

NUTRITION AND MACULAR DEGENERATION

Nutrition plays an important role in optimising macular health, and reducing the risk of macular degeneration. Eating a healthy, well balanced diet which includes eye health foods will be a good for overall wellbeing as well as eye health. For some people an appropriate supplement may also be an important consideration.

The Age Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) has given hope to the one in sevenb Australians over the age of 50 with the early signs of age related macular degeneration (AMD). It showed that the Zinc antioxidants can reduce the progression to advanced AMD and loss of vision by about on third.

People who have been diagnosed with AMD should consider taking a supplement based on the AREDS formula. The Age Related Eye Disease Studies (AREDS) are the only studies for which there is a good, long term evidence for the benefits of high dose nutrients for people diagnosed with AMD

The original ARES study showed that a supplement based on a specific formula of zinc and antioxidants slowed the progression of AMD: for people in the intermediate stage of AMD in one or both eyes, or in the late stage in one eye, the AREDS formula reduced the risk of progression of the disease by 20-25% and delayed vision loss.

In 2013, the AREDS researchers announced the results of their follow-up study, AREDS2. Their recommendation was the continued use of the original AREDS formulation but with the introduction of lutein/zeaxanthin.

The daily doses of the AREDS 2 formula is

- Vitamin C 500mg
- Vitamin E 400mg
- Zinc 80mg
- Cupric Oxide (copper) 2mg
- Lutein 10mg
- Zeaxanthin 2mg

There are a number of supplements available reflecting the AREDS and AREDS 2 formula and any of these can be taken in conjunction with a healthy diet. Be sure to check the label to ensure the product contains the correct ingredients.

For more information regarding nutrition and supplements for AMD please consult your doctor or visit the Macular Disease Foundation website www.mdfoundation.com.au

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