflation and mixed economic newsflow raised hopes that the US Federal Reserve would begin to cut interest rates as soon as September. Meanwhile, investors were unsettled by the second-quarter earnings results from several US technology giants. In turn, this prompted a shift from growth-oriented stocks to smaller and value-focused companies.
- The MSCI All Country World Index rose by 1.61% in July, bringing year-to-date gains to 13.1%.
- Global healthcare stocks also edged higher, with the MSCI World Health Care Index rising by 3.3% during the month, bringing year-to-date gains to 11.5% (all returns in US-dollar terms). Subsector performance was mostly positive. Life sciences tools and services and industrial conglomerates rallied, while healthcare equipment and supplies and pharmaceuticals lagged.

## Portfolio Performance (as of 31/7/2024) #

	Month to Date	Year to Date	Since Inception 05/07/1995 (Annualized)
Class A USD (NAV)	1.10%	9.23%	8.13%
Charges Applied (4%)	-2.95%	4.86%	7.98%

- During the month, major detractors from performance at the stock level included **Edwards Lifesciences**, which declined when investors reacted negatively to disappointing earnings numbers. The share price of **Merck** was dented by news of weak vaccine sales, while **Novo Nordisk** dipped when analysis showed that a competitor's drug was delivering better results than its own medicine.
- Major contributors to performance included Swiss pharmaceutical **Roche**, which revealed positive Phase 1 clinical trials for its experimental obesity drug. **Genmab** added value when it secured approval from the US Food and Drug Administration for some of its treatments. At the same time, better-than-expected second-quarter earnings results boosted **UnitedHealth Group**.

## Market Outlook

- The healthcare sector outperformed the broader MSCI World Index in July, which is encouraging since much of the market's performance in the first half of the year was concentrated in select artificial intelligence (AI) exposed technology and communication-services companies.
- From a fundamental standpoint, profitability across the healthcare sector remains solid, growth opportunities abound, and the political environment is still manageable.
- As valuations have increased in AI-related tech companies, the risk/reward skew points further toward healthcare as an attractive investment. AI can potentially improve healthcare efficiency—by speeding up clinical trials, reducing administrative burdens and improving outcomes through reductions of medical errors—which we believe is not reflected in the valuations of many companies in the segment.
- Although the economy's strength may affect some healthcare subsectors, we continue to believe that the economic sensitivity of healthcare overall remains low compared to other market segments. At the same time, the innovation potential is high.

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**# Past performance is not indicative of future results.** Performance calculations are based on a single pricing basis, include the change in Net Asset Value and reinvestment of any distributions paid on Portfolio shares for the period shown, net of assumed front-end load (FEL) 4% for Class A shares. For Class A shares, maximum front-end load (FEL): Up to 5%. Accordingly, these figures do not represent actual returns to an investor.

**Investment risks to consider. These and other risks are described in the Portfolio's prospectus.**

Investment in the Portfolio entails certain risks. Investment returns and principal value of the Portfolio will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Some of the principal risks of investing in the Portfolio include: **Concentration/Focus Risk:** To the extent that the Portfolio invests a large portion of its assets in a limited number of industries, sectors or issuers, or within a limited geographical area, it can be riskier and subject to greater volatility than a Portfolio that invests more broadly. **Currency Risk:** To the extent that the Portfolio holds assets that are denominated in currencies other than its Base Currency, any changes in currency exchange rates could reduce investment gains or income, or increase investment losses, in some cases significantly. Hedging may reduce but not eliminate currency risk. **Derivatives Risk:** The Portfolio is entitled to use derivative instruments for hedging and/or EPM purposes which may involve additional risks different from, and, in certain cases, greater than, the risks presented by more traditional investments. **Liquidity Risk:** The risk that arises when adverse market conditions affect the ability to sell assets when necessary. Reduced liquidity may have a negative impact on the price of the assets.

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### Important Information

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