

A Guide for Patients and Families

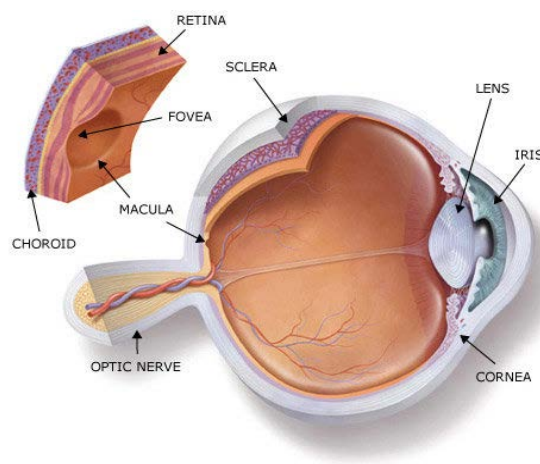
Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD)



What is ARMD?

ARMD is a disease of the retina that is associated with ageing. It is a leading cause of vision loss in people aged 60 years and older in developed countries.

ARMD results in damage of the macula, which is a critically-important area of the retina that allows you to see fine details. Good central vision is needed for seeing objects clearly and for performing common daily tasks such as reading, driving and recognizing faces. This may be affected in ARMD patients.



ARMD causes no pain. In some cases, ARMD advances so slowly that people notice little change in their vision. In others, the disease progresses faster and may lead to a loss of vision in both eyes.

Types of ARMD

ARMD occurs in 2 forms:

- ◆ Wet
- ◆ Dry

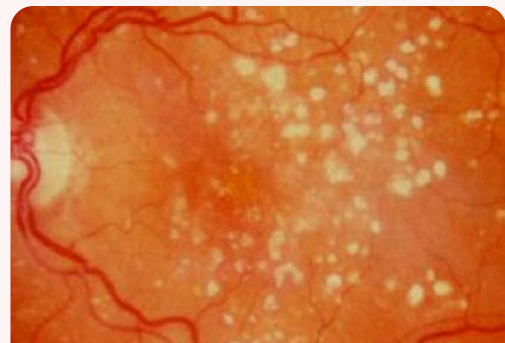
Dry ARMD may be further divided into 3 stages:

- ◆ Early
- ◆ Intermediate
- ◆ Advanced

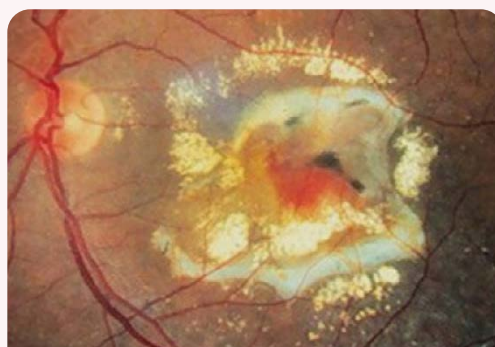
Patients with early or intermediate Dry ARMD may progress to Advanced Dry ARMD or Wet ARMD, which are the more severe forms of the disease and may be associated with severe loss of vision.



Normal Retina



Intermediate Dry ARMD



Wet ARMD

Preventing progression to Advance Dry ARMD to Wet ARMD

If you have been diagnosed with early or intermediate ARMD, there are several things that you need to do to reduce the likelihood of ARMD progression to severe ARMD.

1



STOP SMOKING

Cigarette smoking is associated with an increased risk of ARMD in a dose-dependent fashion. Current smokers who have early ARMD should stop smoking to prevent progression of early ARMD to advanced ARMD and severe visual loss.

2



AVOID OBESITY

This has been linked to progression of early and intermediate stage ARMD to advanced ARMD.

3



LIFESTYLE

Your lifestyle can play a role in reducing your risk of developing ARMD.

- ◆ Eat a healthy diet high in green leafy vegetables and fish
- ◆ Maintain normal blood pressure
- ◆ Exercise regularly

4



MICRONUTRIENTS / ANTI-OXIDANTS

The Age Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) demonstrates that a specific high-dose formulation¹ of antioxidants and zinc significantly reduces the risk of advanced ARMD and its associated vision loss.

The following patients (who are at high risk for developing advanced ARMD) should consider taking the formulation:

- ◆ Intermediate ARMD in one eye or both eyes
- ◆ Advanced ARMD (dry or wet) in one eye but not the other eye

You should understand that this is not a cure for ARMD and will not restore vision already lost. It may however delay the onset of advanced ARMD and help people who are at high risk for developing advanced ARMD keep their vision.



CAUTION:

Current and Ex-smokers should NOT take the standard AREDS formulation, but should opt for the "Smoker formulation" (beta-carotene substituted by lutein) instead.

¹ AREDS formulation: contains 500mg of Vitamin C, 400 IU of Vitamin E, 15mg of beta-carotene (equivalent to 25 000 IU of Vitamin A), 80mg of Zinc as Zinc Oxide and 2mg of Copper as Cupric Oxide

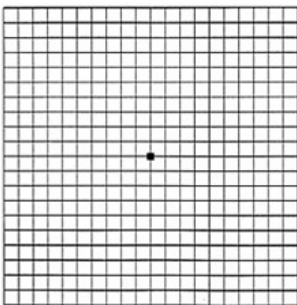
Monitoring your eyes for progression of ARMD



This is done with regular use of the Amsler Chart:

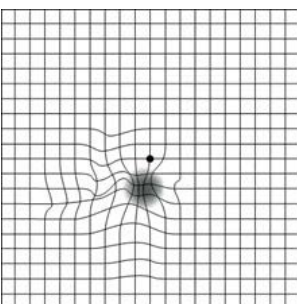
- ◆ Each eye should be tested separately
- ◆ Reading glasses should be worn if necessary
- ◆ Hold the chart 30cm away from the eye to be tested
- ◆ Look at the black dot at the center of the square

NORMAL TEST



- ◆ Lines appear straight and uninterrupted
- ◆ Regular grid appearance
- ◆ Entire grid is visible

ABNORMAL TEST



- ◆ Lines may appear wavy or interrupted
- ◆ Loss of squares in the grid pattern, irregular shapes may be seen instead
- ◆ Parts of the grid may appear darkened or may not be visible at all

Others



If you should experience any changes to your vision, for example:

- ◆ **Decrease in vision**
- ◆ **Distorted vision**
- ◆ **Abnormal Amsler Chart testing:**
Either new onset or worsening of symptoms

You should inform your doctor immediately.

You may require early review by an eye specialist to determine if further treatment and investigations are needed.