

## Medicines Management Team Advisory Summary

Dietary supplements for age-related macular degeneration (AMD) are not recommended for prescribing in primary care within NHS Wiltshire CCG.

For patients who wish to purchase:

- Preservision or Viteyes Original Capsules closely match the formulation used in the AREDS study. Unlicensed & not suitable for smokers or recent ex-smokers.
- Viteyes 2 (unlicensed) matches the AREDS2 formulation (no betacarotene).

### Introduction

- AMD is the leading cause of registered blindness in the Western world<sup>1</sup>.
- Many dietary supplements, containing differing combinations of vitamins, zinc and carotenoids (lutein, zeaxanthin and meso-zeaxanthin), claim to improve eye health.
- They are available for purchase from pharmacies, health food shops and on the internet.
- They are unlicensed so cannot be promoted for AMD but some are available on the NHS.
- The AREDS study<sup>2</sup> reported a reduction in the progression to advanced AMD in a small number of patients treated with zinc plus antioxidants (beta-carotene 15mg, Vitamin C 500mg, Vitamin E 400 IU, Zinc 80mg and Copper 2mg) compared to placebo.
- AREDS2 tested if adding lutein+zeaxanthin, DHA+EPA, or lutein+zeaxanthin and DHA+EPA to the AREDS formulation might further reduce the risk<sup>3</sup>. The conclusion was that the addition of the extra components **did not further reduce the risk of progression**. However, because of the potential increased incidence of lung cancer in former smokers, lutein+zeaxanthin could be an appropriate carotenoid substitute in the AREDS formulation.

### Formulary Status

3Ts	BCAP	ICID
Not listed	'Not recommended' products	Not listed

### Recommended Actions

- **Review patients taking any nutritional supplement for AMD and advise them that this is not recommended for prescribing in primary care but they can purchase as above.**

### Wiltshire CCG Cost Impact

In the last 12 months, £11,304 was spent in 992 prescriptions for AMD dietary supplements

### References

1. UKMI Q&A 78.4 Antioxidants and zinc for age-related macular degeneration. Oct 2011. Available at: [www.evidence.nhs.uk](http://www.evidence.nhs.uk)
2. Age-related Eye Disease Study Research Group. A randomized, placebo-controlled, clinical trial of high-dose supplementation with vitamins C and E, beta carotene, and zinc for age-related macular degeneration and vision loss. AREDS report no. 8. Arch Ophthalmol 2001; 119: 1417-1436.
3. Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2) Research Group. Lutein+Zeaxanthin and Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Age-Related Macular Degeneration. The Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2) Randomized Clinical Trial. JAMA 2013; 309: 2005-2015.
4. <http://www.bcapformulary.nhs.uk/1110-nutritional-supplements-for-age-related-macular-degeneration>