

CHARLES BONNET SYNDROME

Charles Bonnet syndrome (CBS) is a common condition among people who have lost a significant part of their sight. It causes people to see things that aren't really there, known as visual hallucinations. CBS can be distressing, but the hallucinations are usually not permanent. Many people experience hallucinations for a year to eighteen months before they become a lot less frequent. It is important to remember that CBS is caused by sight loss and not by any other health problem.

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

Lutein and Zeaxanthin can be found naturally in vegetables and fruit.

Lutein can be found in yellow peppers, mango, bilberries, and green leafy vegetables such as kale, spinach, chard and broccoli.

Zeaxanthin can be found in orange sweet peppers, broccoli, corn, lettuce (not iceberg), spinach, tangerines, oranges and eggs.

A large research trial, called the 'Age-Related Eye Disease Study' (AREDS), showed that high quantities of the antioxidant vitamins A, C, E, beta-carotene and the minerals zinc and copper, can help to slow down the progression of AMD.

Some people who have AMD may consider supplementation with vitamins and anti-oxidants. Such high dosages of vitamins and minerals might have possible side effects on the body.

For this reason it is very important to consult your doctor first before taking a supplement.

Recommended supplements are sold here.

HELPFUL LINKS

Local Libraries provide large print books, and newspapers and magazines are available on cassette tape

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

Provides a range of services, advice and information for people with serious sight loss
Helpline: 0303 123 9999 www.rnib.org.uk

Partially Sighted Society

Provides information, advice and details of useful organisations to people with a visual impairment.
Tel: 0844 477 4966 www.partsight.org.uk

Calibre Audio Library, runs a free library service, offering books on tape, MP3 & USB memory stick.
Tel: 01296 432 339 www.calibre.org.uk

The Talking Newspapers Association (TNAUK)

Tel: 01435 866 102 www.tnauk.org.uk

Macular Disease Society provides information and local support groups.

Tel: 0845 241 2041 www.maculardisease.org

Notts Royal Society for the blind provides a centre in Radford and stocks an extensive range of visual aids

Tel: 0115 9706806 www.partsight.org.uk

Notts County Council Visual Impairment Service (ADVIS)

offers support and a community care assessment
Tel: 08449 808080 www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/visual-impairment

AGE RELATED
MACULAR DEGENERATION

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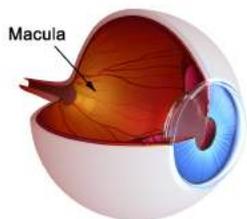


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AGE RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION

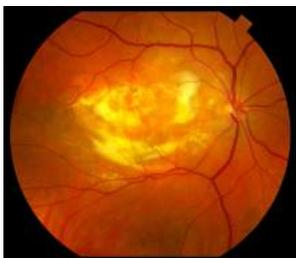
Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is an eye condition that affects a tiny part of the retina at the back of your eye, which is called the macula.



AMD causes problems with your central vision, but does not lead to total loss of sight and is not painful.

AMD affects the vision you use when you're looking directly at something, for example when you're reading, looking at photos or watching television.

AMD may cause straight lines to appear wavy or distorted and, over a period of time, it may cause a blank patch in the centre of your vision.



At the moment, the exact cause for AMD is not known. Some things are thought to increase your chances of developing AMD:

Age; AMD develops as people grow older and is most often seen in people over the age of 65.

Gender; More women have AMD than men, probably because they tend to live longer.

Genes; AMD has not been proven to be hereditary. Although, some genes have been identified which seem to be linked to the development of AMD in some people.

Smoking; Smoking greatly increases your risk of developing AMD. Studies also show that stopping smoking can reduce your risk of developing AMD.

Sunlight; Some studies suggest that exposure to high levels of UV in sunlight throughout your life may increase your risk of developing AMD. Wearing sunglasses to protect your eyes is advisable throughout life.

Diet and Nutrition; A poor diet, high in fats and low in vitamins (antioxidants) and excessive alcohol has been linked to macula damage. There is some evidence that the antioxidants, lutein and zeaxanthin, may help to slow the progression of AMD, or reduce the risk of AMD.

Current thinking is that by making lifestyle changes, the progress of AMD can be slowed. Protecting your eyes from the sun, eating a balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, and stopping smoking may all help to keep your eyes as healthy as possible.

DRY AMD

DRY AMD occurs when the macula pigment layer of the retina, responsible for keeping the sensitive macula area healthy, starts to function less effectively and becomes thinner or patchy. There is currently no treatment for dry AMD.

WET AMD

WET AMD is much less common (10-15% of all AMD), and occurs when abnormal blood vessels grow and leak fluid behind the macula, causing a more rapid loss of central vision. The most common method of treatment for wet AMD is currently an intravitreal injection of a drug called "lucentis". This stops the new blood vessels growing and leaking and needs to be repeated every 3-6 months.



Both types of AMD, can affect both eyes, but only affect the central vision, leaving the peripheral vision unaffected, so do not lead to total loss of sight.