YOUR RETINA OVER 50!
AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION
SPRING/SUMMER SYMPOSIUM

ATTENTION BABY BOOMERS & BEYOND…
If you are reaching age 50, over age 80 or anywhere in between, this is a program for you. It’s never too early or too late to protect your sight and enhance your knowledge about a leading cause of age-related eye disease – “macular degeneration.” POB’s former Medical Advisor to the Macular Degeneration Network, Richard A. Garfinkel, M.D., will discuss the “Retina Over 50” and its vulnerabilities to possible diseases/disorders. He will share current information on research initiatives. This event will take place on June 8th at the Friendship Heights Village Center beginning with

(see Your Retina Over 50! page 2)
AREDS2 STUDY DATA EXPECTED ANY DAY
(AGE-RELATED EYE DISEASE STUDY)

“So we’re eating a healthy diet full of plants and fish, but what about supplements?”

As this newsletter is being written, we await the study results of the Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2). Here is background information, while we wait for the release of the study.

Based on the original AREDS study, there continues to be beneficial effects with the AREDS supplement. According to Dr. Emily Chew, National Eye Institute (NEI) and Medical Advisor to POB’s Macular Degeneration Network, “patients with intermediate or advanced age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in one eye are strongly encouraged to use the AREDS formulation.” Dr. Chew points out that the study data does not support the use of AREDS for prevention of AMD or for those with early AMD.

Long after the original AREDS research was underway, more studies pointed out the potential benefits of two other
carotenoids - lutein and zeaxanthin - which make up the pigment of the retina. Diet research showed that people who ate fish two to three times a week had less macular degeneration; fish oil is high in omega-3 fatty acids. Because of the new information and the concern about the level of zinc, NEI created the AREDS2 study.

AREDS2 compares the risk of progression to advanced AMD in groups of subjects taking different supplements. One group gets 10 mg. lutein/2 mg. zeaxanthin; another group receives 1,000 mg. omega-3; a third group gets a pill with 10 mg. lutein, 2 mg. zeaxanthin, 1,000 mg. omega-3. All participants are offered additional supplementation with an AREDS formula which contains, 1) no betacarotene; 2) lower zinc; or 3) no betacarotene and lower zinc.

The study began in 2008 and involves 4,200 people. The first participants are reaching the five-year mark in 2013. We hope to hear results in May 2013. Once the data has been studied, it will determine if AREDS2 is more effective than the original AREDS.

The confusing part is that there are already brands of vitamins in stores labeled AREDS2. Some eye doctors recommend only the original PreserVision; others do not care about the brand. Some eye doctors are suggesting that patients with AMD take the AREDS2 supplements. Other doctors have their own vitamin list they give their patient. To help you decide, talk to your own eye doctor and consider their recommendations.

March 2012, AMD.org
AMD: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW…

AMD is a common eye condition among people age 50 and older. It is a leading cause of vision loss in older adults. It gradually destroys the macula, the part of the eye that provides sharp, central vision needed for seeing objects clearly.

The macula is made up of millions of light sensitive cells that provide sharp detailed central vision. It is the most sensitive part of the retina, which is located at the back of the eye. The retina quickly turns light into electrical signals and then sends these electrical signals to the brain through the optic nerve. Next, the brain translates the electrical signal into images we see. If the macula is damaged, fine points in these images are not clear. The picture is there, but the fine points are lost. Remember, anyone over age 50 is at risk for developing AMD. Increased risks include: family history, race – caucasians are at much higher risk than people of African descent, and smoking – research shows that smoking increases risk by two-fold. For more information on AMD, contact POB at 202-234-1010 or visit www.youreyes.org.

LOW VISION TIP:

Always use a dark placemat or tablecloth with light colored china.

Gloria Sussman, POB Share Group Facilitator
Calendar of Events

• Wednesday, May 8th
LOW VISION INDEPENDENCE THROUGH ARTS & CULTURE – Join Gail Snider, multi-talented guest speaker as she shares her journey with vision loss through multimedia arts endeavors. Gail Snider, Information & Referral Specialist at the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, is an inspiration to everyone who meets her. 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, Access Services Division, Room 215, 901 G Street, NW, Washington, DC. To reserve lunch, call 202-727-2142.

• Thursday, May 9th
TEA AND CONVERSATION: Library of Virginia TECHNOLOGY PETTING ZOO will be on display at the Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library to showcase how tablets and e-Readers can be used to assist those with vision loss. Attendees will be able to work hands-on with i-Pads, Kindles, Nooks and other gadgets. Librarians will also demonstrate the many features these devices offer. 1:30 p.m., The Beatley Library is at 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA. For more information, call 703-746-1728.

• Tuesday, May 14th
Calendar of Events

• Wednesday, May 15th
LOW VISION GROUP, 10:30 a.m., Gloria Sussman, Facilitator, Vinson Hall, 6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, VA. Everyone welcome! Any questions, please call 703-742-9070.

• Thursday, May 16th
Vision Support Lunch & Learn – Join Marti Bailey, Director, Sibley Senior Association & Community Health, in a conversation on TRANSITIONS: GROW WITH THE FLOW! This event is in recognition of “Older Americans Month” and “Vision Awareness Month.” Celebrate with us at Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Complimentary light lunch is served. Call to reserve: 301-656-2797.

• Wednesday, May 22nd
“PICTURE THIS,” 1 p.m., National Gallery of Art, in partnership with Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, co-sponsors a described art tour, which is intended to enhance the art experience for people with sight loss.
Meet at second floor Rotunda in West Building of the National Gallery of Art, 6th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. For more information, call 202-737-4215.
Calendar of Events

JUNE UPCOMING EVENTS — SAVE THE DATE!

• June 8th: MACULAR DEGENERATION NETWORK SPRING/SUMMER SYMPOSIUM
  Attend the combined May/June Macular Degeneration Network Event – MARK YOUR CALENDAR-JUNE 8th, and plan to join Past Medical Advisor to POB’s AMD Network, Richard A. Garfinkel, M.D. as he discusses the “Retina Over 50.” Friendship Heights Village Center, 4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD, 10 a.m. – 12 noon. Complimentary parking on the rear deck of Courtyard by Marriott of Chevy Chase at Hills Plaza. Please call to register: 301-656-2797.

• June 11th: LOW VISION SUPPORT GROUP
  Guest Speaker: Lorena LoVerde, M.D., Washington National Eye Center at MedStar Washington Hospital Center, 110 Irving Street, NW, Professional Office Building, South Tower, Conference Room A (near Blimpies) on 1st floor. Call to reserve complimentary lunch, 202-877-5329.

• June 12th: LOW VISION INDEPENDENCE THROUGH ARTS & CULTURE, DC Public Library at Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G Street, NW, Washington, DC, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Complimentary light lunch. Open discussion “WHAT ART FORM MAKES YOU HAPPY?” Call to reserve lunch at 202-727-2142.

• June 19th: LOW VISION GROUP, Vinson Hall, 6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, VA, 10:30 a.m., Open Discussion, Gloria Sussman, Facilitator. For more details, call 703-742-9070.
Visit POB’s website, www.youreyes.org, to stay up-to-date on news and event information.