

Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

Recommendations for Prevention

Early detection and monitoring are vital to slow down or prevent (if possible) any vision loss from AMD. Current research shows a person's lack of ability to adapt from light to darkness-dark adaptation-is one of the first indications of AMD changes. This may happen up to 3 years before we see signs of AMD. Our goal with early detection is to preserve your visual abilities, including clarity, and perform such activities as reading, driving, watching TV, and interacting with others.

Here are our recommendations, based on scientific research, to help you prevent or slow down AMD changes:

- **Diet:** Eating a diet rich in antioxidants and dark green leafy vegetables can improve macular health. We recommend 2 cups of dark leafy greens per day (Kale, Swiss chard, bib lettuce, spinach, broccoli, colored peppers, eggs). These foods are rich in lutein, a pigment found only in the macula.
- **Quit smoking:** Numerous studies clearly show smoking dramatically increases the risk of AMD and blindness. Current smokers are 2 ½ times more likely to develop AMD than individuals who never smoked.
- **Exercise:** An active lifestyle has been shown to reduce the risk of progression of macular degeneration. We recommend 30 minutes of exercise 5 times per week. For example, bike, walk, or swim.
- **UV Sunglasses:** Evidence strongly suggests reducing sunlight exposure reduces the risk of AMD. Any plastic lens blocks 80% of UV light, but UV coatings will block over 98%.
- **Eye Vitamins:** AREDS 2 or FOCUS SELECT (follow instructions on the bottle).

Follow up recommendations: Every 12 months or depending on your doctor's recommendations.