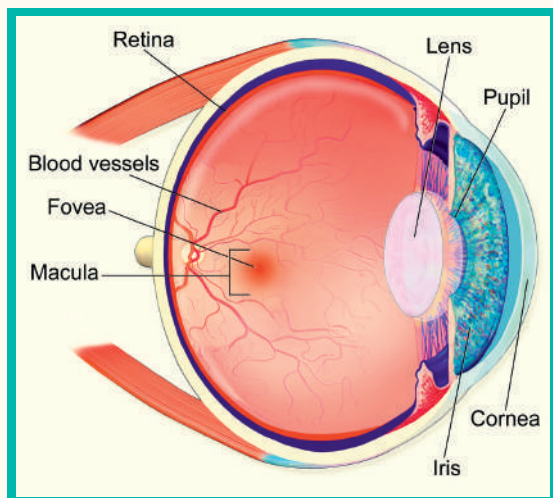




What is Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) ?

Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is an eye disease that usually occurs after the age of 50. It progressively destroys the macula (the central portion of the retina) which affects central vision. This can result in difficulty recognising faces, reading and watching television.



What are the symptoms of AMD ?

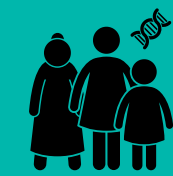
The most common symptoms are:

- **loss** of central vision
- **blurred** vision
- **straight lines appear wavy** or crooked
- **objects appear smaller** than the actual size
- colours appear **less bright**

What are the risk factors for AMD ?



Old Age



Family History



Smoking



Obesity



Hypertension

What are the types of AMD ?

There are two forms of AMD: Wet and dry.

Wet AMD occurs when abnormal blood vessels from under the retina start to grow at the macula. These new blood vessels tend to be very fragile and often leak out blood and fluid. In wet AMD, loss of central vision can be very sudden or rapid.

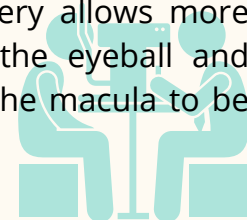
Dry AMD occurs when the light-sensitive cells in the macula slowly break down, gradually blurring central vision in the affected eye. As dry AMD gets worse, you may see a blurred spot in the center of your vision. Over time, as less of the macula functions, central vision is gradually lost in the affected eye. Patients with dry AMD are at higher risk of getting wet AMD.

What are the treatment options available for AMD ?

Wet AMD

The most common type of treatment is an intravitreal injection (into your eye) with drugs called anti-VEGF agents. VEGF is the main growth factor that causes AMD. Several types of drugs are available that block VEGF's action. The main difficulty with these agents are that AMD patients often require injections into the eye every one or two months, for up to a year. Intravitreal injections are generally very safe and most patients do not experience any pain during the short procedure.

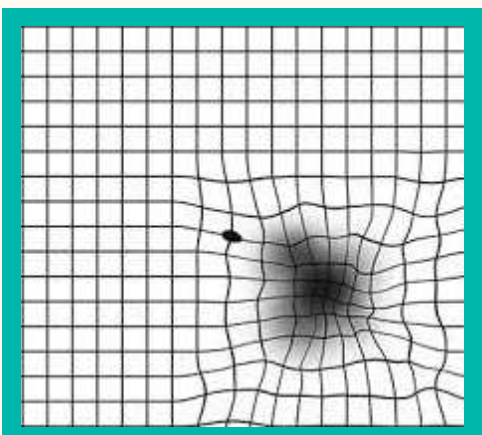
For patients who have very severe bleeding at the macula, a gas injection into the eye may be used to displace the blood. Blood within the macula is very toxic to the retina and can cause permanent visual loss. The injection of gas can be combined with special drugs to dissolve the blood clot and anti-VEGF drugs. Surgery will be performed if the bleeding has entered the vitreous cavity. This surgery allows more gas to be injected into the eyeball and some of the bleeding at the macula to be removed.



Dry AMD

For patients with dry AMD, there is good evidence that taking supplements high in anti-oxidants (Vitamin A, C, E, zinc) and carotenoids (beta carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin) may reduce the risk of developing wet AMD. A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids (fish oil) and colourful vegetables and fruits, may also be beneficial. Patients should consult an eye doctor before taking such high dose supplements. These supplements can also interact with other drugs that the patient may be taking and should only be started after consulting their eye doctor.

Patients with dry AMD should have annual eye examinations to look for wet AMD. Patients can also use home tests like the Amsler grid chart to look for changes of wet AMD.



Distortion perceived on an Amsler grid.

Your Eyes – Your Windows to the World

LOOK AFTER THEM

AMD can be diagnosed by careful examination and the aid of investigations such as:

- Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)
- Fluorescein Angiography (FFA), or
- Indocyanine Green Angiography (ICG)

AMD should be treated by retinal specialists. There are some eye conditions that may mimic AMD but do not actually need to be treated. Unnecessary intra-vitreal injections, may put your eye at risk for further complications.



A simulation of vision with AMD.

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Age-Related Macular Degeneration

(MA-KYU-LUH DUH-JEH-NUH-REI-SHN)