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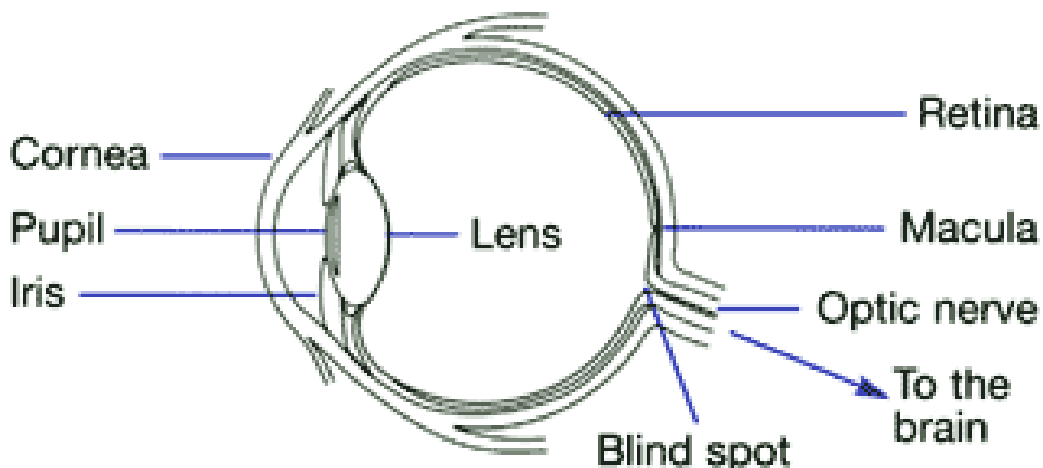
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Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

What is Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)?

The Macula: This is the centre of the film at the back of the eye and is responsible for what we see straight in front of us, allowing us to see fine detail for activities such as reading and writing, as well as our ability to see colour.

Sometimes the delicate cells of the macula become damaged and stop working, and there are many different conditions that can cause this. If it occurs later in life, it is called 'age-related macular degeneration' (AMD). Unfortunately we do not know exactly why this happens.



Types of AMD – Dry and Wet

This is not a description of what the eye feels like, but what the eye specialist can see when looking at the macula.

Dry AMD

Usually develops slowly, often over many years, like the colours fading in an old photograph.

Wet AMD

It can start suddenly and progress rapidly, normally within a few months. Symptoms of distortion or a sudden deterioration of vision are common. This occurs because of a build-up of fluid under the film at the back of the eye.

Treatment Options

There is as yet no licensed treatment to reverse dry AMD although there are promising research trials.

For wet AMD anti-VEGF injections (eg Lucentis) treatment may halt the progress of the disease if it is identified early in the progress of the disease. Monthly injections will be needed initially.

An OCT scan of the eye will be needed. A test called fluorescein angiography may be performed. This test involves an injection followed by a special set of photographs of the retina at the back of the eye.

Your eye specialist will give you further information and advice about treatment.

General Advice

- Stop smoking.
- Eat a healthy diet – The use of nutritional supplements should be discussed with your doctor before starting.
- Look out for new symptoms of distortion or sudden deterioration of vision as this needs to be assessed immediately – see an optician or eye doctor straight away if this occurs.
- A spectacle sight test is worthwhile but new glasses should only be dispensed if the new spectacle prescription gives a definite and worthwhile improvement in sight.
- Broad brimmed hat and, or sunglasses.
- Good lighting.

Low vision help desk – (01782) 674332