

LOW VISION: FYI



SEPTEMBER 2007

A LOW VISION NEWSLETTER

Yes, carrots are **GOOD** for your vision

Research studies suggest that nutrition plays a role in the development and progression of macular degeneration (AMD).

These studies suggest that individuals whose diets are rich in leafy green vegetables have less risk of AMD.

This is thought to be secondary to the intake of a group of carotenoids (colorful pigments) found in high concentrations in certain leafy green vegetables. These pigments are also present in significant concentrations in the macula itself. These carotenoids, known as lutein and zeaxanthin, are antioxidants, which likely play a role in neutralizing free radicals (charged molecules), produced in the highly metabolically active macula.

A recent study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health found that individuals who had the highest consumption of vegetables rich in carotenoids, especially lutein and zeaxanthin, had a 43 percent lower risk of developing AMD than those who ate these foods the least.

Most Americans do not consume enough lutein and zeaxanthin in their diets to get the macular protection they need. Vegetables high in these antioxidants would include raw spinach, kale, and collard greens, corn, green beans, broccoli, spinach, carrots and winter squash. Substantial amounts of lutein and zeaxanthin are also present in kiwi fruits, grapes, spinach, orange juice, zuc-

chini, and different kinds of squash.

The results show that there are fruits and vegetables of various colors with a relatively high content of these important carotenoids. Egg yolks, yellow corn and orange peppers contained the highest percentages of lutein and zeaxanthin.

So what does all of this mean?

AMD may not be an entirely preventable disease — however, it is certainly prudent for all of us to minimize our risk.

How do we do this?

Consume plenty of dark, leafy green vegetables and consume the recommended antioxidant vitamins and zinc.

Finally, if you're over 65 or you've already been diagnosed with AMD, see your eye care professional at least once a year or per his or her recommendations.



Bill Nash: a helping hand

Bill Nash is one of North Florida's great leaders. He's also a great supporter of the Low Vision Center.

Mr. Nash — E. William Nash Jr., to be correct — has helped provide the Low Vision Center's offices near St. Vincent's in the Riverside area.

His civic accomplishments would be enough for any two people: he has been president or chairman of numerous organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, the local Federal Reserve board, the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and the Meninak Club.

His name — literally — is enshrined on a Rock of Gibraltar. After a lifelong career with the Prudential insurance company, he retired in Jacksonville after serving as the CEO of the company's South Central office.

If you visit the building — the company is now Aetna — you'll see a rock on the river's side with a plaque of dedication to Nash. (Prudential's motto was "Rock of Gibraltar.")

When he was with the company, he and wife Fran frequented an antique shop that is now the location for our office.

The house was originally built after the fire that devastated Jacksonville in 1906 as a residence and eventually became the shop.

Mr. Nash purchased the beautiful light blue and white house in 1982 from John Oding, a native of Denmark. The man had learned



Bill Nash

restoration and antiques in France and sold the business to Nash's son, Bill III, who also built a workshop in the back for restoring furniture.

When Mr. Nash retired, he moved his office into the house.

When he heard about Low Vision Center's need for a location that would be convenient to patients, he quickly volunteered the house. He moved his office upstairs and now the Center occupies the downstairs area. Bill Jr.'s workshop is still in back, where he does restoration work and also runs his estate appraisal business.

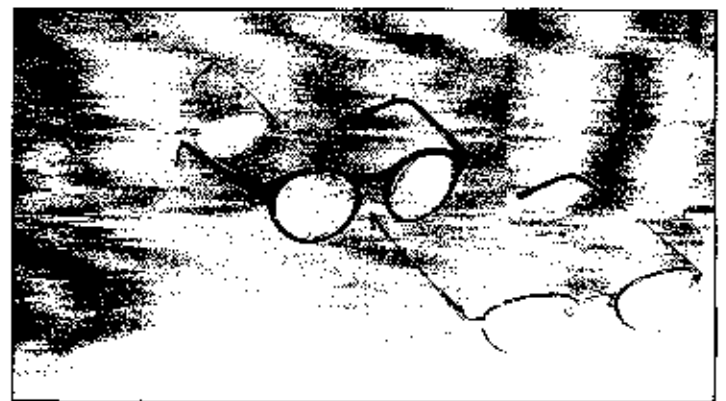
When you come to the center, you probably will see Mr. Nash. we're now part of his family!

