

Eye on Health

Hope For People With Leading Cause Of Blindness

(NAPSA)—According to a study published in *Optometry—The Journal of the American Optometric Association*, a lutein supplement may help improve vision for people who have “dry” age-related macular degeneration—the most prevalent form of the disease.

As many as six million Americans have vision loss because of age-related macular degeneration (AMD). The number of people with this untreatable disease is expected to double by 2030.

The exact cause of AMD is unknown but risk factors for the disease include age, being Caucasian, diets high in fat content and smoking. Symptoms for advanced AMD include:

- straight lines in the field of vision, such as telephone poles, appear wavy;
- type in books, magazines and newspapers appears blurry; and
- dark or empty spaces may block the center of vision.

Lutein is a naturally occurring molecule found in dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale and collard greens.

The LAST (Lutein Antioxidant Supplementation Trial) study is the first to record actual improvement in several key visual functions among patients with AMD.

“The findings strongly indicate the need for larger studies involving more participants over a longer period to ascertain more definitive findings. However, we encourage people with AMD to discuss nutrition strategies with their doctor now and consider whether taking a vitamin supplement containing lutein might be right for them,” said Gerrard Grace, chair AMD Alliance International.

In the LAST study, 90 AMD patients were supplemented daily with a supplement capsule containing 10 mg of crystalline FloraGLO lutein, 10 mg crystalline



A lutein supplement may help improve vision for millions.

lutein in an OcuPower mixed antioxidant formula or placebo for 12 months. Patients who took the lutein supplement experienced significant improvements in several symptoms including glare recovery, contrast sensitivity and visual acuity compared with patients taking the placebo.

“The LAST study creates an imperative for larger studies of lutein and antioxidant nutritional therapies as an intervention for AMD,” said Bruce P. Rosenthal, O.D., AMD Alliance board member and chief of low vision programs for Lighthouse International, a global organization involved in research, education, advocacy and rehabilitation services for vision impairment. “These findings show great promise in the quest to help people with AMD.”

To speak with a specialist about AMD, call Prevent Blindness America at 1-800-331-2020 or visit www.preventblindness.org or www.amdalliance.org. More information about lutein is available at www.luteininfo.com.