

Macular Degeneration

New Treatments for a Challenging Eye Disease



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Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) affects 10 million people in this country and is the leading cause of vision loss among people over the age of 60. AMD affects the central retina (in particular, the "macula," which is like the film in a camera) with devastating results on the vision. There are two types of AMD: "wet" and "dry." In dry AMD, there is deterioration of the retina without bleeding. In wet AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow beneath the retina leading to bleeding and severe loss of central vision.

The cause of AMD is most likely genetic. Poor diet, smoking, and exposure to sun light also play a part. For retina specialists, macular degeneration has always been a challenging disease. However, with the availability of new drugs we have entered a new era in treatment:

Photodynamic Therapy ("cold laser") using a photo-sensitive drug called Visudyne, has been in use at Bloomberg Eye Center since 2001. We were involved in the national clinical investigations of Visudyne prior to its FDA approval.

Avastin, approved for treatment of colorectal cancer, has found an off-label use in the treatment of AMD at a much lower cost, making Avastin a viable option for people who could not otherwise afford treatment.

Lucentis is the most recent AMD treatment breakthrough. Studies show that patients receiving monthly intraocular injections may gain vision and maintain it over time.

At Bloomberg Eye Center our primary goal with AMD is to prevent further vision loss, but we have seen many cases where the vision actually improves following early diagnosis and treatment. This is truly remarkable in the context of this challenging eye disease.

Call today to schedule a consultation.



**Bloomberg
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