



## THE MAGNIFIER

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

FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND

Macular  
Degeneration  
Foundation

# The Magnifier

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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

## Sleep and AMD

By Dan Roberts - MD Support

Recent research has found an association between longer sleep duration and advanced dry age-related macular degeneration (dAMD), also known as geographic atrophy. This has been misconstrued by at least one media outlet to mean that too much sleep might actually cause the disease.

### That is absolutely untrue!

According to the researchers, "Sleeping too much or too little has been associated with adverse health outcomes including total mortality, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, and hypertension." The purpose of the study was to further explore the relationship of sleep and disease states by looking at people who are affected by dAMD. It was not intended to identify sleep as a risk factor for developing blindness.

Of 1,003 subjects in the study, the group with geographic atrophy was found to sleep longer than those without AMD. However, not only will a good night's sleep not cause blindness, a good deal of evidence supports sleep as a positive benefit for visually impaired people. It allows the retina to complete the visual cycle, restores physical endurance, and relieves the stresses often associated with losing vision.

### 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.

## New Study Underway for Treatment of Dry Macular Degeneration

Presently, no scientifically proven treatment option is available for those with dry macular degeneration (dMD). Ongoing research, however, is showing that a new device using biocurrent technology (very low micro-current electrical stimulation) allows the retinal and macular cells to work more efficiently, improving vision and slowing the progression of macular degeneration.

People who have been diagnosed with dry form of AMD, who have vision no better than 20/40 and no worse than 20/200, and who are 50 years of age or older, may be eligible to participate in the research trial. For information about applying and to learn more about the study, contact Colleen Titman at 509-244-6502 or send email to [telephonescreener@outlook.com](mailto:telephonescreener@outlook.com).

## Resources

NFB Newslines  
866-504-7300

Choice Magazine  
Listening  
888-724-6423

National Library  
Service  
888-657-7273  
(Audio Books)

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>

## Resource Consultant

For assistance  
identifying agen-  
cies in a specific  
area, call

Dan Roberts  
Resource  
Consultant

toll free at:  
1-888-866-6148

## “Finding the Balance”



The keynote speaker for the American Academy of Ophthalmology in 2012, Dr. Abraham Verghese, made an incredible impression on me in his speech “Finding The Balance”.

After years of hearing patients complain they had no time to ask questions or get information from their vision-care professional, it was encouraging to hear Dr. Verghese address the physician-patient relationship and how it has been affected by technology and reimbursement issues.

He expressed his concern that physicians are interacting less with the actual, living patient than with the “IPatient”, a surrogate constructed of the multiple test results and high tech images residing in charts and computers.

This direction is spurred by a reimbursement system geared to pay for defined tests and procedures rather than time conducting a careful history and physical examination.

Added to that is the specter of litigation if a physician omits certain expensive tests. What has been lost, according to Dr. Verghese, especially in the United States, are the traditional skills of hands-on medicine and close, direct observation, as exemplified by the physical examination, patient relationship ... not just for diagnosis but also for establishing the bond of trust between the two.



For our readers who feel they are alone in this dilemma, please know we are trying to bring awareness to the medical community and hopefully help is on the way!

## Exclusive Online Videos Featuring World’s Leading Eye Researchers



Dr. David Seftel, Director of Research Development for the Macular Degeneration Foundation, is interviewing the world’s foremost scientists and medical practitioners who are actively investigating cures and treatments

for Macular Degeneration and related eye diseases.

Visit **MacularNews.org** for the latest news and register to receive an email notice when new videos are first posted.

## 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

American  
Council of  
the Blind  
(800) 424-8666  
[acb.org](http://acb.org)

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

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

## Smart Phones ... continued

**There are several options when it comes to paying for your phone and phone service.**

Contract service, usually two years, may allow you to get a phone "free", or at a reduced cost, as long as you don't break the contract. These plans come with hefty penalties for breaking the contract but may get you a better or less expensive phone.

No contract payment plans, such as ATT Next, allow you buy a phone with a monthly payment option and have the payment added to your phone bill. These plans can run as low as \$25 a month and may allow you to upgrade before the end of the payments. Remember, this is just the cost of the phone ... service will be extra.

### Pay as you go or Go Phones

This is where you buy the phone (around \$100 and up) and purchase minutes to load on your phone. Minute packages can be as low as \$10 depending on the carrier and how often you use your phone. Keep in mind that these plans have different loadable options for talk, text and data.



If you are tech savvy or know someone who can help you, you could save money buying a used or refurbished phone either from your carrier or a website such as [www.cellular-country.com](http://www.cellular-country.com) or <https://swappa.com>. Other options for used and refurbished phones include EBay, Amazon, Overstock and Groupon.

### Summary

Smart phones such as the iPhone will enable anyone to do many things much easier. This is especially true for those who are visually impaired. Get smart! Get a smart phone!

