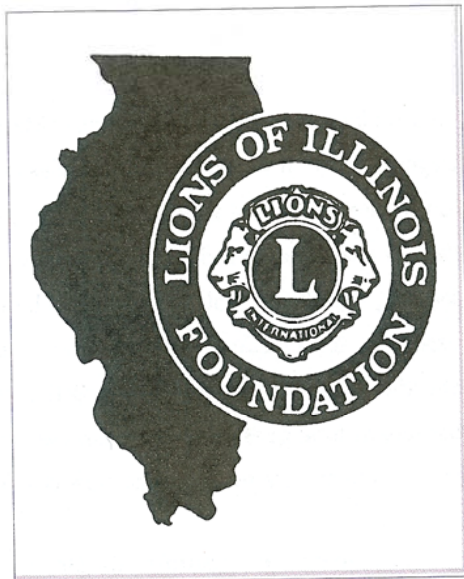
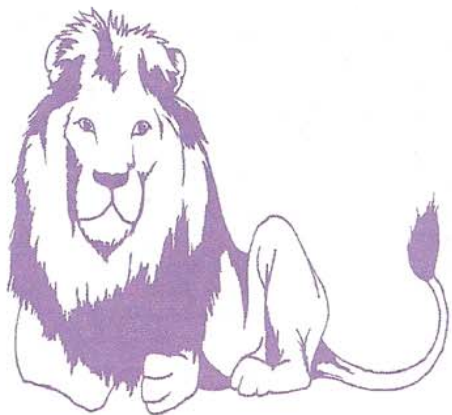


About our Screenings

The Lions of Illinois Foundation, in cooperation with Illinois Retina Associates, has expanded its vision services to include a Diabetic Eye/Macular Degeneration Program. This program is designed to screen people throughout the state who are in high-risk categories for Diabetic Retinopathy/Macular Degeneration. The screening process may determine that you have a retinal problem. If you are exhibiting symptoms similar to the ones listed in the brochure, we recommend that you seek ophthalmologic help.



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Macular Degeneration

Lions of Illinois
Foundation

815-756-5633

What is Macular Degeneration?

There are two forms of macular degeneration. The First is called Dry Macular Degeneration. It is a milder, more common form of the disease. Ninety percent of those who have macular degeneration have this dry kind and will not experience any great changes in their vision.

The second form of Macular Degeneration is called Neovascular. This form affects ten percent of the Macular Degeneration population. It is characterized by a leakage of fluid behind the retina. In some cases, bleeding and the traction of a blood clot in the vitreous body may pull the retina into the vitreous cavity. This is known as retinal detachment and if it is not diagnosed and treated very early, blindness will result.

What are the Symptoms?

Those with dry Macular Degeneration will more than likely not experience any symptoms of the disease. However, there may be some blurriness or difficulty in reading. It should not interfere with everyday tasks.

Neovascular Macular Degeneration may produce more obvious symptoms. A person may perceive a straight line as distorted, wavy, or crooked. Also, one may notice a blind spot in their central field of vision.

Is There Treatment?

There is laser therapy for Neovascular Macular Degeneration. It works in a very similar fashion to laser treatment for Diabetic Retinopathy. The laser beam is directed to the retina of the eye. This beam seals the abnormal blood vessels to stop bleeding. This treatment is only effective when the disease is diagnosed early because as time goes on and the disease progresses, the macula suffers irreparable damage.

Presently, there is no treatment for Dry Macular Degeneration.

Can Vision Aids Be Helpful?

Low vision aids can be of some help. Often, those with any visual loss due to Dry Macular Degeneration can manage with glasses or bifocals and bright lighting. Those with Neovascular Macular Degeneration may require a magnifying glass with a light attached or a telescopic lens added onto a pair of glasses.



How Do I Test For The Disease?

The Lions of Illinois Foundation provides two screenings for the disease. The screening test is the Amsler Grid. This is a simple screening using a piece of paper with a grid on it that the person taking the test uses in order to determine if they can see the center spot, if they are able to see all four sides without taking their eye from the center spot, if they see any defects in the grid, if the lines are wavy, etc. If the person has a problem seeing the grid, this could be an indication of Macular Degeneration.

The second screening uses a non-mydratric camera with digital imaging capability which photographs the retina. These digital images (computer photos) of the retina are reviewed by the professional staff at Illinois Retina Associates to see if the person being



screened exhibits any signs of Macular Degeneration.

These screenings are not meant to be used in lieu of an examination by an ophthalmologist. They are only to test for obvious signs of the disease. Persons found to exhibit symptoms of these retinal diseases are strongly encouraged to seek the ophthalmologist of their choice.