



## THE MAGNIFIER

Macular Degeneration Foundation  
P.O. Box 531313  
Henderson, Nevada 89053

FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND

Macular  
Degeneration  
Foundation

# The Magnifier

ISSUE #92

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### Book on CD

A recorded copy of "Macular Degeneration, "The Complete Guide to Saving and Maximizing Your Sight", by Lylas G Mogk, M.D. is now available on CD.

Sight Into Sound is making it available upon request.

Call 713-622-2767 or email [carol.pierce@sightintosound.org](mailto:carol.pierce@sightintosound.org)

### Free DVD

Hallucinations: Am I going Crazy?

AMD and Charles Bonnet Syndrome. DVD available on request with detailed information! Call: 888-633-3937

## AREDS Trial & Omega-3

Dan Roberts - MD Support

### FISH

US researchers from Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, MA, report the results of a study which found that eating fish, such as tuna, four times a week, may reduce the risk of macular degeneration. Subjects were participants in the Nurses' Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study who did not have AMD at baseline.

The researchers concluded that dietary fat intake was associated with an increased risk of age-related macular degeneration, and that this may have been due to the presence of linolenic acid in the fat. They added that a high intake of fish, a rich source of docosahexanoic acid, may reduce this risk



### OMEGA 3

NEI Press Release: "In the first AREDS trial, participants with AMD who took the AREDS formulation were 25 percent less likely to progress to advanced AMD over the five-year study period, compared with participants who took a placebo. In AREDS2, there was no overall additional benefit from adding omega-3 fatty acids or a 5-to-1 mixture of lutein and zeaxanthin to the formulation."

This does not say that Omega-3 is not beneficial. It says there was no ADDITIONAL benefit from adding it (along with lutein and zeaxanthin) to the formula. By removing beta-carotene, the protection offered by the new formula has been reduced to 18%, but that is still way better than nothing, and it is probably good because of the inclusion of Omega-3, lutein, and zeaxanthin.

### Clinical Trial Information

Nat'l Eye Institute  
800-411-1222 or [www.nei.nih.gov](http://www.nei.nih.gov)

Clinical trials have guidelines called "inclusion" and "exclusion" criteria. These criteria (age, gender, type and stage of disease, etc.) keep participants safe and ensure researchers will be able to answer the questions they plan to study.

## Emixustat Hydrochloride Clinical Trial

Emixustat hydrochloride is being studied to determine whether it slows the progression of geographic atrophy lesions associated with dry age-related macular degeneration. Acucela Inc. recently announced that it has achieved 50% subject enrollment in its ongoing Phase 2b/3 clinical trial.

The Safety and Efficacy Assessment Treatment Trials of Emixustat Hydrochloride study is a multicenter, randomized, double-masked, dose-ranging study initiated earlier this year (ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT01802866). A total of approximately 440 patients with GA associated with dry AMD are expected to be enrolled in the study across 56 sites, primarily in the United States.

## Resource Consultant

For assistance identifying agencies in a specific area, call

**Dan Roberts**  
Resource Consultant

toll free at:  
**1-888-866-6148**

## Resources

NFB Newsline  
866-504-7300

Choice Magazine  
Listening  
888-724-6423

National Library  
Service  
888-657-7273  
(Books on Tape)

Free Low Vision  
Catalogs and  
Independent  
Living Catalog  
800-537-2118

Maxi Aids  
800-522-6294

Enhanced Vision  
888-811-3161

EyeSmart  
<http://www.get-eyesmart.org/eyesmart>

## Questions to Liz



**Liz Trauernicht - CEO  
MD Foundation**

### What are Macular Drusen?

Macular drusen are yellow deposits that develop between the retinal pigment epithelium and the choroid layer - the layer of blood vessels that supply nutrients to the macula.

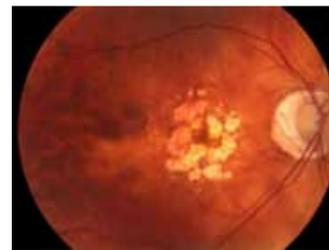
Drusen can contribute to the clogging up of the transport system that feeds nutrients to the eye and removes its waste products. The photoreceptor cells, the rods and cones, require lots of oxygen and when they don't receive enough of it, they begin

to degenerate or die. The macula is made up of predominantly cone cells. Cone cells are responsible for our color vision, central vision and our sharp vision. As these cone cells die, colors are less vivid, detailed or sharp vision becomes blurry, and our straight ahead or central vision gets cloudy.

