

## February is Age-Related Macular Degeneration Month

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## New Research Suggests Alcohol May Not Be Safe for People with Age-related Macular Degeneration

### AMD steals sight without warning

**It's the leading cause of blindness among older Americans.**

You may lose central vision before realizing you have age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

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Even though Dry January is over, new research suggests you may want to consider keeping the no-alcohol challenge going all year, especially if you're among the nearly 2 million Americans who have age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a sight-threatening eye condition, caution Eye Centers of Northwest Ohio and the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

A recent study published in Current Eye Research evaluated seven studies looking at the relationship between alcohol consumption and AMD. The researchers found that moderate to high alcohol consumption was linked to a higher incidence of early AMD, compared with people who didn't drink or who drank occasionally.

### Who is at risk for AMD?

Older people  
(60 and older)

Smokers

Caucasians

People with a  
family history  
of AMD



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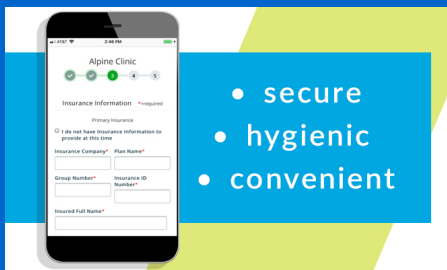
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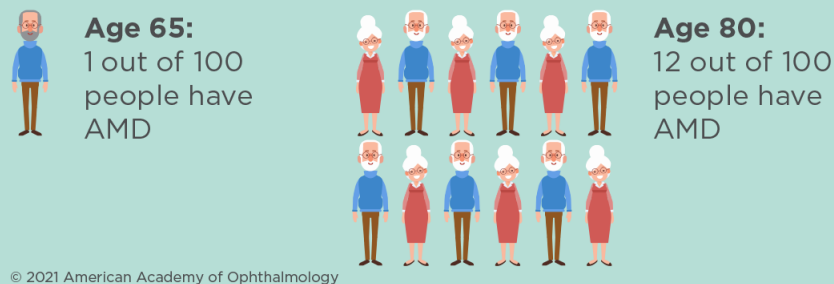


Follow the link that we text to you the day before your appointment

Courtesy: The American Academy of Ophthalmology  
[www.aao.org/](http://www.aao.org/)

## Growing older = growing AMD risk

Seniors are at greatest risk for age-related macular degeneration (AMD).



Why should people with AMD or at risk of developing AMD be concerned about alcohol consumption? AMD is the most common cause of blindness in Americans over the age of 50, affecting about 2.1 million people nationwide. As the population ages, the estimated number of people with AMD is expected to more than double to 5.44 million by 2050.

AMD is a degenerative disease that damages the macula, part of the retina responsible for central vision. Over time, the loss of central vision can interfere with everyday activities, such as the ability to drive, read, and see faces clearly.

## Detect AMD now, save sight later

Get an eye exam every 1 to 2 years after you turn 65.

A medical eye exam is the only way to detect and slow age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

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While genetics do play a part in the development of AMD, there are several lifestyle choices you can make to decrease your chances of losing vision to AMD, including:

1. **Healthy eating.** Ever heard the old saying about carrots being good for the eyes? It's true. So are leafy greens, colorful fruits and vegetables, and fatty fish. Eating a vitamin-rich diet can help protect your vision against age-related macular degeneration and other eye diseases.
2. **Manage your body weight and overall health.** Hypertension, high cholesterol, and heart disease are all risk factors for age-related macular degeneration. Exercise is a good way to combat some of these health risks.

### Don't let your vision go up in smoke

Smoking raises your risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Ever smoked? Get a medical eye exam to assess the health of your eyes.

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3. **Don't smoke.** Studies show smokers are more likely to get eye diseases including AMD, compared with people who never smoked.
4. **Get a dilated eye exam.** During this routine exam, an eye doctor will be able to spot eye diseases early — sometimes before you notice any symptoms — and get you the best care to protect your vision. The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends all healthy adults get a comprehensive eye exam by age 40 to screen for blinding eye diseases.

## How can you protect your vision?

Anyone can develop AMD, but people with a healthy lifestyle have a far lower risk.



Eat eye-healthy foods



Avoid smoking



Exercise regularly



Get regular eye exams

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