

Macular Degeneration

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As people get older, there may be a progressive loss in eye sight. It may be central vision loss mostly known as Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD). AMD is the leading cause of severe vision loss and legal blindness in adults over age 60 (MDP, 2016).

What is AMD? Age-related macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss more than cataracts or glaucoma. For this reason, it is an important topic. As many as 15 million Americans, with 200,000 new cases each year are affected (MDP, 2016).

How is it found? A complete dilated eye exam and Amsler Grid test can detect AMD.

What is the macula? The macula is the central portion of the retina along the back layer of the eye. It is responsible for focusing our main vision in the eye as it records what we see from the eye to the brain. The macular tissue becomes fragile and tends to tear. There is less central vision which may lead to vision loss in both eyes.

Signs and symptoms? Difficulty seeing objects in fine detail, recognizing faces or colors, reading, and driving a car (Abbott, 2013). Not being able to see clearly when reading or performing close work without a stronger light. Problems in adjusting to dim lit areas, increased blurriness, decreased brightness of colors, and a presence of a blind spot in our vision (MDP, 2016).

Risk factors: age, family history, smoking, Caucasian, obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease, and high cholesterol. AMD is treatable but not curable.

Slowing the progression: avoid smoking, eat a healthy diet of green leafy vegetables and fish, get regular exercise, and maintain normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels to help slow the progression (NEI, 2015).

References

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