

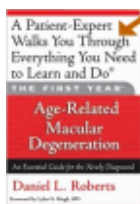


The Magnifier

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How To Create Your Own Task Force

By Liz Trauernicht, Director of MDF



"Work diligently on your TENACITY, ACCEPTANCE, SUPPORT and KNOWLEDGE and you will be an active, able participant in your own health and well-being." This is a quote from Dan Robert's book [The First Year Age-Related Macular Degeneration](#).

If you are a Macular Degeneration Patient, this is a must-have handbook and "An Essential Guide for the Newly Diagnosed". However, for any MD patient, this book is jam-packed with suggestions and information to make daily activities less challenging. But for me, I depend on the Appendixes to help my callers find information on services in their state. This includes financial assistance for eye care, low vision devices, distributors of audio books, and much more. You may pick this up at your local bookstore. It is also available on "Books On Tape" through the National Library Service. Free Books on Tape (www.loc.gov/nls) or 800-424-8567.

Macular Degeneration Foundation

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Relearning To See.

Doctors at Emory Eye Center in Atlanta, Ga., are working on a unique form of treatment for AMD that takes advantage of the brain's ability to reorganize itself to make up for vision loss. The therapy involves training AMD patients to focus on using the good cells that remain. "We are encouraging them or influencing them to be able to use those parts of the retina to be able to better utilize the residual vision," Primo said.

In the treatment, doctors first use a computer to map out the areas of the eye that are damaged. The machine then locates the areas that are still sensitive based on factors like thickness of the retina. The computer then uses biofeedback (in this case a series of beeps that gets faster and louder as the patient moves closer to using the healthiest portion of the eye) to train the patient to move their eye into the position that gives them the best possible vision.

Update On Microneedles: From the Emory Eye Center

"It's our goal to get rid of the need for hypodermic needles in many cases and replace them with a patch that can be painlessly and simply applied by a patient," says Mark Prausnitz, Ph.D. "If you can move to something that's as easy to apply as a band-aid, you've now opened the door for people to self-administer their medicine without special training. Microneedles are not just able to deliver drugs through the skin.

He notes that microneedle treatments can target specific tissues in the eye. "In localizing the delivery, microneedle treatments for macular degeneration and other diseases of the eye may prove safer than conventional needles. We're now doing experiments with rabbits and non-human primates - we hope to have the first human trial in the next few years," says Prausnitz.



Kudos To The Florida Council Of The Blind

A huge "Thank You" to Debbie Grubb, President, Florida Council of the Blind for providing services and support when we needed a caring and knowledgeable contact person. The number for the Florida Council of the Blind is 800-424-8666.

Oraya Therapeutics, Inc Company to Begin Two International Clinical Trials for Wet Age-Related Eye Disease Treatment

The IRay system is designed to deliver a highly localized dose of low-energy X-Ray radiation to the macula quickly with a highly automated system. "Current solutions are difficult to endure for patients who need treatment," said Mark Brooks, Managing Director. "Oraya has developed a promising and easy-to-administer solution, and the data from the IRay system trials are very encouraging. "Oraya's novel treatment for AMD has the potential to provide significant benefits to patients, physicians, and payors," states Brian Halak.

From Tufts University: Omega - 3 Fish Oil

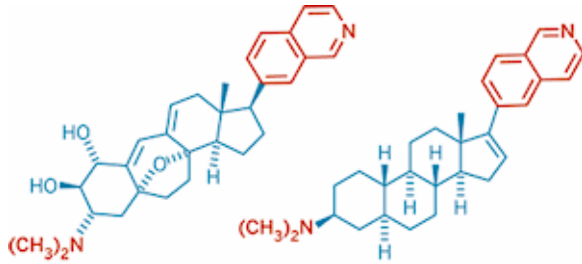
Researchers continue to report on the benefits of eating fish and taking omega-3 fish oil. The complex results from this study suggest that a diet rich in the DHA form of omega-3, may reduce the progression of early stage AMD in people not taking certain dietary supplements. Also eating low glycemic foods and a diet rich in omega-3 may reduce the risk of progression to advanced AMD. (The Glycemic index or GI is a measure of the effects of carbohydrates on blood glucose levels)

The Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins is very proud to introduce its newly constructed research and clinical building, a \$105 million structure in East Baltimore. Wolf Kahn, a New York-based landscape artist and former patient, has offered 16 paintings on extended loan for display in the surgical waiting area. And sculptor John Safer has created a 36-foot, six-ton stainless steel sculpture entitled "Quest" for the atrium. After being diagnosed with macular degeneration and cataracts, Safer was treated by former Wilmer Eye Institute director Morton Goldberg and eye surgeon Oliver Schein. "Quest, which resembles a strand of DNA, truly symbolizes Wilmer's mission of seeking new knowledge in the battle against vision loss," Goldberg said.

