

multiple small drusen, single or nonextensive intermediate drusen, or pigment abnormalities) but a significant risk reduction (odds ratio 0.72, 99% confidence interval 0.52–0.98) among people with more advanced ARMD.⁴ The results suggest an absolute risk reduction of 6% (29%–23%; number needed to treat, 17) in the proportion of people with more advanced disease progressing to at least a 15-letter decrease in visual acuity score over 5 years with daily zinc and antioxidant supplementation compared with placebo. Given that an estimated 8 million people at least 55 years old in the United States have more advanced ARMD, the public health impact of treating this population with supplements to

avoid visual deterioration is potentially great.⁵ In light of the recent studies showing an unexpected increased risk of lung cancer among smokers taking beta-carotene, physicians and patients should be reminded of the potential risks of taking vitamins.⁶

People with loss of central vision benefit from early visual rehabilitation with aids such as magnifiers and improved illumination. Adults aged 45 and older should undergo a comprehensive eye examination that includes central acuity testing and dilated eye examination every 2–4 years to facilitate early detection of ARMD.

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