

# Macular Degeneration & Antioxidants

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## ○ What is Age-Related Macular Degeneration?

Age-Related Macular Degeneration, or AMD, is a breakdown of the light sensitive cells in the back of the eye. This breakdown usually happens slowly over a person's lifetime, so problems appear later in life. There are three forms of AMD: early AMD, intermediate AMD, and advanced AMD. At least 1.6 million Americans over the age of 60 have advanced AMD, and it is the #1 cause of blindness in this group.

## ○ What are Antioxidants?

There is no cure for AMD, but certain vitamins and minerals called antioxidants can help reduce the chance that a person with intermediate AMD will get advanced AMD. The antioxidants that are most helpful include:

Vitamin C (500mg)

Vitamin E (400 IU)

Beta-carotene (15mg)

Zinc (80 mg)

Copper (2 mg)

You cannot get these high levels of antioxidants from food or from a normal multivitamin nor should you stop taking your daily multivitamin if you take these supplements. There are specific brands that have the right combination of these antioxidants. They include:

Bausch & Lomb Occuvite®

PreserVision® Science Based Health Macular Protect Complete®

Alcon Laboratories ICaps™

- **Warning:** If you smoke, you should not take large amounts of beta-carotene. It may increase your risk of getting lung cancer. A few companies use a substitute for beta-carotene called lutein (PreserVision Lutein®).

- If you have kidney stones or are taking medicines to thin your blood, you should be careful about taking these types of vitamins. Check with your doctor before starting any new vitamin or supplement. Talk with your family doctor about your risk of getting advanced AMD and whether taking these high levels of antioxidants is right for you.

- If you would like to know more about Macular Degeneration and Antioxidants visit the National Eye Institute's Webpage at [www.nei.nih.gov/amd/](http://www.nei.nih.gov/amd/)

## ○ References:

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