OptoLight Vision Technology has received a [CE mark](#) for its [Lipshitz Macular Implant](#) in Europe. The implant is a modified IOL that integrates miniature mirrors to form a mirror telescope inside the eye. The device is the only implantable telescope that has the ability to magnify the central image without diminishing peripheral vision.

Exploiting Cortistatins' Essence

Simple analogs of a complex natural product may protect against loss of vision.



"By making simplified versions of cortistatins, marine natural products that halt new blood vessel growth, researchers can treat excessive vessel growth in mice with macular degeneration. The analogs may inspire a new class of medications for the disease, which is a leading cause of vision loss.

Cortistatins A and J are potent blockers of angiogenesis, or new blood vessel growth, but the natural supply is scarce and chemical syntheses of the cortistatins haven't produced enough material for animal testing. Chemists Barbara Czakó, László Kürti, and E. J. Corey at Harvard University decided to study analogs instead.

The most effective pharmaceutical treatment for macular degeneration is administered by injection into the eye, Corey notes. All of his team's most potent analogs are water-soluble and could lead to an eye-drop-based treatment, he says".

Regarding Avastin and Lucentis Eye Injections And Patient Education

"These drugs are truly remarkable in their ability to control age-related macular degeneration," said Emily Chew, M.D., Deputy Director of the Division of Epidemiology and Clinical Applications at the National Eye Institute.

"While 95% of the time, treatment with bevacizumab or ranibizumab (Lucentis) will control progression of age-related macular degeneration, only about 40% of patients actually show improvement in vision," she said.

"Doctors need to explain to their patients that vision improvement is not going to happen in everyone," Dr. Chew said. She said that presentation of how the drug will work is an important part of therapy. Quoting On-Line Wikipedia: "Ranibizumab (trade name Lucentis) is a monoclonal antibody fragment derived from the same parent murine antibody as bevacizumab (Avastin).

Be Safe - Preventing Falls by Adapting Your Home

www.afb.org/store

Featured tips include:

1. Don't store the things you need in high places that would require the use of a step stool to reach.
2. Apply non-skid mats or appliques in bold, contrasting colors to the surface of the tub or shower.
3. Arrange your furniture so that there is a clear path for walking, and keep clutter out of walkways. Avoid using furniture on wheels.
4. Clap-on/clap-off lights in the living room and in your bedroom will keep you from having to get up from your chair to adjust the lighting.
5. During the winter months, keep outdoor pathways clear of ice and snow by using kitty litter or salt, or ask someone to shovel the walkway.

Research Into Bone Marrow Stem Cells Continues

LOUISVILLE, Ky. -- Researchers at the University of Louisville have moved closer to preventing or possibly even restoring loss of sight in thousands of patients. Dr. Suzanne Lidstad, Director of the Institute for Cellular Therapeutics, is investigating bone marrow stem cells as a repair avenue for damaged macular degeneration tissue. The body's natural receptors and signaling systems may make it possible to turn bone marrow stem cells into retinal cells or other cells in the eye. This is in the beginning stages of clinical trials, so stay tuned for more information.



Advanced Cell Technology Will Seek Approval For Human Trials

By Courtney Humphries June 17, 2009

"Testing experimental embryonic stem cell therapies in humans poses some unique challenges: for example, creating tumors or immune rejection of the transplanted cells. For that reason, the first stem-cell therapies have focused on the eye and nervous system, so-called immune-privileged sites that do not experience this response to foreign cells. This latest treatment for eye disease, developed by [Advanced Cell Technology](#) (ACT), based in Worcester, MA, uses human embryonic stem cells to re-create a type of cell in the retina that supports the photoreceptors needed for vision.

The "Pebble": A New Hand-Held Magnification Product

Enhanced Vision, America's leading manufacturer of magnifying solutions for the visually impaired, recently launched a powerful new hand-held device that can bring affordable independence to the 15 Million or more Americans suffering from low vision conditions such as macular degeneration. At just \$595 and no larger than a men's wallet, "Pebble" is an exciting new vision device that gives users the freedom to read menus, check price tags, write checks, and much more while on the go. For more information about Enhanced Vision and its products, please call (888) 811-3161 or visit www.enhancedvision.com.

CONTACTING MDF

To speak to a support representative directly, you may call 1-888-633-3937. If you reach our voice mail, please speak slowly and distinctly.

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS:

Please make checks payable to Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 531313, Henderson, Nevada 89053, or you may use your credit card on our web site <http://www.eyesight.org>. Your contributions make our services available as a support system for macular degeneration patients in the following ways:

1. We provide toll-free lines for personal contact assistance.
2. We mail brochures and other printed materials upon request.
3. We support an award-winning web site that provides the latest up-to-date information.
4. We fund research proposal grants to provide therapies for both the wet and dry form of AMD. Contributions marked "research" are used 100% for research.

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MDF was founded in 1992 by Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Ph.D (a victim of macular degeneration). It provides MD patients and their families with the information necessary to understand the disease, the latest news concerning ways to cope with the disease, and supports the efforts of researchers to find a cure.