



Macular Degeneration

Macular Degeneration (MD) is an eye disease, which causes permanent loss of central vision. The macula is a tiny central part of the retina at the back of the eye, which is responsible for central vision (including fine detail vision and colour perception).

There are two types of MD and they are known as Dry and Wet MD.

Dry MD is the most common type and causes varying degrees of central vision loss. Wet MD occurs less often (in 10-15% of cases) with central vision loss being more severe

MD usually affects both eyes, but often begins in one eye.

Typical symptoms include straight lines appearing wavy or distorted, or increased difficulty in reading.

MD is the leading cause of blindness for people over 50 in the western world, affecting an estimated 25-30 million people worldwide. In Australia, this disease currently affects more than one in seven people aged over 50. The disease can also affect young people.

The cause of MD is unknown. Possible risk factors include smoking, genetics, high blood pressure, and exposure to the sun, fair skin/blue eyes, and poor nutrition such as a lack of essential vitamins or minerals.

There is no cure at present, however recent research and advancements in laser treatment coupled with consumption of certain nutrients can assist in slowing down the process of the disease

Sydney Eye Hospital recommends that people aged thirty -five and over have their eyes checked annually by local doctor/ Ophthalmologist /Optometrist

Low vision optical aids are available to help people with MD.