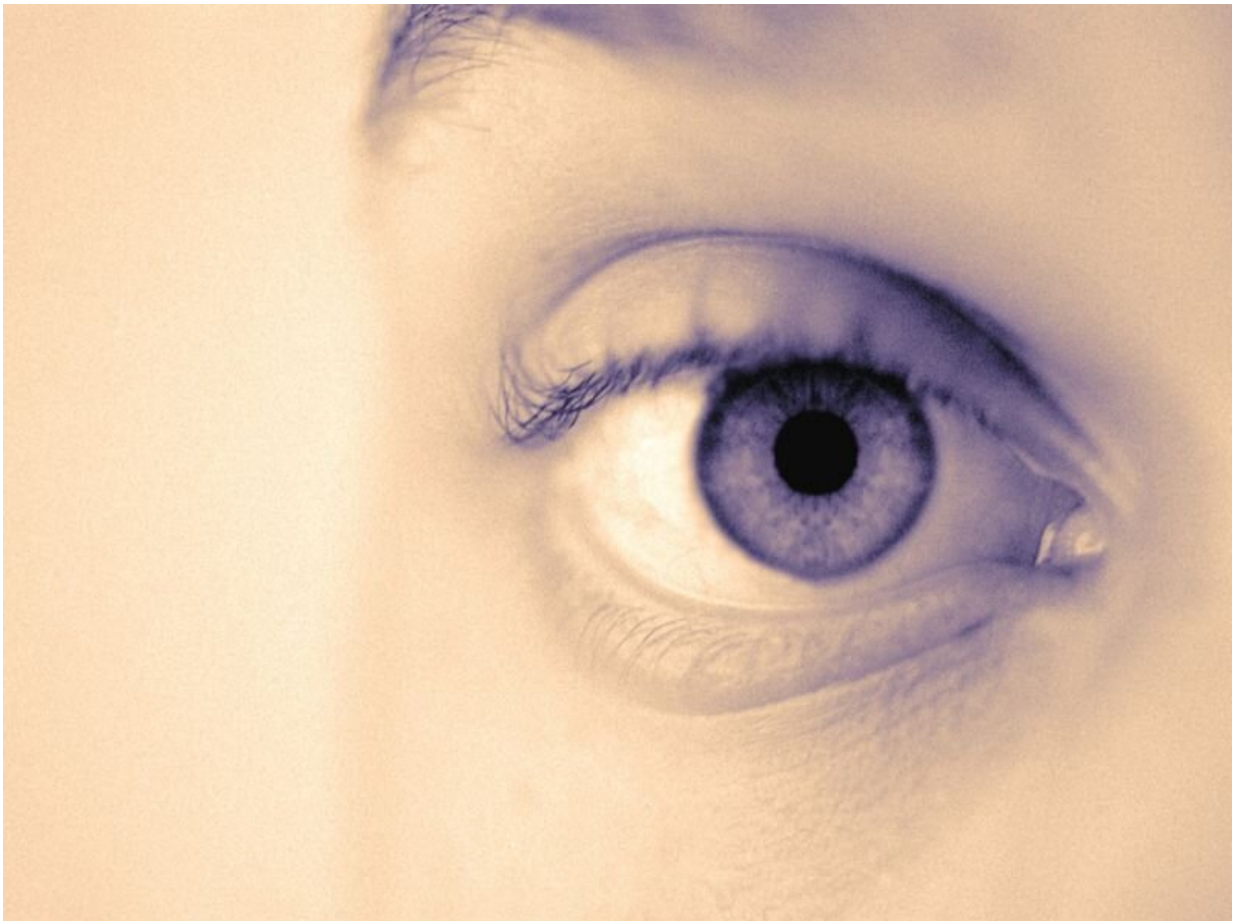


Macular degeneration can rob you of sight: Know the signs

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(HealthDay)—Early diagnosis and care can often stop the progression of

age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which is the leading cause of vision loss in older Americans, the American Society of Retina Specialists (ASRS) says.

As part of AMD Awareness Month in February, the society urges people to pay attention to their vision and learn more about AMD.

Age is the main risk factor for [AMD](#), and people with a [family history](#) have an increased risk. Other [risk factors](#) include: smoking, obesity, [high blood pressure](#), excessive sun exposure, and a diet low in fruits and vegetables.

It's important to be aware of the symptoms of AMD.

Watch for altered or wavy lines that should be straight. Cover one eye at a time and look at a door frame or a checkerboard. If the lines look wavy or warped, it may be a sign of AMD. Or you can use an Amsler grid, which has black lines on a white piece of paper with a dot in the middle.

Pay attention to blurred central [vision](#) that can make it difficult to see a friend or loved one's face clearly.

Look out for colors that appear washed out or dull. You should get your eyes checked if you notice any decrease in the intensity or brightness of color.

"The earlier we see patients experiencing symptoms of AMD or any retinal condition, the sooner we can determine the cause of the symptoms and monitor the issue or use breakthrough treatments to safeguard sight," ASRS President Dr. Philip Ferrone said in a society news release.

"Advances in imaging technology and newer treatments including [eye](#)

[injections with anti-VEGF medications](#) mean, quite often, [vision loss](#) and [blindness](#) can be prevented when patients team with a retina specialist, so seek care at the first sign or symptom," Ferrone said.

More information: There's more on AMD at the [U.S. National Eye Institute](#).

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