



Eye on Health

Macular Degeneration *New Research Provides Hope*

(NAPSA)—Scientists are setting their sights on new ways to preserve sight. That's good news for over six million people in the U.S. who are affected by age-related macular degeneration (AMD). It's also good for the 15 million who have early signs of the disease that could lead to vision loss.

Macular degeneration causes a progressive loss of central vision and is the leading reason for legal blindness in Americans over 50. Many affected by AMD eventually may be unable to read a book, drive a car, or even see the faces of family members.

AMD occurs when the center of the retina begins to deteriorate, and it becomes worse over time. The condition can cause blurring of central vision, distortion and blind spots. Blurred central vision can make straight lines appear slightly distorted or warped.

Various factors contribute to AMD, and some studies suggest inherited genetic factors play a role. Other factors may include smoking, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and sun exposure.

While there is currently no cure for AMD, researchers are testing promising new treatments that could halt vision



Researchers have their eyes on ways to help older Americans keep good vision.

loss associated with AMD. Clinical trials, testing a number of new treatments, are going on throughout the country and may be available in your area. In addition, there are treatments which may help slow or at least temporarily arrest its progression.

The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB), a national nonprofit organization, acts as an authority and resource on new treatments and referral resources. Its primary charter is to raise funds to support medical research for treatments and cures of macular degeneration and other blinding retinal diseases.

If you (or someone you know) are looking for answers, or for information on clinical trials testing, call the Foundation Fighting Blindness at **1-800-943-4494**.