February is AMD Awareness Month!

Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness among older Americans. More than 11.2 million Americans have AMD, and are at risk of becoming visually impaired or blind.

Two types of AMD exist – dry and wet. Dry AMD is the most common form (85-90% of cases). Drusen, or fatty deposits, accumulate under the retina and can cause damage to your macula, the part of your retina responsible for central vision. Dry can progress to the more serious Wet AMD. Wet AMD is responsible for 90% of legal blindness cases from AMD. New, abnormal blood vessels will grow behind

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February is AMD Awareness Month!

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the macula causing scarring and severe vision damage.

Early signs of AMD include difficulty seeing at night, shadowy or fuzzy central vision, and distortion of straight lines in your vision. Catching and treating AMD early will help prevent unnecessary vision loss.

AMD has a few major risk factors. Smokers are up to 4.8 times as likely to develop AMD. Chronic sunlight exposure increases risk of developing AMD or accelerating progression to more advanced stages. Other risk factors include high cholesterol, obesity, having pale/light skin or blue eye color, and family history.

There are a few ways to prevent or slow progression of the disease. These include a healthy diet, regular exercise, wearing protective eye wear in the sun, and receiving your annual comprehensive dilated eye exam from your doctor.

Some treatments are available to help slow or stop progression of the disease. You should talk with your doctor to follow the best plan for your own eyes. To learn more about AMD, visit www.nei.nih.gov and speak with your eye doctor.
Low Vision Learning Center

POB is happy to announce the opening of the Low Vision Learning Center in Bethesda! At the Center, those with vision loss have the opportunity to make a no-cost one-on-one appointment with a Vision Resource Rehabilitation Specialist to learn about available resources and services in your community.

We invite you to make an appointment to visit our demonstration area so you can examine our low vision aids, including magnifiers, CCTV’s (Closed Circuit Televisions), Zoom Text, and non-optical adaptive aids (such as talking clocks and writing guides).

The Center is a place to learn and be a connector to services and resources someone with vision loss may need. The Center is open Monday - Wednesday and Friday from 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and is located at 4948 St. Elmo Ave., Suite #209, Bethesda, MD. For questions or to make an appointment, call (301) 951-4444.
Q: I read that February is Macular Degeneration/Low Vision Awareness Month. What is macular degeneration? Does it cause low vision?

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the most common diagnosis among my patients coming for low vision rehabilitation. This makes sense given that AMD is the leading cause of vision loss over age 60. The macula is a portion of the retina, the light-sensitive tissue that lines that back of the eye. It is responsible for your central, most detailed vision.

In short, AMD results in damage to this critical structure. It causes blind spots, or scotomas, and can affect the ability to see faces, read, and do other fine tasks, especially when lighting is not ideal and contrast is low. The visual impact of AMD can range in severity, even with the best medical treatment. However, there are low vision rehabilitation strategies at nearly every level of vision.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Weinberg, call (703) 652-7803. For more information, visit youreyes.org.

(Belinda Weinberg, OD, is a low vision specialist. Send questions to communications@youreyes.org. We regret that unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.)
### Age-related Macular Degeneration Awareness Month

**TUE 11**

11:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

**Guest Speaker:** Georgina Medina M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident

AMD is the leading cause of blindness among older Americans, but new treatments have dramatically changed the course of this disease. AMD has become more manageable than ever – but early detection is critical to save your sight!

**MedStar Washington Hospital Center**

Eye Center Conference Room, Suite 1A-19

110 Irving Street, NW, Washington, DC

To register, call (202) 877-5329.

### Focus Group with Vinson Hall C.E.O.

**WED 12**

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Discuss what makes Vinson Hall a good place to live and what would make it even better!

**Vinson Hall (Conference Room near the Library)**

6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, VA

To register, contact Sandy at (703) 989-1821, or contact Carol in Apartment #1309.
What Lighting is Best with AMD?
12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. • POB Signature Share Group
Proper lighting and contrast is very important to optimize remaining vision from AMD. Learn more from Belinda Weinberg, O.D., low vision specialist.
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington Headquarters [New Address]
415 2nd Street NE, Washington, DC 20002
To register, call Sean at (202) 234-1010, ext. 233.

Learn About Non-24 Sleep-Wake Disorder
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. • Low Vision Resource & Support Group
Guest Speaker: Magdalena Felton
Non-24 is a serious, chronic sleep disorder that occurs in up to 70% of people who are totally blind, and to others who are not totally blind!
Bethesda Regional Services Center (Room East B)
4805 Edgemoor Lane, Bethesda, MD
To register, call Sean at (202) 234-1010, ext. 233.
Low Vision Update with Dr. Alibhai
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. • Vision Resource Group
Dr. Alibhai, low vision specialist, will discuss low vision, including Vision Rehabilitation, research updates, and how you may be able to obtain services!
Charles E. Beatley Jr. Library
5005 Duke St., Alexandria, VA
To register, call Kym at the library at (703) 746-1762.

Learn About the Low Vision Learning Center
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. • Vision Resource Lunch & Learn
Guest Speakers: Christine Huang, O.T., and Sean Curry, M.P.H.
The Center aims to help inform and show those with vision loss what is available for them! Hear from Sean Curry and Christine Huang about what you can learn and try out at the Center!
The Village of Friendship Heights
4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD
To register, call the Village Center at (301) 656-2797.
UPCOMING DESCRIBED ART TOURS

POB is proud to partner with local museums offering art tours for visitors who are blind or have low vision.

America InSight (Smithsonian American Art Museum)
Sun., February 9, 1:30 p.m. & Sun., February 23, 1:30 p.m.
For more: AmericanArtMuseumTours@si.edu or (202) 633-8550

Picture This! (National Gallery of Art)
Sat., February 22 & Wed., February 26 1:00 p.m.
For more: access@nga.gov or (202) 842-6905

Portrait InSight (Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery)
To set up a tour, contact:
NPGAccess@si.edu or (202) 633-8506