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THE MAGNIFIER Issue #64, March/April, 2008

Newsletter from the Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 531313 Henderson, NV 89053
<http://www.eyesight.org>

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TEAM MACULAR REGENERATION, USA FOR RACE ACROSS AMERICA

See: <http://www.eyesight.org> for details of this bicycle event

Start: Oceanside, CA - The Oceanside Pier. Women June 7th, Men June 8th, Teams June 11th.

Finish: Annapolis, MD - The City Dock. June 17th - June 20th.

Route: More than 3,000 miles across the United States, touching 14 states and climbing over 100,000 feet. Teams typically cross the country in 6 to 9 days, averaging 350 to over 500 miles per day. Teams have a relay format and race 24 hours a day.

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CLINICAL TRIAL INFORMATION

For a complete list of current study trials, you may click on <http://www.nei.nih.gov/neitrials/participate.asp> for the National Eye Institute's home page to access the Clinical Studies Trial Database. The NIH Clinical Center Information line is (866) 444-8805.

VEGF Trap-Eye Clinical Development

A phase 3 study, VIEW 1, is currently enrolling patients. The VIEW 1 study is comparing the VEGF Trap-Eye and ranibizumab (Lucentis, a registered trademark of Genentech, Inc.), an antiangiogenic agent approved for use in

wet AMD. In a phase 2 study evaluating VEGF Trap-Eye in the neovascular form of wet Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), the VEGF Trap-Eye met the primary end point of a statistically significant reduction in retinal thickness and demonstrated statistically significant improvement in visual acuity after 12 weeks as compared to baseline. There were no drug-related serious adverse events, and treatment with the VEGF Trap-Eye was generally well-tolerated. To find a study site in your area, you may call 866-549-8439

TRIAL: The Comparison of Age-Related Macular Degeneration Treatments Trials (CATT)

This trial is being conducted in 48 institutions across the country in a National Eye Institute/National Institutes of Health-funded study to compare two drugs (Lucentis and Avastin), made by the same company. Call (866) 444-8805 to find the location of a study center near you.

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EYE EXAMS HAVE GONE HIGH-TECH

<http://www.bucyrustelegraphforum.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071219/LIFESTYLE/712190316>

This article explains the use of new technology used to evaluate and diagnose eye disorders when patients are examined by a retinal specialist or an ophthalmologist. Patients may see these tests on a bill or hear phrases using the technical names of one or more of these tests, however, not everyone is aware of what results these tests provide and/or how the test works.

* “Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) — This is a sophisticated laser that reflects off the layers of the retina and creates a retinal profile. These measurements and laser-produced pictures of the retina can reveal the earliest stages of macular degeneration and glaucoma* Preferential Hyperacuity Perimetry (PHP) — With 15 million people in our country currently having “dry” macular degeneration, the PHP can readily identify in an early stage those who will progress to “wet” macular degeneration This instrument tests more than 500 spots within the most critical part of one’s retina, the macular area.

* GDX Analyzer — This instrument is a sophisticated laser that measures in microns the thickness of the nerve fiber layer of the retina. Changes in

the nerve fiber layer represent the earliest signs of potential glaucoma. It is estimated that 50 percent of the public having glaucoma are currently undiagnosed. Recent research indicates 40 percent of glaucoma patients have what used to be considered “normal” pressures. (For truly accurate measurement of pressure, the office may use the Pascal Tonometer).

* Wave Front Analyzer — Almost instantaneously, this instrument will make a totally objective determination of what lens power might most accurately focus rays of light on your retina in order to create the sharpest, clearest vision for you. Within less than two minutes, three readings, which are usually incredibly close, can be obtained on each eye and then averaged. Curvatures of the cornea are simultaneously measured, which is important in evaluating the health of the corneas and utilized in determining a possible contact lens.

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SUBSCRIBERS TAKE TIME TO WRITE:

Robert from Pottsville, PA writes, Dear Liz, “Just sending a note to let you know how much your newsletters have helped me to understand my vision problem . . . just want to thank you for the helpful information.”

Marty from Ruidoso Downs, NM writes, “ Dear Liz, I so enjoyed our phone conversation last week. I cannot tell you how nice it was to hear a friendly non-hurried voice to discuss these eye issues . . . keep up the good work“.

