

20/20 Perfect Eyesight Made Easy

As you age, nutritional deficiencies can lead to vision impairment from cataracts and macular degeneration. According to the National Eye Institute, you have a one in three chance of going blind after the age of 75! Yet, how is it that in certain areas of the world – like the rainforests of the Amazon – age-related blindness in elders is a rare occurrence? The secret to their exceptional vision – and lack of eye problems that plague civilized society today – is found in the nutrients they consume.

You don't have to sit back and accept cataracts, macular degeneration or even the eye irritation you get with dry eye syndrome as a matter of age.

This special report will show you ways to fight age-related vision problems and win!

Dry Eye Syndrome

Do you spend hours in front of a computer? Have you noticed a burning, itching or gritty sensation when you're reading or watching TV? You may be suffering from the symptoms of dry eye syndrome.

What is it?

Dry eye syndrome is a common problem seen by eye doctors. What is it? It's that itchy, burning feeling you have when you're doing things like staring at a computer screen for most of the day, driving in bright sunlight with the windows open, or reading a long book.

Dry eye syndrome affects 10 million Americans each year. Many reach for over-the-counter eye drops but I've found some natural solutions that really help – not only with dry eye but with an overall whole-body benefit, too!

First, let's look at what's going on in your eye. A lack of tears is the reason your eyes feel so dry and gritty. You have three tear layers in your eyes:

- **Mucus layer:** This layer coats the cornea, which forms a foundation so tear film can adhere to the eye

- **Aqueous layer:** This layer – made up of 98% water plus small amounts of salt, proteins and other compounds – delivers needed water and oxygen to the cornea
- **Lipid layer:** This last outer layer consists of an oily film that seals tear film on the eye, helping prevent evaporation

Tears materialize in several glands around the eye. When you blink, your eyelids spread tears over the eye keeping it lubricated. Two tiny drainage ducts in the corner of your eye ... by your nose ... capture excess tears and connect to your nasal passages. Have you ever wondered why your nose runs when you cry? That's why!

Reflex tears – like those produced in response to injury or emotion – do little to soothe dry eye. So, you could have watery eyes but may still suffer from eye irritation.

Tear film serves several purposes. Eye moisture is the obvious one but it also helps create a smooth surface for light to pass through, keeps the front of the eye well nourished, and gives your eyes protection from injury and infection. Treating symptoms of dry eye is vitally important ... not only for comfort, but also for the health of your corneas.

There are three main causes of dry eye syndrome:

- ✓ The normal aging process ... your body produces less oil – 60% less when you're 65 than when you were 18 – as you age, which affects your tear film production.
- ✓ Environmental toxins like air pollution in the form of smog, cigarette smoke and excess chemicals
- ✓ Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)

Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)

Computer Vision Syndrome – or CVS – describes eye-related problems and symptoms caused by prolonged use of a computer. What causes it?

Eye problems are more noticeable with computer tasks because of how the letters on the screen are formed. They're created by tiny dots called pixels instead of the solid images you see in a newspaper, for example. Pixels cause your eyes to work harder keeping images in focus. Fortunately, I've found no scientific evidence that working on computers will harm your eyes.

Who is at risk for dry eye syndrome?

Those at risk for dry eye syndrome are:

- Contact lens wearers: Your contacts absorb tear film and causes proteins to form on the surface of the lens – the accumulated protein is what you cleanse from your lenses with solution
- Those on certain types of medication: People taking medication for a thyroid condition, vitamin A deficiency, or Parkinson's and Sjogren's diseases
- Women: Women often experience more symptoms of dry eye syndrome during menopause and women also tend to have drier skin than men

What you can do

You don't have to run to the pharmacy to get the latest in eye drops or even turn to your eye doctor for Restasis. Essential fatty acids or EFAs may be the ticket to soothe your dry eyes – and ease the soreness of itchy, flaking skin.

What are Essential Fatty Acids?

Essential fatty acids – like those found in Omega-3 fish oil supplements – ramp up your energy, govern growth, and are responsible for your vitality and mental state. Increasing your intake of EFAs could improve dry eye syndrome as well as relieve your dry skin.

There are two kinds of fatty acids: EPA and DHA. Both are critical for overall cardiovascular health but EPA is the preferred fatty acid. The ideal ratio is a 2:1 ratio of EPA fats to DHA fats and, if you choose to take a fish oil supplement, I recommend you use pharmaceutical grade supplements. Others can contain toxic substances like mercury and PCBs, which could be harmful to your health.

You can get Omega-6 EFAs by eating whole grains, nuts and vegetables. Raw nuts like almonds and walnuts, seeds like sesame and sunflower, the oils of borage, grape seed, primrose, and soybeans, whole grains, and legumes contain the best amounts of Omega-6 EFAs.

