



Saving sight through research and education

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# Macular Degeneration: Questions to Ask Your Doctor

Learning you have age-related macular degeneration (AMD) can be a shock. The best thing to do now is arm yourself with the facts, and your doctor is your best ally.

Here are a few important questions that you should ask your doctor if you are diagnosed with macular degeneration.

- ✓ Do I have “wet” or “dry” macular degeneration? Does it affect both eyes? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ What stage is it in, early, intermediate, or advanced? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ What is the likelihood that my AMD will progress? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ What are my treatment options? Do they include injections and are there new studies of other treatments? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Can diet, exercise, supplements and other lifestyle changes help slow the progression of macular degeneration? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Are my children and siblings at risk? Should they be examined? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ What can I do to stay independent? What should I tell my family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ How often do I need to get checkups? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Can you recommend a retinal or macular degeneration specialist, a vision rehabilitation center, and support groups? \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ Am I legally blind? Should I register with the Commission for the Blind? \_\_\_\_\_

# Macular Degeneration: What You Need to Know

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss for those aged 55 and older, affecting more than 10 million Americans.

AMD is caused by the deterioration of the macula, the portion of the retina responsible for central vision which captures fine details.

AMD takes two possible forms. Patients with the “dry” form usually have better central eyesight, but can experience fluctuating vision, difficulty reading, or limited vision in low light, especially if they have the advanced “dry” form.

In the “wet” type, about 10–15% of the cases, abnormal blood vessels grow under the retina and macula, distorting or destroying central vision.

Notes

Questions prepared by William Sweet in consultation with a leading researcher in macular degeneration, Johanna M. Seddon, MD, ScM, Tufts Medical Center as Professor of Ophthalmology, Tufts University School of Medicine, Founding Director of Ophthalmic Epidemiology and Genetics Service at the New England Eye Center. All contents ©Copyright 2012 AMDF. All Rights Reserved.

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