



The Magnifier

Issue #69 January / February 2009

Where Can I Find a Support Group?

<http://www.mdsupport.org/telesupport.html>

Patients with Macular Degeneration often wish they could connect with others to discuss experiences, concerns, or share information. This program is designed to meet the needs of low-vision, senior patients without computer access and/or cannot find or attend a local support group.

About the Program:

IMDSG TeleSupport is a year-round program of monthly group support sessions held over the telephone. A session typically includes a brief update on recent research and developments, followed by listening to and discussing the current month's recorded IMDSG presentation (see the Schedule of Presentations). Each session will include the moderator and up to 25 registered members.



Members who wish to do so may share their phone numbers with others in the group for personal communication outside of the scheduled sessions. This aspect of the program is optional, with phone numbers otherwise remaining totally private.

Why are we doing this? Information and human interaction are vital to maintaining quality of life when dealing with loss of vision. But, due to disability, lack of transportation, or lack of Internet access, a large number of low vision seniors are being left out. This program is our way of reaching those people with the same resources and support we have been sharing with millions of others since 1998 through our website and public outreach programs.

Moderator: Dan Roberts, Founding Director, Macular Degeneration Support

Presenters: Leading experts in the fields of low vision care, research, low vision products, and rehabilitation. Membership is free and there are no obligations.

How to Become a Member in 3 Easy Steps

Step 1: call us. If you are phoning from North America, dial 1-816-761-7080. If you live outside of North America, dial your "exit country code" (found in your phone book) + 1* + 816-761-7080. This is a brief long distance call to our office in Grandview, Missouri (USA). It will be your only expense for this program. Once you are a member, all TeleSupport group phone sessions will be toll-free from anywhere in the world.

Macular Degeneration Foundation

P.O. Box 531313
Henderson, NV 89053

Website:
www.eyesight.org

Telephone:
1-888-633-3937

Step 2: When you call, a real live human being will ask you the following questions: What is your first and last name? What is your area code and telephone number? What is your mailing address? Do you prefer receiving information from us in large print or on CD? What are your first and second choices of session times?

Sessions are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month at the following times:

Pacific	Mountain	Central	Eastern	GMT	
7:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	3:00 PM	Additional days and times will be added as required
9:00 AM	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	12:00 Noon	5:00 PM	
11:00 AM	12:00 Noon	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	7:00 PM	
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	9:00 PM	

Step 3: A few days after your call, you will receive a package from us by first class mail. It will include:

1. A large print copy of the official IMDSG source book, *The First Year: Age-Related Macular Degeneration* by Daniel L. Roberts (Marlowe ... Co., New York, NY: 2006)
2. An instruction packet providing you with:
TeleSupport's toll-free phone number
Your pass code for entering the monthly sessions
Your reserved day and time
Your guidelines for participating in the TeleSupport group

We look forward to welcoming you to our group!

SCHEDULE OF PRESENTATION THROUGH JULY, 2009

January: "Reclaiming Independence—Staying in the Driver's Seat When You No Longer Drive."
Presenter: L. Penny Rosenblum, Ph.D. (University of Arizona)

February: "Body Weight and Eye Disease." Presenter: Ellen Troyer, M.T., M.A. (Chief Research Officer, Biosyntx, Inc.)

March: "Should I Learn Blindness Skills?" Presenter: Robert Massoff, Ph.D. (Lions Vision Center, Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University)

April: "New Thinking in the Prevention of AMD." Presenter: Steven Ferrucci, OD, FAAO (Southern CA College of Optometry)

May: "Crashing Through." Presenter: Michael G. May (President ... CEO, Sendero Group, LLC)

June: "The Latest in Research and Treatment." Presenter: Dan Roberts (Director, MD Support)

July: "The Aging Brain—Memory as a Substitute for Vision." Presenter: Colleen O'Donnell (Visual Rehabilitation and Research Center, Henry Ford Health System)

Sewing Seeds of Hope

We do not solicit donations or charge for any of our services. However, many organizations large and small choose to support the Macular Degeneration Foundation and we deeply appreciate each and every one of them.

We recently got a check from a small, home business making “Cozy Toads” to be used as a heating pad or ice pack. Melissa White called several months ago to let us know her family wanted to do something to help our foundation in honor of her mom who has MD. As a result, three generations of seamstresses are involved in making these soft durable corn filled Toads. You may purchase a “Cozy Toad” by calling Melissa at (614) 873-1454.