It is our privilege to be of service to MD patients whether it’s a phone conversation or email. Information is sent to subscribers free upon request. Our phone number is (888) 633-3937. We appreciate the notes, emails, and letters expressing gratitude for our efforts.

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AMD STUDY MOVES TO MIAMI

“We are looking for individuals who participated in a genetic study of Age-Related Macular Degeneration at the Center for Human Genetics at Duke University. Some of the researchers conducting this study have moved to the Miami Institute for Human Genomics at the University of Miami and

would like to notify participants of this change. If you participated in this research project and do not want your samples and data used by the University of Miami, or have questions about this transition, please contact the AMD research team in Miami at (1-877-686-6444).”

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HEALTHY TO THE CORE

From Women’s Care Magazine Winter, 2007

“Did you know that the amazing apple contains only 81 calories, with almost no fat and three grams of fiber?

Here are a few more facts:

- 1. The complex carbs in apples give your body a long, even energy boost
- 2. The fiber in an apple can act as a laxative for constipation and a treatment for diarrhea.
- 3. The hefty amounts of boron (a mineral) in apples are believed to boost alertness in older adults as well as help keep bones strong
- 4. The pectin in apples lowers LDL (bad) cholesterol

A diet rich in fruits, like apples, may reduce the risk of some types of cancer and other chronic diseases. Plus, one big apple is the equivalent of two servings of fruit!

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GLAUCOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

If you, or someone you know, has Glaucoma and would like to receive a quarterly newsletter from the Glaucoma Research Foundation, you may call 1-800-826-6693. Their address is Glaucoma Research Foundation, 251 Post Street Ste. 600, San Francisco CA 94108.

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ARTIFICIAL LIGHT: (Note: as originally published, this article on Artificial Light titled “Lighten Up” contained information that was not factual. We have removed it from this archived copy and substituted the following from Mr. Dan Roberts, Director of Macular Degeneration Support with a link to his full report.)

What kind of lighting is best for people with retinal diseases like macular degeneration? Researchers tell us that ultraviolet (UV) and blue light rays may be harmful to those of us with retinal disease, while marketers tell us that lamps with enhanced UV will help us to see better and stay healthier. Advertisers tell us that the intensity and range of colors offered by lamps that replicate sunshine and daylight are necessary for best vision and visual health. At the same time, doctors admonish us to wear blue-blocking, UV-protective sunglasses when we go outdoors.

What’s going on? What should we believe? How can light hurt our retinas? What are the differences between fluorescent, halogen, neodymium, and regular incandescent lightbulbs? What do they mean by labels such as “full spectrum” and “daylight?” To sort all of this out, let’s begin with a definition of light and its effects on the retina.

LINK: <http://www.mdsupport.org/library/hazard.html>

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CONTACTING MDF

To speak to a support representative directly, you may call 1-888-633-3937. If you reach our voice mail, please speak slowly and distinctly.

ORDERING BOOKS & TAPES

When purchasing items from Amazon.com, please remember to use the MDF search box located at <http://www.eyesight.org/Books/books.html> . By simply originating your search from our website, Amazon rewards the Foundation with a small commission from each product you order. Thank you.

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS:

Please make checks payable to Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 531313, Henderson, Nevada 89053, or you may use your credit card on our web site <http://www.eyesight.org/Donations/donations.html> . Your contributions make our services available as a support system for macular degeneration patients in the following ways:

1. We provide toll-free lines for personal contact assistance.
2. We mail brochures and other printed materials upon request.
3. We support an award-winning web site that provides the latest up-to-date information.
4. We fund research proposal grants to provide therapies for both the wet and dry form of AMD. Contributions marked "research" are used 100% for research.

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MDF was founded in 1992 by Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Ph.D (a victim of macular degeneration). It provides MD patients and their families with the information necessary to understand the disease, the latest news concerning ways to cope with the disease, and supports the efforts of researchers to find a cure.

Subscribers who wish to cancel their subscription or change their email address may visit: <http://www.eyesight.org/Newsletter/newsletter.html> .

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