

A NEW LEASE—on Life! - January

Written by Judit Rajhathy, B.A., RNCP, D.Ac.

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Lifeguard Your Vision—Naturally!



Cataract surgery and various treatments for macular degeneration and glaucoma are topics of concern in a senior community. Age-related Macular Degeneration is a disease of the retina and is the leading cause of legal blindness for those 65 years and older. Approximately 9.1 million Americans suffer from this (Macular Degeneration Association) debilitating disease.

Glaucoma is caused by gradually increasing intraocular pressure where there is a slow loss of peripheral and central vision resulting in blindness if left untreated. Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness and affects approximately seven million people in North America. It is more common in women than men.

Symptoms range from eye pain, discomfort, blurred vision, a frequent need to change

prescriptions, impaired dark adaptation and sometimes seeing halos around lights. Often there are no symptoms and diagnosis is made through a routine eye exam. Conventional treatment includes eye drops, oral medications and/or laser surgery to keep the fluid from draining.

Integrative Medicine Explanation of Degenerative Eye Disease

Recently I conducted an interview in Canada about vision health with a well known Integrative Medicine specialist, Dr. Zoltan Rona, whose explanation is this: The retina and lens of the eye are continuously exposed to oxygen and light radiation. This creates free radicals that can damage the retina leading to macular degeneration. The lens can also be attacked by these free radicals creating a cataract. In normal circumstances the body uses substances called antioxidants to protect itself from free radical damage.

Unfortunately, as one ages, there are less and less of these antioxidants produced by the body and, unless one can obtain these antioxidants from the diet or nutritional supplements, eye diseases like cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and other eye disorders develop (*Vision Supremacy Naturally*).

Vision Health Diet

Dr. Rona encourages his patients to eat more legumes due to the high content of sulphur which he claims has a cleansing effect and pushes fresh fruits and vegetables, berries being highly important for their high content of anthocyanidins and cherries because they provide carotenes, flavonoids, vitamins E and C. Green veggies such as spinach, kale and collard greens are important due to their carotenoid - lutein and zeaxanthin - content. Carotenoids offer antioxidant protection for the retinal cells. (*Vision Supremacy Naturally, Dr. Z. Rona*). Of course you could take green supplements such as algae, spirulina, wheatgrass and chlorella as well.

Avoiding caffeine is essential as it reduces retinal blood flow.

Supplements

A good vision supplement would include lutein, zeaxanthin, vitamins A, C, E, zinc, grape seed extract, bioflavanoids, bilberry, eyebright and other supportive nutrients. Even some traditional opticians and ophthalmologists are recommending natural supplements with these ingredients because they make a huge difference, often reversing eye conditions.

Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercise is crucial for glaucoma patients because it has been shown to reduce mean intraocular pressure by 4.6 mm when compared to sedentary patients. All the more reason to get those sneakers on and shake your booty!

*(Ed. Note: Judit Rajhathy is the author of the Canadian best seller *Free to Fly: a journey toward wellness* and can be reached at juditrajhathy.com or 765-455.)*