

# Eye on Health

## Supplements Help Young Eyes

(NAPSA)—A new study from the Vision Science Laboratory at the University of Georgia suggests that nutritional support for eye health should begin much earlier than previously thought.

Zeaxanthin and lutein, antioxidants found in the macula of the eye, have long been associated with maintaining healthy eyesight and preventing afflictions such as age-related macular degeneration, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy.

Researchers concluded that supplementation, once thought to be most necessary for middle-aged people and seniors to prevent age-related vision problems, should be considered by a much broader age range of the general population to maintain healthy vision.

In the study, researchers found that young people who took the supplements showed nearly 60 percent greater ability to detect targets through a veiling glare and 15 percent faster recovery time from intense light.

"This study shows that the benefits of zeaxanthin and lutein are not reserved for older people," says Phil Gowaski, an expert in eye health supplements. "Younger athletes, in particular, could benefit from the findings of this new research. It shows that zeaxanthin and lutein can sharpen central vision, reduce the effects of glare and maintain healthy vision."

The antioxidants are now commonly included in nutritional supplements that promote eye health. While lutein is better known, more consumers are taking zeaxanthin, too, as research shows that the two nutrients work best in tandem. Lutein is found in dark



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green leafy vegetables and eggs, while zeaxanthin is found in brightly colored foods such as corn, peaches, mangoes and peppers. The natural zeaxanthin used in vitamin supplements is derived from marigold flowers. According to Gowaski, "Recent studies have shown that Americans consume less than one-third of the daily 6 milligrams of zeaxanthin and lutein suggested by the USDA, so dietary supplements could play an important role in helping people get enough of these two nutrients to reap the benefits."

As positive scientific evidence continues to emerge, more consumer-friendly information about zeaxanthin and lutein is becoming available. Online resources can be useful, especially Web sites such as the one belonging to Chrysantis, Inc., a company that produces natural zeaxanthin for use in supplements: [www.ezeyes.info](http://www.ezeyes.info). It presents the latest science in an easy-to-read and -understand format.