GM’s High-Tech Windshield Enhances View for Older Drivers

This technology is so complex it may be a few years “down the road”. However, it is encouraging to look forward to visual enhancement that could provide a forward-looking camera system that is able to detect and interpret street signs, speed limit signs, and other important road-side features and warn the driver of their presence.



The GM enhanced windscreen system picks out details that might be missed, especially in low-visibility situations, and highlights them with brightly drawn laser outlines, reports the Associated Press. Technology like GM’s windshield display will never be able to completely compensate for poor vision or other restrictions, but they may be able to safely extend some drivers’ years behind the wheel.

AICON Ends Development of Certain Treatment for Wet AMD

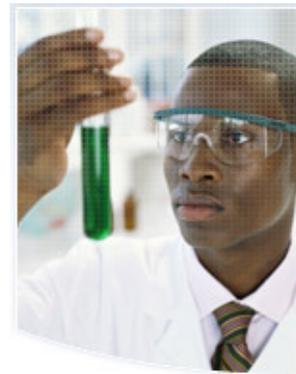
In July, 2008, Alcon Inc. reported it ended the development program evaluating the benefit of anecortave acetate treatment for AMD. The Swiss eye-care company said an analysis of studies showed anecortave acetate demonstrated “no effect on the primary or secondary endpoints.” Alcon said it continues to study anecortave acetate administered as an anterior juxtasclear depot to reduce intraocular pressure in patients with open-angle glaucoma. This drug was derived from the steroid class and was administered with a blunt-tipped, curved cannula to deliver the drug behind the eye. If effective, it would have required less treatment visits than injections.

Potentia Pharmaceuticals’ Drug Candidate for Age-Related Macular Degeneration Shows Positive Safety Profile in Phase I Clinical Trial

Article from www.potentiapharma.com ATLANTA, GA – November 10, 2008 – “Potentia Pharmaceuticals are currently developing medicines for the treatment of AMD. Data from the Phase I clinical trial was presented in January during the Retina Subspecialty Day at the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA. The data was from the ASaP (Assessment of Safety of Intravitreal POT-4 Therapy for Patients with Neovascular Age-Related Macular Degeneration) clinical trial for the company’s leading drug candidate, POT-4. What is POT-4? POT-4 is a derivative of the cyclic peptide Compstatin, discovered at the University of Pennsylvania. POT-4 is a peptide capable of binding to human complement factor (C3) and therefore prevent its activation. POT-4 is designed to inhibit the inflammation process.

The interim results of this trial revealed that intravitreal POT-4 is safe, and the data accumulated so far support the continued investigation of POT-4 for the treatment of both dry and wet AMD with larger randomized clinical trials to further define its efficacy profile. ‘These

safety data strongly support the further development of POT-4 as a potential treatment for patients with AMD,' said Cedric Francois, President and CEO of Potentia Pharmaceuticals. 'We believe that the product has significant promise based on these early-stage findings and look forward to further testing of the compound in higher doses as we continue this trial.'



The injection of anti-angiogenic agents into the eye is the current therapy for treatment of wet AMD. This treatment modality aims to inhibit the growth and leakage of new blood vessels and thus addresses a late-stage complication of macular degeneration. Such therapies can temporarily halt progression in the more severe form of the disease but do not address its fundamental causes.

Potentia believes that the future standard of care for AMD will involve early detection and arrest or reverse the disease process before it results in progression to advanced disease and significant loss of vision occurs. To achieve this goal, Potentia is developing drugs targeting the underlying causes of AMD, effective against the dry form of the disease, as well as minimally invasive ways of delivering these drugs to the back of the eye.

MacuCLEAR and Mystic Pharmaceuticals Agree To Collaborate on Macular Degeneration Phase I/II Clinical Trial

MC1101, a compound patented by MacuCLEAR, is a novel, topically delivered solution for the treatment and prevention of the progression of the Dry or early stage of AMD. MC1101 was invented at Texas A&M University by George C.Y. Chiou, PhD, who previously led the discovery of Timolol, the pioneering treatment for glaucoma.

How can a topical eyedrop affect the progression of AMD? MC1101 is designed to increase choroidal blood flow, decrease inflammation, and prevent oxidative damage. This compound along with a new eye drop delivery system from Mystic Pharmaceuticals will provide a double bonus for elderly patients in the phase I/II clinical trial. For more information visit www.macuClear.com and www.mysticpharmaceuticals.com

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.

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>. 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.