



End-Stage Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

Fact Sheet

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- More than 15 million Americans are affected by some form of macular degeneration, a progressive disease which can lead to severe vision loss in the most advanced form, end-stage AMD. The number of Americans afflicted with macular degeneration is expected to double with the rapid aging of the U.S. population. Approximately 2 million Americans have advanced forms of AMD with associated vision loss.
- End-stage macular degeneration is a disease of the retina (back of the eye). It is the most advanced form of age-related macular degeneration and the leading cause of irreversible vision loss and legal blindness in individuals over the age of 65.
- Macular degeneration is an eye condition that attacks the macula, the region of the retina responsible for central, detailed vision. Although it does not cause complete blindness, it robs the individual of their central, straight-ahead vision, resulting in what is often referred to as a central vision “blind spot”. It does not affect the outer circle of peripheral vision, so a person will always be able to see things to the side, but this vision is too low resolution (blurry) to make up for lost central vision.
- For many people, the first sign of AMD is something they notice themselves. Straight lines like doorways or telephone wires may appear wavy or disconnected. When they look at a person, their face may be blurred while the rest of them are in focus. Lines of print may be blurred in the center or the lines may be crooked.
- Despite the availability of new drug treatments that slow, but not stop, the progression of AMD, the number of people with end-stage AMD is expected to double by the year 2050.