

What to ask your eye care professional

When you are first diagnosed with Macular Degeneration (MD) it is important to obtain as much information as possible

It can be overwhelming to be diagnosed with MD, so being informed about your type and stage of MD is of great value to you, your family or carer. It may also be helpful when dealing with any support services that you may need now or in the future.

It is vital you discuss with your doctor the stage and type of MD that you have. Knowing this helps you understand any diet and lifestyle changes that may be beneficial for you and what treatment options might be available.



When visiting an eye care professional

- If you do not understand your eye care professional's responses, ask him or her to explain until you feel confident of the answer
- Take notes or have a friend or family member take notes for you
- Ask the eye care professional to write down instructions for you
- Ask for any available printed material

Eye health checklist*

- Have your eyes tested regularly and make sure the macula is checked
- Don't smoke
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet
- Eat dark green leafy vegetables and fresh fruit daily
- Eat fish 2 to 3 times a week
- Eat a handful of nuts a week
- Limit your intake of fats and oils
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, control weight and exercise regularly
- Consider taking a supplement in consultation with your doctor

* Any changes in diet or lifestyle should be undertaken in consultation with your doctor

Suggested questions

Some questions you may find helpful to ask your eye care professional

About your MD

- What type of MD do I have, **wet** or **dry**?
- What stage is my MD at?
- If **one** eye is affected, is the other eye likely to develop MD?
- If **both** eyes are affected, are they at the same stage?
- What are my treatment options?
- Should I change my diet?
- Should I take a high dose zinc and antioxidant formula (AREDS formula)?
- What symptoms are 'normal'?
- When should I contact an eye care professional urgently?
- How will my type of MD affect my vision now and in the future?

About low vision support services

- When should I see my optometrist for new glasses?
- Should I have a low vision assessment?
- Where do I go for a low vision assessment?
- What low vision services are available in my area?
- What technology is available to help me?
- Would electronic magnification help me?

About your tests

- What tests will I need?
- When will I know the results?
- Is there any special preparation?

About your treatment options

- Is treatment available for my type of MD?
- What is the difference between various treatments?
- When will treatment start and what does it involve?
- How many treatments will I need?
- What are the risks and side effects?
- What are the benefits and how successful is it?
- What is the cost (in time and money)?
- Will I be able to get home after the treatment?

Sight is precious
Ask questions
Make sure you understand
Take notes if helpful

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For further information and support call the MDNZ helpline
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