Cold-water fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, and herring contain the needed Omega-3 EFAs, as well as in certain vegetables, flaxseeds, walnuts and canola oil. Be careful if you use flaxseed oil – it oxidizes easily and can go rancid quickly.

A few lifestyle changes may significantly improve your dry eye syndrome irritation. For instance, drink more water ... up to eight to ten glasses daily. This not only keeps you hydrated, it flushes impurities out of your system. Blink more frequently – especially when you're reading or watching TV. And don't rub your eyes – it worsens the irritation.

The Truth About Free Radicals and Oxidation

What is a "free radical" and why is oxidation so bad?

Oxidation is a bodily reaction that creates free radicals. A free radical is an unstable molecule that only has one electron. Normally, most molecules in a given cell contain two electrons. But sometimes, as part of normal metabolism or even due to environmental factors like air pollution, UV rays, cigarette smoke or herbicides, weak bonds split resulting in a "free radical" or unattached electron.

Your body can put up with a moderate amount of free radicals but if you don't have enough antioxidants to combat them, damage can occur. And free radical damage multiplies with age. Research studies have linked oxidation and free radicals to loss of vision from macular degeneration and cataracts.

Lutein, a powerful anti-oxidant, crushes free radicals and protects your precious eyesight. It was shown to be highly effective against macular degeneration in a study called LAST (Lutein Antioxidant Supplementation Trial) done by the Veteran's Administration.

Visogen ... a supplement specially formulated with lutein in combination with potent vitamins and minerals ... has been proven to:

- ✓ Be a potent inhibitor of cell death caused by free radicals
- ✓ Modify cell response to free radical stress
- ✓ A forceful protector of cell structures against damaging oxidants

So what happens if you're beginning to experience cloudy vision? This could be the start of cataracts but there are things you can do to halt or even reverse their severity.

Cataracts

A cataract is a cloudiness in the lens of the eye. Your vision is impaired when damage is done to the protein of the lens. Glycosylation is the process that causes your eye lens to discolor and the resulting cloudiness reduces the amount of light that can reach your retina.

Research has found that cataracts occur most often in smokers, those who have diabetes, or those exposed to excessive amounts of sunlight. These factors lead to oxidative damage, which has been shown to cause cataracts in both animals and people.

Did you know that cataracts are the leading cause of blindness in the world? Forty-two percent – nearly half! – of all blindness is due to cataracts and cataract surgery is the most common surgery performed on those over 65.

Symptoms

Typically, cataracts develop slowly without any pain or redness of the eye. Some common symptoms include fuzzy or blurred vision, a need for more light when reading or doing close work, sensitivity to bright lights like sunlight or car headlights at night, poor night vision, and frequent changes in eyeglass or contact lens prescriptions.

If your vision problems start affecting your daily activities, you might opt for surgery to replace the clouded lens with an artificial one. But surgery is not foolproof. Anywhere from 30% to 50% of surgical cataract patients require additional follow-up treatment. Plus, the artificial lenses used don't seem to have the same sharpness of vision (or acuity) as a normal lens does. However, there is some exciting new information on the horizon for cataract patients.

N-acetylcarnosine – Wonder Drops

This new treatment uses an amino acid called N-acetylcarnosine (l-carnosine) and is administered with an eyedropper. In clinical trials, the success rate has been high within three to six months of treatment. In a study of 96 patients with primary cataracts, every patient – that's 100% -- showed some improvement. For patients with mature cataracts ... those who'd had them the longest time (some as long as 20 years!) ... the effective rate was 80%.

In another study, Russian researchers have shown that, after six months, 88.9% of everyone treated with N-acetylcarnosine drops had improvement in glare sensitivity.

How does it work? L-carnosine slows or even prevents the glycation process – that's what causes your eye lens to discolor and become cloudy.

Vitamins and Herbs May Be Helpful in Your Fight Against Developing Cataracts

There are nine vitamins and herbs that I've put in my arsenal to help patients fight the onset of cataracts. They are Vitamins C, E, B2, B3, lutein, zeaxanthin, lycium-rehmannia tea, bilberry and selenium.

Vitamins

Vitamins C and E are the major antioxidants in the lens of the eye. Vitamin C activates Vitamin E and that switches on a critical antioxidant in the eye called glutathione. **Vitamins B2 and B3** protect glutathione and research has shown a direct link between a Vitamin B2 deficiency and cataracts.

If you've regularly taken a multi-vitamin or a supplement with vitamins C or E for more than 10 years, you'll have a 60% lower risk of forming cataracts!

Recently, *Harvard Women's Health Watch* reported that Vitamin C use by women under the age of 60 might reduce the risk of developing cortical cataracts by more than 50%. I recommend taking 500 to 1,000 mg of vitamin C for a good cataract prevention program.

