

# Age-Related Macular Degeneration : Lifestyle Recommendations

## **Risk Factors:**

Obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, sedentary lifestyle and poor diet have all been associated with increased risk of vision loss from macular degeneration. Thus, we recommend a healthy lifestyle with regular exercise for patients with age-related macular degeneration. Have regular check up with your internist to control any blood pressure or cholesterol problems.

## **DIET:**

A diet rich in green, leafy vegetables, fresh fruit and fish is thought to reduce the risk of vision loss from macular degeneration. We recommend 3 - 5 servings of fruits or vegetables daily. Avoid processed, fatty or “junk” food. We also recommend 2 servings of fish a week. Fish high in omega-3 fatty acid is recommended, e.g. tuna, salmon, bass.

## **AREDS VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS:**

A high dose anti-oxidant vitamin supplement formulation (AREDS formula) has been shown to reduce the rate of blindness from macular degeneration especially if you have already experienced some vision loss from this condition. This is based on a nationwide clinical trial AREDS (Age-related Eye Disease Study) published in 2001. Patients without macular degeneration or very mild macular degeneration did not benefit from these supplements. AREDS supplements are not recommended for current or recent smokers since the high dose Vitamin A can increase the risk of lung cancer in these patient. Please consult your retina specialist to determine whether you would benefit from AREDS formula supplements:

## **AREDS Supplement Daily Dose :**

Vitamin C	500 mg
Vitamin E	400 IU
Beta Carotene (Vit A)	15 mg (For Non-smokers)
Zinc	80 mg

Good Commercially available AREDS supplements include:

- Ocuvite Preservision (Bausch and Lomb).
- Ocuvite Preservision + Lutein (soft gel tabs),
- ICaps AREDS Formula (Alcon)

Other promising antioxidants:

A nationwide clinical trial (AREDS II) is underway at UC Davis to determine whether supplements of other antioxidants, including **Lutein**, **Zeaxanthin**, and **Omega-3 fatty acids**, will benefit patients with macular degeneration. The results are still pending.

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INTERNIST BEFORE BEGINNING THE ABOVE REGIMEN. SOME OF THESE VITAMINS AND MINERALS MAY INTERFERE WITH YOUR OTHER MEDICATIONS. THE RISKS OF THESE LARGE DOSES OF VITAMINS AND MINERALS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: LUNG CANCER, HEMORRHAGIC STROKE, HEART DISEASE, CIRCULATORY PROBLEMS, GENITOURINARY PROBLEMS, INFECTIONS, ANEMIA, SKIN PROBLEMS, YELLOWING OF SKIN, KIDNEY STONES, FATIGUE, MUSCLE WEAKNESS, THYROID PROBLEMS AND UPSET STOMACH