There are two types of drusen - hard and soft. It is important to know which ones you have. Hard drusen are small and round with very sharp borders. These well-defined deposits are light yellow and thought to be less harmful. They become more common with age and may or may not indicate the early development of age related macular degeneration.

Soft drusen are different. They are larger with less defined borders. They vary in size and shape. When your eye

doctor sees soft drusen during an eye exam, there is more cause for concern. These deposits are thought to be more harmful because they interfere with waste products getting removed from the macula and rich oxygen getting to the macula. People who have soft drusen will often have more vision changes than those who have only hard drusen. They may find that they need more light to see bills, to read or perform hobbies. A smudge or blurry spot may appear in the center of their vision.



The number, size and type of drusen help your doctor to determine the stage of macular degeneration.

## I'm Falling!: Continued ...

### Who can help or give advice regarding fall prevention?

- 1) Your local Area Agency on Aging may have a free all prevention program "A Matter of Balance". This is currently available in 38 states. Call 1-800-677-1116 to locate your local Area Agency on Aging or go to [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov)
- 2) The American Foundation for the Blind's "Vision Aware" program has tips and advice regarding fall prevention
- 3) Many local hospitals and home health agencies have fall prevention programs.
- 4) You can obtain the Center for Disease Control's "Preventing Falls" publication. This has an extensive list of risk factors and

recommendations. "Preventing Falls", CDC 2008 National Center for Injury Prevention Control, [http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecationalsafety/images/cdc\\_guide-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecationalsafety/images/cdc_guide-a.pdf)

5) YouTube has a few good videos on fall prevention. You may [click here](#) or search "Fall Prevention".

6) Fall prevention Day, Sept. 22, 2013 is the 6th annual National Fall Prevention day, sponsored by the National Council on Aging ([www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org)) 800-677-1116. There may be local publicity and activities related to this. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for more information.

### Donations

The Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc. is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization.

Please visit our website at [eyesight.org](http://eyesight.org) to make a tax deductible donation.

### Checks may be mailed to:

Macular Degeneration  
Foundation, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 531313,  
Henderson, NV 89053

Call: 888-633-3937 (USA)  
Call: 702-450-2908 (Intl)  
Email: [liz@eyesight.org](mailto:liz@eyesight.org)

**Disclaimer** - Articles in the Magnifier are for information only and are not an endorsement by the Macular Degeneration Foundation editorial staff.

## Organizations That Can Help

National Eye  
Institute  
800-411-1222  
[www.nei.nih.gov](http://www.nei.nih.gov)

AMD Alliance  
[amdalliance.org](http://amdalliance.org)  
416-486-2500  
x-7505

Association for  
Macular Diseases  
212-605-3719  
[macula.org](http://macula.org)

Foundation  
Fighting Blindness  
888-394-3937  
[blindness.org](http://blindness.org)

MD Partnership  
888-430-9898  
[amd.org](http://amd.org)

Prevent Blindness  
America  
800-331-2020  
[preventblindness.org](http://preventblindness.org)

Macula Research  
Foundation  
610-668-6705  
[mvrf.org](http://mvrf.org)

MD Support  
816-761-7080  
[Mdsupport.org](http://Mdsupport.org)

EARS  
Free Tapes to  
live life with confi-  
dence and dignity.  
800-843-6816

## Definitions

### Ophthalmologist

a practitioner in the medical science of surgery and care of the eye and its related structures. An M.D. degree is required.

### Retina specialist

a medical doctor trained as an ophthalmologist, who has received additional training in diseases and surgery of the retina and vitreous.

### Optometrist

a degreed (O.D.), independent, primary health care provider skilled in the co-management of eye health and vision care, including examination, diagnosis, treatment, management of diseases/disorders, prescription of eye-glasses/contact lenses, and provision of low vision aids and therapy.

### Optician

a person who designs or manufactures ophthalmic appliances or optical instruments ("ophthalmic optician") or deals in prescriptions ("dispensing optician").

## I'm Falling!: Continued ...

\* Do not store objects that you use frequently so high that you will need to climb on something to get them down. Store them at counter top height

\* Add night lights or motion sensitive lights in areas where you may go at night-as, bathroom, kitchen, etc.

