



# Eye on Health

## Seniors Fight Age-Related Eye Disease With Breakthrough Treatment

(NAPSA)—When Bonnie Conway began to experience vision loss due to an eye disease known as wet age-related macular degeneration, or wet AMD, she worried that she might have to leave her job. As Borough Manager of her local community, Conway relies heavily on her sight to complete her bookkeeping, filing and letter writing duties.

More than 15 million American seniors live with some form of AMD, a leading cause of blindness in people over 60. There are two forms of AMD, dry and wet. While all cases begin as the dry form, it is the wet form that accounts for about 90 percent of all AMD-related blindness.

Wet AMD can result in sudden and severe loss of a person's central vision, and can worsen rapidly without treatment. Like many of the 1.7 million people with the advanced form of the disease, Conway had difficulty reading and the faces of her friends and loved ones became blurry.

"I was a big reader. The most frustrating thing for me was losing the ability to read without a magnifying glass," said Conway. "I started to accept that my wet AMD would eventually get so bad that I'd have to give up my job."

But in August of 2006, Conway's eye doctor, a retina specialist, began treating her with monthly injections of Lucentis® (ranibizumab injection), which is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of wet AMD. Since starting treatment, Conway's vision has improved from 20/80 to 20/40 on the eye chart.



**These images depict the impact age-related macular degeneration may have on a person's central vision.**

"Bonnie was one of the first patients in our practice to receive Lucentis, and because she's continued to come for treatment every month, her vision has improved and she's been able to continue her normal activities," said Dr. Miguel Busquets of Associates in Ophthalmology.

In clinical studies of Lucentis, nearly all patients (90 percent) treated once a month maintained their vision for up to two years. About 40 percent of patients' vision actually improved by three lines or more on the study eye chart at two years, though a few patients have experienced some vision loss.

Because AMD advances so quickly, and can cause sudden and irreversible loss of vision, early diagnosis and treatment are critical. The National Eye Institute recommends that people aged 60 or older schedule eye exams every two years, and anyone who notices changes in vision should receive an eye exam right away.

Lucentis is a prescription medication given by injection into the eye. Lucentis has been associated

with detached retina and serious eye infection and should not be used in patients who have an infection in or around the eye. Increases in eye pressure have been seen within one hour of an injection. Although uncommon, conditions associated with eye- and non-eye-related blood clots (arterial thromboembolic events) may occur. Serious side effects included inflammation inside the eye and, rarely, effects related to the injection procedure such as cataract. The most common non-eye-related side effects were nose and throat infection, headache, and respiratory and urinary tract infections. The most common eye-related side effects were the feeling that something is in your eye, and increased tears.

If your eye becomes red, sensitive to light, painful or has a change in vision, you should seek immediate care from your eye doctor.

For full prescribing information, talk to your doctor or call 866-LUCENTIS (866-582-3684) or visit [www.LUCENTIS.com](http://www.LUCENTIS.com).