

What Causes This Deterioration?

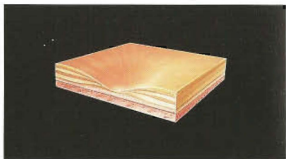
It is not fully understood why some older adults develop this disabling condition. We do know that the retina, the delicate inner lining of the eye that "sends pictures" to the brain, is very susceptible to any abnormality in its blood supply.

Sometimes tiny blood vessels begin to grow under the macula. If these vessels leak they will damage the retina and impair vision. Macular degeneration can lead to permanent loss of central eyesight, but it does not cause total blindness.

Yellow deposits under the retina and clumps of pigment indicate macular degeneration.



Cross-section of macula.



Early Detection is Vital

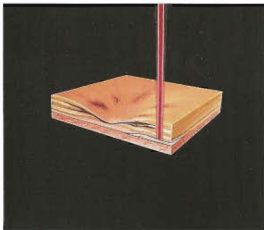
Most people with age-related macular degeneration experience a slow, progressive loss of central vision. Usually it starts in one eye and may affect the second. It also runs in families.

In its early stages, eyesight may be blurred, reading difficult, and straight lines will look distorted. It's important to detect these changes as early as possible when treatment is most beneficial.

In some cases, laser treatment can halt vision loss by sealing the leaking blood vessels. This can be performed on an outpatient basis. Most people have little or no discomfort and can resume normal activities immediately afterward.

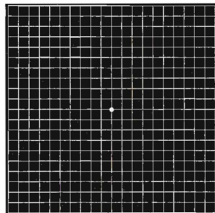
The slow, irreversible nature of macular degeneration is why it's so important for anyone over 50 to test their eyesight regularly.

Cross-section of macula with laser.



A Simple Test is Your Best Defense

Your eye care provider can best detect the early warning signs of macular degeneration during your eye exam. You can also help in its detection by testing your vision at home each day using an Amsler grid.



Check each eye separately by covering the eye and staring at the dot in the center of the Amsler grid. If the lines on the grid appear distorted, blurry, or even seem to disappear, contact your eye care provider immediately.

To schedule an appointment or receive additional information call: