

Bartlett Surgery & Specialty Clinic

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Macular Degeneration and Nutritional Supplements

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a disease caused by damage or breakdown of the macula, the small part of the eye's retina that is responsible for our central vision. This condition affects both distance and close vision and can make some activities, like threading a needle or reading, very difficult or impossible. Macular degeneration is the leading cause of severe vision loss in people over 65.

Although the exact causes of AMD are not understood, a recent scientific study shows that antioxidant vitamins Zinc may reduce the impact of AMD in some people with the disease.

Among people with high risk for late-stage macular degeneration (those with intermediate AMD in both eyes or advanced AMD in one eye), a dietary supplement of vitamin C, E and Beta Carotene, along with Zinc, lowered the risk of disease progressing to advanced stages by about 25-30 percent. However, the supplements did not appear to benefit people with minimal AMD or those who have no evidence of macular degeneration.

Light may affect the eye by simulating oxygen, leading to the production of highly reactive and damaging compounds called free radicals. Antioxidant vitamins (vitamin C, E and Beta Carotene) may work against this activated oxygen and helps slow the progress of macular degeneration.

In addition to your daily Centrum Silver multivitamin, we recommend taking these extra supplements:

- Zinc 65 MD two total 80 MG/day
- Vitamin E 355 IU to total 400 IU/day
- Vitamin C 440 MG 2 total 500 MG/day
- Beta Carotene 15 MG total daily

Ocuvite preservation is a good vitamin for macular degeneration.

It is very important to remember that vitamin supplements are not a cure for AMD, nor will they restore vision already lost from the disease. However, specific amounts of certain supplements do play a key role in helping some people at high risk for advanced AMD to maintain their vision.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at 907-796-8700.