

## The Makari Method To Eye Health

### **Macular Degeneration**

*What is macular degeneration?*

Macular degeneration is a progressive disease which affects central vision. At first objects directly in front become blurred and indistinct, then gradually loss sets in, so that by the late stage, central vision is completely lost. Normally peripheral vision is retained, so there is the possibility of leading some sort of normal life, though at this stage the person cannot read or drive a car.

*Orthodox medical treatment*

In the last 10 years it has been found that new drugs, originally developed for reducing the proliferation of arteries in cancers is also effective in reducing recently formed arteries proliferating over the macula in wet-type macular degeneration. It is not a very pleasant treatment, as it involves injection directly into the eye. However, there are often significant improvements, and the short-term side effects are infrequent. The most common side effect is pain in the eye from the injection, which can be considerably helped by taking homoeopathic *Ledum* (which is specific for puncture wounds, as opposed to *Arnica*, which is more for bruising).

This treatment is not suitable for dry-type MD, nor is it routinely given to younger patients, as the long-term effects are not yet known.

*What else can be done?*

There are a number of ways in which macular degeneration can be helped. Usually the progressive deterioration can be slowed down or even halted. In some cases there is even some improvement.

*Acupuncture*

There are two ways in which acupuncture can help. One is to bring energy to the affected eye(s) and the other is to help the overall body condition. Acupuncture stimulates the nervous system and has been shown to stimulate blood flow in various parts of the body.

Bringing energy to the eyes is something that acupuncture is especially good at. Acupuncture has a unique ability to stimulate nerve and bring about restoration of function and promote neuro-modulation. Using points close to the eye can have a dramatic effect on local energy, and sometimes just a few treatments will start the healing process. Some points may require deep needling, and the practitioner must be adequately trained for this to be a safe procedure.

The addition of micro electro-stimulation has also been shown to awake dormant cells, which appeared damaged but were simply lying dormant.

Practitioners of Chinese Medicine are experts at regulating and strengthening the various integrated systems of one's body to improve overall function and circulation. They can then instruct the body to focus its healing on specific areas of body systems.

### *A Typical Course of Treatment*

For all retinal problems, including macular degeneration and RP, good results are obtained by an intensive course with 10 to 20 treatments given over one or two weeks. Many patients will come to sunny San Diego and stay during the time while they have their treatments. Local clients may choose to spread out their treatments over the course of a couple weeks.

### *Eye massage*

The massages given elsewhere on this web site are helpful in bringing energy to the eyes and stimulating circulation while easing muscle tension. On their own they may not be effective in slowing the progress of MD, but they are very useful as an adjunct to other treatments.

### *Herbal medicine*

Herbal medicine, particularly Chinese herbs have a long tradition of use in eye problems. As with acupuncture, there are two components, one to strengthen the whole body, and the other to strengthen the eyes specifically. Fortunately Michael Woodworth is a certified Fellow and long time student of Chinese herbal medicine, crafting customized herbal formulas tailored to many of his clients and their particular presentations. He is more than happy to guide patient's local practitioner in helping their patients with follow up herbal care.

### *Food supplements*

There are a number of food supplements (minerals and vitamins), which are helpful in nourishing the eyes. These are particularly recommended for older people, who do not absorb foods so well, and whose appetite is considerably

less than when they were young. Prescribing these supplements is a specialized field, and we advise consulting an experienced nutritionist.

*Will these treatments restore my sight?*

If the condition is in its very early stages, there is a possibility of restoring the sight more or less completely. If it has progressed to the point that there is significant loss of vision, patients usually find that the vision improves significantly, but not back to 100%. As a general rule, one can hope to restore sight to what it was about 2 years prior; but parts of the eye that have been blind for more than two years rarely recover. That said, we are regularly surprised by what the human body is capable of given the correct supplements and stimulation.

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