

[IMAGE]

Protect Your Vision With Antioxidants

In the United States, a common cause of blindness in the elderly is age-related macular degeneration, or AMD. While the exact cause of AMD is unclear, many scientists believe that oxidative stress is a leading culprit. Previous research has shown that taking supplements high in antioxidants can slow the progression of AMD, but less is known about whether antioxidants - particularly those that come from food - can prevent AMD from occurring in the first place.

In this study, researchers in the Netherlands reviewed the dietary habits of more than 4,100 middle-aged people, all of whom completed a series of food questionnaires. The subjects were tracked for an average of eight years. During that time, 560 people in the study were diagnosed with AMD.

Comparison of the food questionnaires found that people who consumed foods high in four specific antioxidants - beta-carotene, vitamin C, vitamin E and zinc - were 35 percent less likely to develop AMD over the course of the follow-up period. On the other end of the scale, people who ate less than the regular amounts of these four nutrients were 20 percent more likely to develop AMD.

Various foods are high in antioxidants, including whole grains, vegetable oil, eggs and nuts (vitamin E); meat, poultry, fish and dairy products (zinc); carrots, kale and spinach (beta-carotene); and citrus fruits, fruit juices, green peppers and broccoli (vitamin C). If you are concerned about developing AMD, talk with your doctor of chiropractic about drawing up a diet plan containing foods high in these and other antioxidants. For more information, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition.

Van Leeuwen R, Boekhoorn S, Vingerling JR, et al. Dietary intake of antioxidants and risk of age-related macular degeneration. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Dec. 28, 2005;294(24):3101-3107.

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