



Vision Alert

February 2008

Photopigments known as zeaxanthin and lutein along with vitamin E have been shown to help protect the eyes against the development of cataracts. These are all in the group of elements called antioxidants. We have known that they are key in reducing the risk of macular degeneration, however this new study expands their role to providing a reduced risk of cataract formation!

A recent large scale study conducted at Harvard Medical School and published in the respected professional journal Archives of Ophthalmology followed over 35,000 subjects for 10 years. During that period of time over 2,000 subjects developed cataracts. A review of the study population revealed that there was a 20% greater incidence of cataract development in those subjects who had low levels of zeaxanthin and lutein. There was a 16% increased risk of cataract development in those subjects with low levels of vitamin E.

Your doctors at NSVC have been proactive in the management of ocular diseases in consideration of nutrition and supplementation. We have the ability to measure levels of protective photopigments (zeaxanthin and lutein) located in the central retina known as the macula. A simple and non-invasive test called QuantifEye measures macula photopigment density levels (termed "MPOD" levels). Should these levels be low we can suggest modifications to diet and prescribe supplements such as Eye Promise Restore that contain anti-oxidants, including zeaxanthin, lutein, vitamin E, and other key ocular protective elements (including Omega 3). We have seen dramatic increases in MPOD levels following 6 to 12 months of diet modification and supplement use.

NSVC is committed to preventative health management for all of our patients. Please contact our office to schedule a visit where we can determine if your levels of protective photopigments are normal or if they are low and require supplementation.