\* Do not run to answer the phone. Carry a cell phone with you at all times, so you can answer easily and can call if injured.

\* Think before you climb. Improvised stands or ladders, such as a chair, cause many falls.

\* Remove any and all loose objects on floors and stairs. Do not have loose or unattached rugs. Clear loose power cords.

### In the community

\* If you have mobility or balance problems use a cane

or walker in unfamiliar areas. Make sure your aids are properly adjusted. An evaluation by a physical therapist would be best.

\* Beware of uneven terrain in your yard, up and down hills, curbs and be mindful of unfamiliar stairs.

\* Consider installing motion sensor flood lights to the corners of your house to provide better illumination between dusk and dawn. Some creative folks string clear white Christmas lights around trees and bushes bordering their pathways to light the way.

### Other measures

\* Join an exercise program. Strength and flexibility make it more likely that you will recover from a minor imbalance. Exercise and perform flexibility and balance training. Leg strength training is the most important, as it has been shown that

leg weakness is a major risk factor for falls

\* If you are dizzy or unbalanced on standing after lying down or sitting, ask your doctor to check you for a sudden drop in blood pressure (postural hypotension)

\* Do not walk in high heels or loose-fitting slippers, socks or slip-on shoes. Shoes should have non-slip soles and low heels. Do not have loose untied laces when walking.

\* Medication or alcohol may cause falls. Sleeping pills and antidepressants should be reviewed and discussed with your doctor, especially if you fall and were unusually unbalanced or cannot remember the fall.

\* Medical alert systems can be considered. Having a cell phone with you at all times is an alternative.

## Applications for Your iPhone & iPad



### LookTel Money Reader

LookTel Money Reader instantly recognizes currency and speaks the denomination, enabling people experiencing visual impairments or blindness to quickly and easily identify and count bills. Point the camera of your iOS device at a bill and the application will tell you the denomination in real-time. Twenty one currencies are supported. [LINK](#)

### Color Identifier

Color Identifier uses the camera on your iPhone or iPad to speak the names of colors in real-time. It will also tell you the hex value of the color, so you can identify exactly what color the camera sees. [LINK](#)

### List Recorder

List Recorder combines making lists with an easy to use, yet powerful audio recorder. The result is a handy app that lets you quickly jot down and organize information. It is also a great organizer, so you won't lose track of your audio after it's recorded. Manage all kinds of information by making lists of items that can include both audio and text. Give your items due dates. Make lists within lists. [LINK](#)

### VizWiz

VizWiz lets blind users recruit remote sighted workers to help them with visual problems in nearly real-time. Users take a picture with their phone, speak a question, and then receive multiple spoken answers. [LINK](#)

### HeyTell

HeyTell® is a cross-platform voice messenger that allows you to instantly talk with friends and family. No account needed—just start the app, choose a contact, and push the button to start talking! [LINK](#)

## Upcoming "Eye" Meetings

[Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology: The Eye, The Brain, And The Auto.](#) Sept 16th–18th, 2013

[American Academy of Ophthalmology New Orleans, Louisiana](#) Nov 16th – 19th, 2013

[American Academy of Optometrists Seattle WA](#) Oct 23rd – 26th, 2013

[The Envision Conference Minneapolis, Minnesota](#) Sept 19th – 21st, 2013

## Are You Missing Out on Benefits?

April Issue of AARP by Joan Rattner Hellman

If you're struggling to pay for health care, food, or utilities, help may be closer than you realize.

Older Americans miss out on more than \$20 billion worth of benefits every year. A nationwide campaign launched by the National Council on Aging and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging aims to help older adults learn about two easily accessed resources that can connect them to needed support.

BenefitsCheckUp (benefitscheckup.org)

Eldercare Locator (1-800-677-1116 or eldercare.gov)

## Please Help Me, I'm Falling!

Community Services for Vision Rehabilitation  
Joe Fontenot MD, CLVT - Medical Director  
Marie Cafferty, LPTA and Robert Fontenot - Illustrations

Common sense, as well as the Mr. McGoo cartoons, tells us that poor vision makes it more likely to fall. Medical studies bear this out.

Falls are serious and frequent events. According to a 2008 report by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) one third of those over the age of 65 have a fall every year and one out of 10 falls results in a serious or even fatal injury. Falls are a major cause of death in people over the age of 65. Vision impairment is one of the major risk factors for falling.