**Joe Fontenot MD, Med Dir  
Patricia Hacker, Equip Spec  
Community Services  
for Vision Rehabilitation**

## What is a Smart Phone? Who Needs One?



**A smart phone** is a hand-held, mobile cellular phone that has an advanced operating system and the functions of a personal computer allowing e-mails, text messaging, storage of data and much more.

Since their introduction only a decade ago, smart phones have changed the way of life for much of the world. They have allowed immediate access to communication, information and data that could only be dreamed of a few years ago. Smart phones also changed the way blind and visually impaired people live, increasing their independence, function and ability to communicate.

### Who can use a smart phone?

Anybody, regardless of age, dexterity or vision loss can use a Smart Phone. There are no limitations. Many smart phone functions are very simple (such as making phone calls or sending text messages) for even the totally blind. Others do require varying degrees of proficiency. Like computers, smart phones have many more functions than most users will need. But anyone can benefit from using a smart phone.

**Continued ...**

## MD Support and Prevent Blindness America Establish New On-Line Resource

The new resource provides an extensive list of searchable resource directories, a database of 1,500 municipal paratransit services, a library of self-help guides and workbooks, and up-to-the-minute news.

This marks the first time in Internet history that two major organizations have joined in such a dramatic way to bring both education and support to the entire global low vision community.

See [lowvision.preventblindness.org](http://lowvision.preventblindness.org) or [mdsupport.org](http://mdsupport.org)

## 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)

## Smart Phones ... continued

### Two Main Types

There are two major "platforms", or operating systems ... the Apple IOS used in the iPhone and the Android system used by multiple other manufacturers.

Android smart phones are more varied and are available in a greater range of sizes, display screens and options. Android phones are made by Samsung, Sony, Motorola, Google, LGV and others and can be less expensive.

### Which is best for the blind and visually impaired?

There is discussion and disagreement among experts in the blind and visually impaired community, but most in the United States prefer the Apple iPhone for initial use by the blind or visually impaired. There is more standardization, consistency and built-in, out-of-the-box features, such as Siri and Voice Over.

### The iPhone Voice Command

Siri, the voice command function built into the iPhone, is the friend of those with impaired vision. Siri is responsive and easy to use. Siri will allow you to make phone calls, send and read text messages, open e-mails, answer many questions, set alarms, do mathematical calculations, give directions, distances and much more.

### Voice Over

Voice Over, also an out-of-the-box built-in feature in the iPhone, provides additional speech commands. It can be activated by rapidly depressing the "home button" three times, or holding down and commanding "Voice Over on". It may be turned off the same way. Voice Over allows voice commands to activate some functions not responsive to Siri commands and will read more of the text displayed on the screen.

### Apps

"Apps", or applications, are functions and programs that can be downloaded and added to your smart phone. Some are specific to the iPhone or Android, some will work on either platform. Apps have proliferated and there are now more than a million apps. Some are designed specifically for blind or visually impaired users and have eliminated the need for some larger "stand alone" devices. For example, the Talking Books NLS library now offers a "Bard Mobile" app, allowing downloading and playing of books and magazines with a smart phone thereby eliminating the need for the bulky player and cartridges. Many apps are free or cost very little. They can be downloaded to the smart phone from the Apple Store, Google Play Store or iTunes.

Apple has a growing list of 200 recommended apps for the blind and visually impaired at: [AppleVis.com](http://AppleVis.com)

- \* SuperVision+ (magnifier)
- \* Talkler (email)
- \* KNFB (reader)
- \* Bard Mobile (talking books)
- \* Be My Eyes (volunteers)
- \* IDEAL U.S. (currency ID)
- \* VisionConnect (resources)
- \* Blind Square (navigation)

### How do I learn to use a smart phone?

The usual answer to this question is to ask a 6 year old. However, some of the functions of smart phones, such as the basic voice commands, are very simple and intuitive. To become more proficient and comfortable using more features and apps, you can:

- \* Go to the tutorial located within "Settings" on the iPhone and Android devices.
- \* Many public libraries offer free computer instruction which may include the use of smart phones. Call your local library.
- \* Free tutorials and tips on specific functions can be found on various smart phones websites and on Youtube.com.
- \* The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) has tutorials and info on their web site. Go to [www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org) and enter "cell phones" into the search box.



### Where do I buy a smart phone and how much do they cost?

iPhones and other smart phones can be bought from many retailers, as well as service providers. Places like Best Buy, Walmart, Target and others have contracts with many carriers to offer phones and phone plans (activation with a carrier will be required). A carrier, or service provider, will cost about \$50.00 and up per month (depending on your needs) on top of the cost of the phone. Carriers include companies like AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile.

Whether you are looking for an iPhone or Android smart phone you can expect to pay between \$100.00 and \$900.00 for your device.

Continued ...

## Latest Audio Newsletters and Video's from the MD Foundation

Visit [MacularNews.org](http://MacularNews.org)

## 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) or call 1-888-657-7323

## Chaplains on Hand

[Chaplainsonhand.org](http://Chaplainsonhand.org) for spiritual support or call toll free 1-844-242-7524