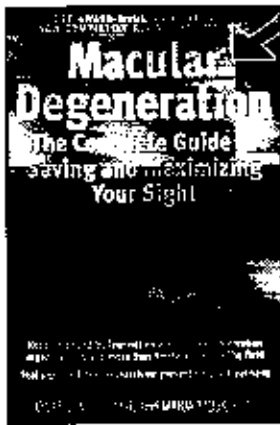
Glasses that work like microscopes

One of the simplest forms of low vision aids is high-powered reading glasses, which is also called a microscope.

High-powered reading glasses work by allowing a person to hold their reading material closer, taking advantage of relative distance magnification.

Before determining the appropriate prescription, several assessments of functional vision are taken. These include visual acuity,





She wrote the book!
Lylas Mogk, M.D. is one of the foremost authorities on Macular Degeneration and her book has received worldwide acclaim.



Meet her in Jacksonville!

Dr. Mogk is the featured speaker at the 15th annual Eye Research Foundation Seminar.

Friday, March 7, 2008

Wyndham Hotel, downtown Jacksonville
(formerly the Radisson)

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

No admission fee (and there will be no solicitation for money.)

The seminar is a project of the Eye Research Foundation of Jacksonville, a non-profit organization dedicated to education, treatment and research in vision.

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visual fields, contrast sensitivity, eccentric viewing, binocular function and photosensitivity.

Once these measurements are taken, an appropriate reading lens can be predicted. The predicted lens power gives a starting point for determining the best possible reading prescription.

There are basically four microscopic options available: full-field microscopes, half-eye microscopes, bifocal microscopes and loupes.

You may find weaker powered microscopes in a drug store usually ranging in very low powers from +1.00 to +3.00 diopters.

Microscopes can range in power from +4.00 diopters to +48.00 diopters (1X - 12X).

The advantages of a microscope include being able to have both hands free while reading or writing. This option is especially good for patients with hand tremors or poor dexterity.

Also, astigmatic correction can be incorporated into the lenses.

The main disadvantage is that as the strength of the lens increases, the reading material must be held closer to the face. This can be rather uncomfortable for some patients.

Video Magnifiers (CCTV):

They have been called many things: Video magnifiers, closed circuit televisions (CCTV's), or electronic magnifiers. A video magnifier uses a video camera to show an enlarged image onto a screen such as a monitor or television.

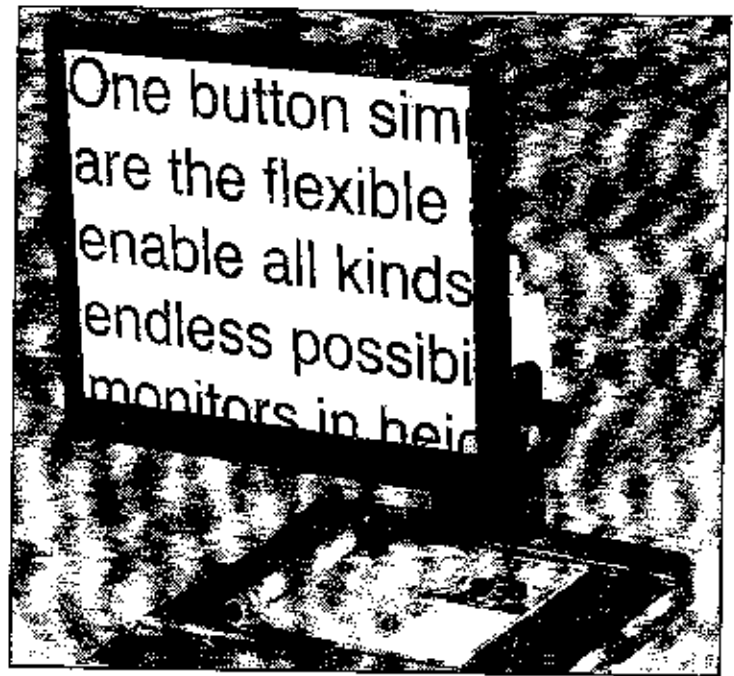
As most of you know, a video magnifier is like the Cadillac of low vision devices! They can be pricey, but video magnifiers can make just about anything you put under the camera larger. Most people use them to read mail, newspaper, or books. Some people use them to write checks and letters. They can also be used to look at pictures, work on hobbies or even put on makeup.

