

# MACULAR DEGENERATION



Macular degeneration is the leading cause of central vision loss among older people. It results from changes to the macula, a portion of the retina, responsible for clear, sharp vision, and located on the inside back wall of the eye.

The macula is many times more sensitive than the rest of the retina and without a healthy macula, seeing detail or vivid color is not possible.

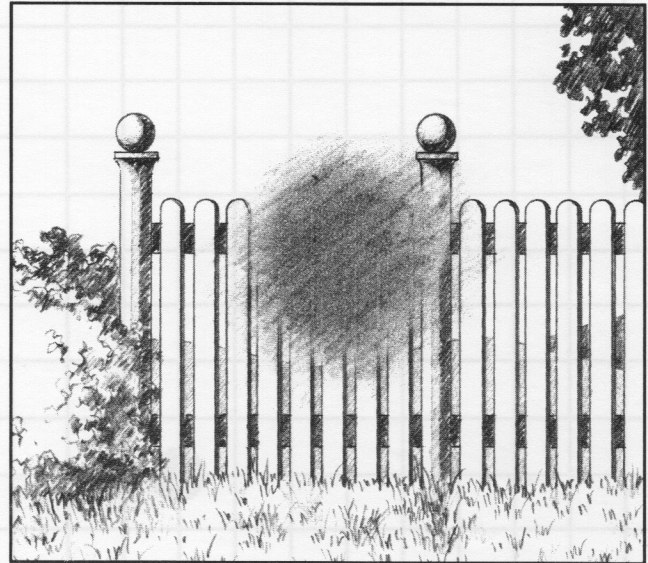
There are several causes for macular degeneration. In one type, the tissue of the macula becomes thin and stops working well. This type is thought to be a part of the natural aging process in some people.

In another, fluids from newly formed blood vessels leak into the eye and cause vision loss. If detected early, this condition can be treated with laser therapy, but early detection and prompt treatment is vital in limiting damage.

Macular degeneration develops differently in each person, so the symptoms may vary. But, some of the most common symptoms include:

- A gradual loss of ability to see objects clearly
- Distorted vision. Objects appear to be the wrong size or shape or straight lines appear wavy or crooked
- A gradual loss of clear color vision
- A dark or empty area appearing in the center of vision.

These symptoms may also indicate other eye health problems, so if you are experiencing any of these, you should contact your doctor of optometry immediately.



*As macular degeneration advances, a dark or empty area often appears in the center of vision.*

In a comprehensive eye examination, your doctor will perform a variety of tests to determine if you have macular degeneration or another condition causing your symptoms.

Unfortunately, there is no way to restore central vision damaged by macular degeneration. However, since macular degeneration does not damage side vision, low vision aids such as telescopic and microscopic special lenses, magnifying glasses and electronic magnifiers for close work, can be prescribed to help make the most of remaining vision. Often, a person, with adaptation, can cope well and continue to do most things they were accustomed to doing.

Remember! Early detection of macular degeneration is the most important factor in determining if you can be treated effectively. Use the simple vision check on the back side of this sheet and maintain a regular schedule of optometric examinations to help protect your vision.

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**HEALTHY EYES MEAN A BETTER LIFE**

