

Protecting Eye Health and Possibly Reducing Your Risk for Developing Macular Degeneration

These suggestions may help protect vision and improve overall health, and may lower the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

1. Maintain a healthy weight.
2. Eat a nutritious diet that includes green leafy vegetables, yellow and orange fruit, fish, and whole grains.
3. Do not smoke.
4. Maintain normal blood pressure and control other medical conditions.
5. Exercise regularly.
6. Wear sunglasses and hats outdoors.
7. Get regular eye exams, and consult your doctor if you notice vision changes.

Foods with potential visual benefits

Carotenoids

Carotenoids may defend against a number of medical conditions, including AMD. They are naturally found in dark green, yellow, and orange fruits and vegetables. Lutein and zeaxanthin are 2 especially important carotenoids related to vision health. They are found in:

- Spinach
- Collard Greens
- Kale
- Yellow Corn
- Okra
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Mango
- Green Beans
- Sweet Potatoes
- Lima Beans
- Squash
- Bell Pepper
- Egg Yolks

Vitamin C

Also include in your diet, fruits and vegetables that are abundant in Vitamin C, such as green peppers, citrus fruits, tomatoes, broccoli, strawberries, sweet and white potatoes, leafy greens, and cantaloupe.

Vitamin E

Foods containing Vitamin E include:

- Eggs
- Fortified Cereals
- Fruit
- Wheat Germ
- Green Leafy Vegetables
- Nuts/Nut Oils
- Vegetable Oils
- Whole Grains

Complex Carbohydrates

Increase consumption of whole grain versions of pasta (sometimes called “brown pasta”), rice, and bread that contain complex carbohydrates.

- Complex carbohydrates are metabolized more slowly and are healthier than their “white” counterparts.
- White rice, bread, and pasta have a high glycemic index (GI), meaning that the carbohydrates are rapidly broken down into glucose (blood sugar). They provide quick energy but contain few nutrients and little fiber; in large amounts they may damage cells. Some studies have shown that eating foods with a high GI may increase the risk of developing AMD.