Experts suggest these ways to decrease your risk of developing AMD.

- Don’t smoke. And if you do smoke, quit.
- Enjoy colourful vegetables and fruits (carrots, corn, squash, tomatoes, cantaloupe and berries) as well as dark green leafy vegetables.
- Eat fish such as salmon, tuna and mackerel, once or more a week.
- Avoid processed foods.
- Wear UV sunglasses consistently.
- Stay physically active.
- Control your blood pressure and cholesterol.
Treatment

The available treatments for dry and wet AMD are growing but still limited.

**Dry AMD** - The only treatment currently available for people with dry AMD is a combination of **vitamins and minerals** tested in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS). This high-dose mix of antioxidants reduces the risk (by 25%) that a person with dry AMD will develop advanced vision loss within five years. In the spring of 2013, a second study (AREDS2) revised this formulation – making it safer and potentially more effective – as follows:

- 500 mg vitamin C
- 400 International Units vitamin E
- 10 mg lutein / 2 mg zeaxanthin
- 25 mg of zinc (zinc oxide)
- 2 mg of copper (cupric oxide)

Several companies market AMD vitamins containing these nutrients, and are now revising their products to match the AREDS2 formula. These vitamins are available without prescription. However some people shouldn’t take high-dose supplements due to other health problems. Speak to your doctor before beginning.

**Wet AMD** – Thanks to research, there are now sight-saving treatments for wet-AMD called **anti-VEGF therapies**. Vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) is a substances that is normally produced by our bodies, which tells new blood vessels to form. However, the uncontrolled growth of blood vessels in the eye causes vision loss in Wet AMD. Anti-VEGF therapies prevent vision loss (and even reverse some vision loss) by removing excess VEGF from the eye. In Canada, the approved anti-VEGF therapies include Lucentis (ranibizumab) and Eylea (aflibercept). Lucentis requires monthly injections into the eye. Each Eylea injection is designed to last two months (after an initial set of monthly injections). Both of these drugs are widely reimbursed across most provinces, and prevent vision loss by getting rid of VEGF. Eylea also removes Placental Growth Factor (PIGF), which causes the growth of new blood vessels. Avastin (bevacizumab) is an anti-VEGF therapy that was designed as a cancer treatment. Although Avastin is not approved by Health Canada to treat wet AMD, it is commonly used “off-label” because studies have shown that it works similarly to Lucentis and Eylea. Doctors continue to discuss the pros and cons of these different treatments. Please talk to your doctor about what treatment would be best for you.

If the following symptoms appear, please see your eye doctor, as they may be signs of dry or wet AMD:

- Blurred central vision
- Distortion of lines and shapes (a line of text appears wavy)
- Difficulty distinguishing colours
- A blind spot in your vision

Updated October 2015: Reviewed by Dr. Mary Sunderland, The Foundation Fighting Blindness, Director of Research & Education