



A Healthy Diet and Age-related Macular Degeneration

Over the years there have been numerous studies done to figure out the exact cause of Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), but there has been not one specific gene or environmental factor that causes AMD in every case. While there is still no concrete answer as to why some people develop AMD and others do not, there are a significant number of studies that have proven the importance of a healthy diet.

Researchers have recognized that a major factor in the dry form of AMD is that the retinal cells begin to die off. The dry form is one of two main types of age-related macular degeneration. It is characterized by the presence of yellow deposits, called drusen, in the macula. A few small drusen may not cause changes in vision; however, as they grow in size and increase in number, they may lead to a dimming or distortion of vision that people find most noticeable when they read. In the advanced stages, there is a loss in central vision.

Since researchers noticed the factor, they have looked at important factors that keep retinal cells alive. They found that the mitochondria are one of the most important elements that protect the cells in the body. It was found that when the mitochondria are not healthy, then the cells will eventually die. Therefore, it is important to keep the mitochondria healthy. One way to do this is to eat healthy foods.

Studies have been done to identify foods and supplements that are good for the retinal cells and also the mitochondria. Those who are high-risk for developing AMD should follow diets that are rich in green leafy vegetables, whole fruits, any type of nuts and omega 3 fatty acids. These foods have antioxidant properties that help to “turn off” genes involved with inflammation, which is an important factor of retinal diseases.

Green leafy vegetables contain important protective macular pigments (carotenoids) called lutein and zeaxanthin that reduce the risk of AMD by 43%. High levels of lipid or fat deposits in the body (like with obesity) can “soak-up” the lutein and zeaxanthin that was needed, resulting in them being unable to protect the retina.

Salmon, mackerel and sardines have the highest levels of omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids also improve mitochondrial function, decreases the production of reactive oxygen species (free radicals that damage cells) and leads to less fat accumulation in the body.

While adding specific foods to your diet can help to slow down the progression of AMD, it is hard to consume the daily amount that the body requires. To ensure you get your daily requirements you should include a supplement like Vitasight or similar. While supplements do not replace a healthy balanced diet they can help you reach your daily requirements without needing to eat five cups of broccoli a day.

[Source 1](#)

[Source 2](#)