In the past, the desktop video magnifier was a large TV on top or to the side of the camera with a sliding x-y table underneath. The CCTV had to be plugged into an outlet. Most new desktop versions now have a thinner and lighter flat screen on top of the camera.

Now, there are also many new portable versions that use batteries for people who want to use them for school, business meetings, or just reading a menu, price tag or label while you are away from the home. Portable versions can be as light as 7 ounces and still allow a lot of magnification.

Advantages of video magnifiers:

- * A desktop video magnifier, allows you to use a larger size screen, which shows more of what you are looking at (more words) than a standard magnifier with the same power.



- * It allows more magnification than a standard magnifier, most standard magnifiers only go up to about 12 or 14x and the field is the size of a half dollar, where as some video magnifiers can go up to 70X. (although not as useful at the max power)

- * Contrast enhancement (makes print appear more black and white). Some even have the option to change colors of the print or the background.

- * Some have the option to add a line under what you are reading or blackout a portion, to help you track across the page easier.

- * Most have a button to help with writing, so the camera focuses on your paper and not on your hand.

- * Some newer versions are computer compatible, where half of your computer screen uses the CCTV mode and half is used for computer programs.

Getting devices

There are numerous devices available that can help those with low vision but, like any piece of sophisticated equipment, you need to have the right "fit." Thus, don't buy something "off the shelf." See a low vision specialist for a proper fit!

Our great vendors!

At the Low Vision Center, we have many local and nationwide vendors that have graciously loaned us their video magnifiers to demonstrate to our patients. Here's a list of the vendors and the equipment they have loaned us.

Florida Reading and Vision Technology:

Contact: Dan Giblin at (407) 488-3547

Smartview Xtend- Desktop model

- 3-68X magnification
- Auto focus
- High contrast/false colors
- Color image - one button press
- Can include a keypad to control options like line guides

Eclipse: Hybrid model

- 3-50X magnification
- Can fold in half to save space or carry
- Weight - only 20 lbs
- Line guides and blackouts
- Brightness control

Pocketviewer: Portable model

- up to 7x magnification
- 4X3 viewing screen
- lightweight
- Retractable writing stand
- Built-in rechargeable battery
- 2 hours continuous use of batteries

Freedom Scientific:

Contact: William Hopton at (800) 444-4443

Topaz: Desktop model

- 2-70X magnification
- Laser pointer to position
- Extra wide x-y table
- 28 high contrast modes
- computer compatible

Insight:

Contact: America Gordon at (800) 684-7456

Optelec Clearview plus feature pack:

Desktop model

- 2-50X magnification
- One button simple control system
- Electronic brake to lock for writing
- Optional - Line markers and windows providing reference guidelines for reading
- Optional - Additional foreground and background colors
- Computer compatible
- Position locator

Optelec Clearnote: Hybrid

- 3-46x magnification

- Battery operated - 5 hour rechargeable
- Laptop computer compatible
- Near and distance viewing
- Picture in picture

