

# Eye on Health

## Healthy Living And Macular Degeneration: Tips To Protect Your Vision

(NAPSA)—Here's health news you may be glad to see: A healthy lifestyle may reduce your risk of getting vision diseases such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which can damage central vision and currently affects 11 million Americans. If you already have AMD, such a lifestyle may help protect your remaining vision. Here are hints on how.

### Tips To Help Your Vision

**Don't Smoke.** Smokers are more than twice as likely as nonsmokers to get AMD. Smoking narrows the blood vessels, reducing blood supply to the eyes. If you smoke, make a plan to quit with your doctor's help.

**Exercise Regularly.** Exercise may reduce inflammation, which is a key contributor to AMD. It can also help lower eye pressure, which improves blood flow to the retina and optic nerve.

**Eat a Varied and Nutritious Diet.** Both your eye health and your overall health benefit from a diet rich in vitamins and minerals, including dark leafy greens, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables, fish, and whole grains.

**Maintain Normal Blood Pressure and Cholesterol Levels.** High blood pressure narrows the blood vessels that nourish the retina. Cholesterol deposits in the eye contribute to AMD.

**Maintain a Healthy Weight.** Being overweight contributes to AMD and increases your risk of heart disease and diabetes. Develop a healthy diet and lifestyle plan.

**Protect Your Eyes Outdoors.** Sunlight exposure may increase the risk of AMD. Wear wide-brimmed hats when outdoors and use high-quality sun-



**See your eye doctor regularly to protect your vision from age-related macular degeneration.**

glasses with a UVA and UVB rating of 99 to 100 percent.

**Keep Track of Your Eye Health.** It's important to monitor your vision, to help with early detection of eye problems or to slow the progression of AMD. Schedule regular, comprehensive eye exams with your eye doctor. More than a vision test, the exam should include pupil dilation to detect diseases, and the use of tonometry, which measures eye fluid pressure.

Ask your doctor how often you should schedule exams, based on your risk factors. These include a family history of AMD and being over age 60.

### Learn More

For further eye care advice, you can download *The Top Five Questions to Ask Your Eye Doctor* and other free vision resources at [www.brightfocus.org/eye-health](http://www.brightfocus.org/eye-health), or call (800) 437-2423.

BrightFocus Foundation is a premier source of research funding to defeat Alzheimer's, macular degeneration, and glaucoma, investing in bold, innovative science to find the cures for diseases of mind and sight.