

FOCUS ON MACULAR DEGENERATION

Macular Degeneration is the Leading Cause of Vision Loss

Macular Degeneration Affects the Central Portion of the Retina

Macular Degeneration (AMD) is a progressive disease with two causes: the deterioration of the central portion of the retina (the macula) or leaky blood vessels under the retina. The macula controls our ability to read, drive, recognize faces and see objects in fine detail.

AMD affects more than 10 million people in the United States – more than glaucoma and cataracts combined. In an effort to raise awareness of AMD and to promote eye health, the following guide has been prepared, summarizing the types of AMD, its symptoms and treatment options.

01 | Types of AMD

The two main types of Macular Degeneration are:

- **Dry:** Characterized by the presence of yellow deposits in the macula. Blind spots will occur in the center of vision, and in advanced stages patients lose their central vision.
- **Wet:** The abnormal growth of blood vessels under the macula can leak blood and fluid, causing blurred vision and blind spots. This leakage causes scarring, resulting in permanent loss of central vision.

02 | Symptoms

The symptoms of AMD are typically subtle and progressive, and usually begin with a dim, blurry spot in the middle of your vision. Color perception may become weakened. If you experience either of these symptoms, consult an Ophthalmologist as soon as possible.

03 | Diagnosis & Treatment

AMD can be detected during a routine eye exam. Your eye specialist will look for tiny yellow deposits under

the retina, and may recommend an angiography to look for leaky blood vessels behind the eye.

04 | Treatment

Although there is no cure for Macular Degeneration, the progression of the disease can be managed, especially with early diagnosis. Some treatment options include:

- **Anti-angiogenesis (anti-VEGF) drugs:** These drugs reduce the level of proteins that stimulate blood vessel growth in the retina and macula. They are administered via injection and patients have reported regaining lost vision after anti-VEGF treatment.
- **Laser Therapy:** High-energy laser can destroy actively growing blood vessels that cause vision loss.
- **Photodynamic Laser Therapy:** This is a two-step treatment combining a light-sensitive drug and cold laser to activate the drug, destroying abnormal blood vessels.

To learn more about AMD, please visit:

<https://www.macular.org/>

Did You Know?

89% of age-related macular degeneration patients are white

References

<http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/macular-degeneration/age-related-macular-degeneration-overview?page=4>

<http://www.eyesight.org/>