Falls occur at any age, but have more serious consequences for older people. One fall, even if not serious, may predict more dangerous falls to come. You do not need to curtail your activities, but should consider fall prevention measures.

Macular degeneration and falls  
People who have macular degeneration are particularly prone to falling. Those with macular degeneration tend to have problems with depth perception. One eye is frequently affected more than the other, resulting in loss of depth perception, a major risk factor for falls. Contrast sensitivity, the ability to see well in low lighting and situations where there

is little difference in colors and textures, is impaired. Blind spots (scotoma) are almost invariably present in macular degeneration, making it difficult to see small objects or obstacles.



Although macular degeneration by itself rarely causes total blindness, it may be compounded by glaucoma or diabetic eye disease. If this is the case, formal Orientation and Mobility training by an Occupational Therapist may be needed. This could include use of the long white cane and possibly even a guide dog. However, this is rare if the only eye problem is macular degeneration.

## I'm Falling!: Continued ...

### What to do?

What should those with macular degeneration do to prevent falls and injury? Do not stop being active and getting out. Instead, consider the following adjustments:

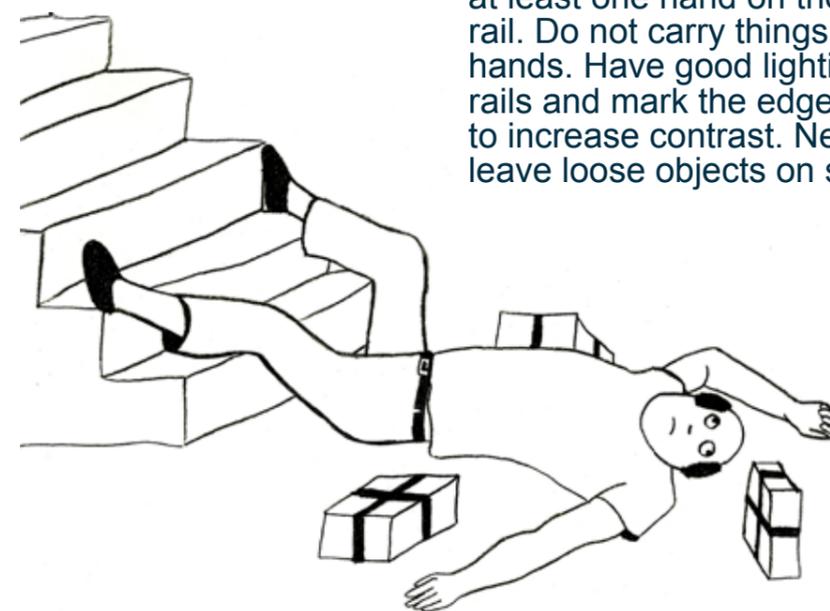
### Glasses

\* Do not wear multifocal (bifocal, trifocal, or progressive) glasses while walking, especially in unfamiliar surroundings. The lower part of the glasses are designed to focus at a short reading distance and anything further than that is out of focus and blurred. Anything on the ground or stairs will be difficult to see clearly. Wear distance prescription glasses or no glasses. The great Benjamin Franklin, inventor of bifocal glasses, has been the cause of many falls.

### Modify your home environment. More than half of all falls occur at home.

\* High risk areas include bathrooms, especially the shower and tub. Avoid reaching for the towel bar for stability it will not hold your weight. Instead, add grab bars and rails that are permanently installed into a wall stud. Invest in a bath tub bench that straddles the tub. Sit on the bench and position yourself inside the tub. This saves energy by eliminating the struggle to regain your balance to get in and out of the tub. Avoiding loose rugs and wet, soapy floors can prevent many falls.

\* Stairs are another high risk area. If you fall down stairs, you may have a long way to go. It is like multiple falls. Always have at least one hand on the hand-rail. Do not carry things in both hands. Have good lighting, hand rails and mark the edge of steps to increase contrast. Never leave loose objects on stairs.



## TALKING BOOKS

The National Library Service provides qualifying individuals a bimonthly large print catalog of recorded books and magazine at no charge.

Patrons may order talking books by contacting their local cooperating library. Contact information is online at [www.loc.gov/nls/find.html](http://www.loc.gov/nls/find.html)

You may also call our Resource Service Consultant, Dan Roberts, at 1-888-866-6148 to locate the library contact phone number for your state.