



Magnifiers & More

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Treating Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

Currently, there is no cure for macular degeneration. Treatment, however, may prevent some vision loss and slow the progression of macular degeneration. Several options are available, including:

Current Dry Macular Degeneration Treatment

Dietary supplements: Dietary supplements such as vitamins C, E, beta-carotene, lutein, and zinc have been shown to decrease the risk of vision loss in patients with intermediate to advanced dry macular degeneration. The Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) showed that people with the intermediate stage of dry AMD could reduce their risk of progressing to advanced dry macular degeneration by about 25% by taking a special high-dose formula of the supplements, sold without a prescription. It is important to note that high-dose vitamins, even when sold without a prescription, may present a risk for some people. Smokers taking beta-carotene may increase their risk of lung cancer. We strongly encourage you to talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of these dietary supplements before taking them.

Current Wet Macular Degeneration Treatments

Laser therapy: High-energy laser light is used to destroy actively growing abnormal blood vessels that occur in macular degeneration.

Photodynamic laser therapy: A 2-step treatment in which a light-sensitive drug is used to close the abnormal blood vessels. Your doctor injects the drug into your arm or hand vein. It is absorbed by abnormal blood vessels in your eye. Your doctor then uses a cold laser to activate the drug in your eye, destroying the abnormal blood vessels. Currently, this treatment is approved by the FDA for approximately 25% of wet AMD patients.

Anti-VEGF Therapy: The most recent therapy available to treat all types of wet AMD was approved by the FDA in December 2004. This new therapy works by blocking a key signal that causes abnormal vessels under your macula to grow and leak. This is believed to lead to wet AMD disease.

Investigational Wet Macular Degeneration Treatments

Corticosteroid therapy: A corticosteroid derivative is being studied as a potential treatment option for some types of wet AMD patients.

Additional VEGF Therapies: There are additional drugs under investigation that are designed to block the key signal that causes abnormal vessels under your macula to grow and leak.

Managing Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Only your doctor can determine the right treatment for you. In addition to medical treatment, your doctor may ask you to help self-manage your macular degeneration in the following ways:

Regular eye exams can monitor the course of macular degeneration and screen for other problems. Early detection of changes provides earlier treatment and better results.

Self-vision testing can detect sudden vision changes that may be a sign of abnormal blood vessel growth or leakage. An Amsler grid test can reveal signs of degeneration such as blurred vision, wavy vision lines, or blank spots. Self-testing does not replace regular eye checkups with your doctor. If you notice any changes to your vision, immediately report them to your ophthalmologist.

Vision aids such as magnifiers can help with tasks that require detailed vision. Large-face clocks and appliances, as well as large print books, can help people continue to read and take care of themselves.

The health information contained herein is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace discussions with a health care provider. All decisions regarding patient care must be made with a health care provider, considering the unique characteristics of the patient. Compliments of Prevent Blindness America & Magnifiers & More.