Looky: Portable model

- 3-8x magnification
- 3.5 " LCD display
- weight - 7 ounces
- 2 buttons - contrast enhancement and Freeze mode
- Writing ability
- Battery operated and chargeable

Compact: (coming soon) portable model

- Up to 10x magnification
- 4X3 viewing screens
- 3 hour AA batteries
- snapshot (freeze mode)
- Writing
- Center camera
- Can choose color of device

Clarity Deskmate - Hybrid

- 4-45x magnification
- 17 in. screen
- Near and distance viewing
- Spacesaver
- Lightweight

Magnifying America:

Contact: John Palmer at (352) 347-7827

Patriot: Desktop model

- 5-50X magnification
- Simple design
- Buttons are easy to use

Magnifying Solutions:

Contact: Tom O'Rourke at (386) 986-0312

Merlin: Desktop model

- 2.7-58x magnification
- Brightness controls
- Screen pivots, tilts and swivels and adjusts for height
- Computer compatible
- 3 year warranty

Acrobat: Hybrid

- Up to 72X magnification
- Distance, self and near viewing
- Adjustable arm

- Removable camera
- Line markers
- Remote control

Jordy: Hybrid

- Up to 30X magnification
- Portable
- Can be head borne like glasses or used with a monitor like a desktop model
- Wide field of view
- 4 modes of contrast

Amigo: Portable model

- 3.5 - 14x magnification
- Portable- operates on chargeable battery
- 6.5 inch viewing screen
- screen tilts for better posture
- contrast enhancement
- freeze mode
- connects to TV for more magnification

Nemo: Portable

- 4.5 - 9x magnification
- Portable- operates on chargeable 3 hour battery
- 4 inch viewing screen
- freeze mode
- contrast enhancement

Max:

- 16-28X magnification
- Economical
- Connects to a TV screen
- Contrast modes
- compatible with computer

A Special Thank You!

The staff at the Low Vision Center would like to give a special Thank You to one of our vendors - John Palmer of Magnifying Center. John loaned us a 27 inch LCD Television for use with patients in our office. The television gives us the opportunity to demonstrate a couple of video magnifiers that can be used with a patients own TV. It has also allowed us the ability to demonstrate descriptive videos that are available through the Talking Book Program and provide us the ability to show educational DVD's on eye conditions and our clinic to patients in our waiting area.

Follow up for a check up

Your visit to the Low Vision Center doesn't end when you walk out the door — you also need to make a follow-up visit!

"We want to make sure we have achieved your goals and that we have given you all the resources available, such as talking books and support groups," says Kim Rigdon, CLVT, the Center's therapist. "We want to visit with you

to make sure that you're comfortable with the devices and able to use them with the tasks you have chosen in the environment you will be using them in."

The follow-up should be about two weeks after your visit and you'll make your appointment when you're in the office for you initial visit.

How To Visit the Center

A visit to the Low Vision Center is a simple process. Simply call the Low Vision Center's Patient Care Coordinator, Marsha Dowell, to set up an appointment. The phone number is (904) 399-9989. She'll handle all the details.

A typical Low Vision Center experience consists of two visits. During the first visit your vision will be measured by the Low Vision Specialist, Dr. Tiffany Owens. Glasses or devices will be recommended to help meet your goals. You will be given the opportunity to borrow the devices to try them out at home. Finally, you will return for a follow up visit. During this visit, your progress will be measured and other concerns can be addressed. You will work with the Low Vision Center's Certified Low Vision Therapist, Kim Rigdon, on available community resources and non-optical items that can help make life easier.

Friends and family are encouraged to join you at your visit.



The Low Vision Center

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Low Vision Therapist

KIM RIGDON, CLVT

Patient Care Coordinator

MARSHA DOWELL

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This is a quarterly
publication of the
Low Vision Center of
Northeast Florida,
a non-profit clinic
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More information about
the center is available
by calling 389-9989.