# Age-Related Macular Degeneration

## What You Should Know

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health
National Eye Institute

The National Eye Institute (NEI) conducts and supports research that leads to sight-saving treatments and plays a key role in reducing visual impairment and blindness. NEI is part of the National Institutes of Health, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**For more information, contact—**

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## What is AMD?

AMD is a common eye condition and a leading cause of vision loss among people age 60 and older. It causes damage to the macula, a small spot near the center of the retina and the part of the eye needed for sharp, central vision, which lets us see objects that are straight ahead.

In some people, AMD advances so slowly that vision loss does not occur for a long time. In others, the disease progresses faster and may lead to a loss of vision in one or both eyes. As AMD progresses, a blurred area near the center of vision is a common symptom. Over time, the blurred area may grow larger or you may develop blank spots in your central vision. Objects also may not appear to be as bright as they used to be.

AMD by itself does not lead to complete blindness, with no ability to see. However, the loss of central vision in AMD can interfere with simple everyday activities, such as the ability to see faces, drive, read, write, or do close work, such as cooking or fixing things around the house.

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