

# RECOMMENDED NUTRIENTS FOR HEALTHY EYES

## Essential nutrients your eyes need

Did you know that small, dietary changes can have a big impact on your eyes? In fact, published research studies have identified essential nutrients that promote healthy vision, improve visual performance and may reduce the risk of certain eye diseases.<sup>1-10</sup>

Consider the list below<sup>7,12</sup> and remember the recommended daily intake of these essential nutrients typically requires supplementation in addition to your diet. Just make sure to consult your eye health professional or physician before beginning any new nutrition regimen, including when it changes your dietary supplement usage.

**10**

MG/DAY

**Lutein**<sup>2,3</sup>

with Zeaxanthin **2 MG/DAY**

Green leafy vegetables such as spinach, collards or kale; corn, eggs or lutein supplements

**500**

MG/DAY

**DHA/EPA**<sup>4,5</sup>

Essential Fatty Acids

Fleshy fish like tuna or salmon or fish oil supplements

**500**

MG/DAY

**Vitamin C**<sup>1,9,10</sup>

Orange juice, other citrus and fortified juices, citrus fruits or Vitamin C supplements

**400**

IU/DAY

**Vitamin E**<sup>1,9,10</sup>

Nuts, salad and vegetable oils, peanut butter, fortified cereals, sweet potatoes or Vitamin E supplements

**40-80**

MG/DAY

**Zinc**<sup>\*1,6</sup>

Red meat, poultry, oysters, fortified breakfast cereals, nuts, baked beans, milk or multivitamin/mineral supplements

\* The 40 – 80 mg zinc dosage is for people diagnosed as being at high risk for age-related macular degeneration (AMD) or experiencing early-stage AMD. The recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for zinc is 11 mg for men and 8 mg for women. High doses of zinc may cause stomach upset. **Also, zinc supplementation has been known to interfere with copper absorption, so 2 mg/day of copper is strongly recommended for people supplementing their diet with zinc.**<sup>8</sup> Excellent sources of copper are mixed nuts, sunflower seeds, and beans.<sup>12</sup>

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## Proper nutrition is critical

**Absolute need** – Today, 25 million people worldwide are affected by eye diseases like age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and cataracts. AMD is the leading cause of blindness in people over 55.

**Emerging science** – In 2001, the National Eye Institute concluded that AMD is a nutrition responsive disorder in its Age-Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS).<sup>1</sup> A follow-up study (AREDS2) began in June 2008 and includes 4,000 patients at high risk for AMD. AREDS2 is evaluating the protective effects lutein, zeaxanthin, and omega-3 fatty acids may have against AMD as well as the link between nutrition and macular pigment optical density (MPOD), cataract development and visual function.<sup>11</sup>

### AREDS2 STUDY — NUTRIENT SUPPLEMENTATION DOSES/DAY:<sup>11</sup>

Lutein: 10 mg

DHA: 350 mg

Vitamin C: 500 mg

Zeaxanthin: 2 mg

EPA: 650 mg

Vitamin E: 400 IU

Copper: 2 mg

Zinc: 80 or 25 mg

**Ask your eye doctor** – about the nutrients you may need daily to keep your eyes healthy, reduce the risk of certain eye diseases or improve visual performance. Please visit [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org) or [www.luteininfo.com](http://www.luteininfo.com) for more information.

**Eye Care Professionals** – to reorder these free nutrition tear pads for your practice, please email: [publicrelations@aoa.org](mailto:publicrelations@aoa.org)

### REFERENCES

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