The most well known of a group of mega antioxidant carotenoids are beta-carotene and alpha-carotene. Some of the better-known carotenoids providing very high antioxidant protection are **lutein** and **zeaxanthin**. How do they work? Your body uses lutein to manufacture the macular pigment in your retinas that filters light and protects you against dangerous UV rays.

Lutein and zeaxanthin are important carotenoids. In a preliminary study, those with the highest intake of these two carotenoids were 50% less likely to develop cataracts as those with the lowest intake. In another study, a small group of people with age-related cataracts added 15 mg of lutein three times a week for one year. Their vision improved significantly.

In both preliminary and experimental studies, researchers found that a higher dietary intake of carotenoids offers protection against developing macular degeneration, cataracts, and other health conditions linked to oxidative, free radical damage.

Lutein is found in green, leafy vegetables like kale and spinach, collard greens, romaine lettuce, leeks, peas, and even egg yolks.

A recent study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* has shown that regular supplementation with lutein and zeaxanthin reduces the risk of cataracts by up to 22%!

Traditionally used in Chinese medicine, **lycium-rehmannia tea** has helped alleviate symptoms like blurry vision, dry, painful eyes, pressure behind the eyes, and bad night vision.

Bilberry is a kissing cousin of the blueberry and is high in the flavonoid anthocyanosides. Anthocyanosides may protect both the lens and retina from damage due to free radical oxidation. This alone may make bilberry useful for reducing cataract risk. You can take bilberry supplements in extract, capsule or tablet form.

Heavy metals like cadmium have been found to be higher in the lenses of cataract patients. **Selenium** helps to flush out toxic metals like cadmium from eye tissue, activates the antioxidant enzyme glutathione, and enhances the antioxidant effect of vitamin E.

Macular Degeneration

Next to cataracts, age-related macular degeneration is the biggest area of concern for seniors.

But a recent 12-month, randomized, double masked, placebo-controlled study sponsored by the Veterans Administration... and published in *Optometry*... has shown that the right combination of vitamins, minerals and supplements can halt or even reverse the course of age-related macular degeneration.

Macular degeneration gradually erodes your field of vision starting in the center. Darkness spreads into the rest of your field of vision until you can no longer see. Many scientists point to oxidation as a main cause of this problem.

But there's an answer for your macular degeneration worries: **Visogen**. **Visogen** is packed with all the vitamins, minerals and proprietary nutraceuticals needed to halt or even reverse macular degeneration. Ingredients like **Camu Camu**, which is loaded with more Vitamin C than an orange; **Progrado extract** – a super repairer of free radical oxidation; and **Vincara**, an extract that's been documented by research scientists for its ability to protect your eyes against UV radiation.

Eye Exercises to Keep Your Baby Blues (or Greens, Hazels, and Browns) Healthy!

If you wore glasses as a kid, you may have been told to do exercises in order to strengthen your eye muscles. Well, that's still important even though you're all grown up. Here are three great exercises that can help with eye flexibility, relaxation, and irritation.

1. Near-far focus

In this exercise, you'll be switching your visual field from near to far and back again. Hold something in your hand about 6 inches away. It could be a finger, pencil or pen. Then choose a fixed object about 20 feet away. If you're outside, this could be a car in your neighbor's driveway or a tree at the end of your property. Alternate between looking at the near object and the far object for about two seconds each. Repeat this exercise 15 times daily to increase your flexibility.

2. Scanning

This exercise also increases and helps maintain eye flexibility. Sitting or standing in a room, move your eyes around the room, looking at objects like clocks, TVs, and lamps. The idea is to keep your eyes moving in a fluid manner. Perform this exercise for two minutes per day.

3. Palming

First started as part of a yoga exercise, this helps with physical and mental relaxation and helps relieve eye strain. Gently cover your eyes with the palms of your hands so everything is dark. Be careful not to press your palms on your eyeballs as this can reduce circulation in your eyes. If you don't know what to do with your fingers, try crossing them on your forehead.

Here's where some visualization comes in. In your mind, travel to the most relaxing place you can think of. For some it's a Caribbean beach, for others it could be the desert southwest, or still maybe in the Colorado Rockies. You might experience flashes of light or color but that's normal. Palming works by calming the visual system. The time you spend doing this exercise is up to you. Some practice for as short as 30 seconds; others for as long as 30 minutes. Do this exercise whenever you can, especially when you notice that your eyes are tired.

Summary

I've spent years tromping around the jungles of the Amazon and have been amazed at the remarkable ability the Amazon hunters have to see even the smallest bird in a high tree at dusk.

With a few dietary and lifestyle changes, you can reduce – even eliminate! – your chances of developing cataracts or age-related macular degeneration.

Don't give in to loss of vision and eye problems as you age. *Visogen* and the exercises and supplements recommended in this report will help you keep your vision as sharp as your mind and spirit.