

PRISM

Your Resource for Independent Living • Summer, Fall 2008

KEEP AN EYE ON NUTRITION TO PROTECT VISION

AGE-RELATED MACULAR Degeneration (AMD) is an eye disease that destroys the sharp central vision needed for everyday tasks such as driving and reading. It is the leading cause of vision loss in adults over age fifty, and it currently has no cure. Because of this, and because of its devastating impact on people's lives, prevention is key—research is still ongoing, but initial results suggest that making simple dietary changes may slow and even prevent the development of AMD.

Eating a diet low in fat and high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains keeps your body healthy by providing it with the nutrients it needs to function at top capacity. We already know this diet reduces your chance of developing chronic diseases, and now it appears it keeps your eyes healthy too!

The connection between a high fat diet and the weakening and failure of the human vascular system is well established. Minimizing your intake of dietary fat lessens the stress on the blood vessels that supply your eyes with the gases and nutrients essential to their continued function—thus lessening your risk of developing AMD! Amongst the different types of fats, high consumption of saturated, monounsaturated and trans unsaturated fats are all associated with an increased risk of AMD.¹

Conversely, omega-3 fatty acids, found in large quantities in fish, walnuts and kiwi fruit (as well as other foods), have been associated with a decreased risk of developing eye disease. Because of this, professionals recommend the consumption of omega-3 rich foods, in particular fatty cold water fish such as salmon, herring, anchovies and sardines. Studies show that people who eat fish at least twice weekly benefit the most.²

Like fish, fruits and vegetables keep your body healthy and protect your eyes. Many botanical foods are rich in carotenoids, organic pigments that help the human body produce vitamin A, a substance important to good eye health. One study concluded that participants consuming the largest amount of carotenoid rich fruits and vegetables had a 43% lower risk of AMD compared to those who consumed smaller amounts.³

Some foods rich in carotenoids (collards, kale, spinach) are associated with a notably lower risk of Macular

FOODS FOR GOOD EYE HEALTH

FISH AND SHELLFISH

FRUITS

Apples, Apricots, Blueberries, Cherries, Grapefruit, Peaches, Strawberries, Raspberries, Tangerines

BEANS AND LEGUMES (FRESH COOKED)

Black-eyed peas, Butter beans, Chick peas, Green beans, Lentils, Lima beans, Kidney beans, Navy beans

BREADS AND PASTAS

High fiber wheat, Pumpernickel, Whole wheat pasta (and other whole grain breads and pastas)

NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Asparagus, Bok choy, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Collard greens, Cucumber, Greens, Lettuce, Mushrooms, Okra, Onions, Peppers, Snow peas, Spinach, Summer squash, Sweet potatoes, Tomatoes

GRAINS

Barley, Bulghur, Rye, Wild rice

NUTS AND OILS

Almonds, Peanuts, Sunflower seeds, Hazelnuts, Pecans, Walnuts, Oils that are liquid at room temperature

DAIRY

Skim milk, Lowfat cheese, Lowfat yogurt

POULTRY AND MEAT

Lean beef, Skinless chicken and turkey

Degeneration—so don't forget to eat your greens!³

Additionally, new research indicates that the type of carbohydrates you consume has implications for your eyes. Researchers postulate that simple carbohydrates (sugar, corn syrup) "provide eye tissue with too much glucose too quickly, overwhelming eye cells' ability to use (it) properly."⁴ In fact, in the same study, the researchers concluded that **CONTINUED ON PG 2**

KEEP AN EYE ON NUTRITION, CONTINUED FROM PG 1

“dietary glycemic index... is associated with the risk and severity of AMD”⁴, with an increase in the risk of AMD directly related to an increase in dietary glycemic index.

Dietary glycemic index (dGI) expresses how quickly the foods you eat affect your blood sugar level. Generally speaking, a food with a high glycemic index, which breaks down rapidly in your bloodstream, is considered of lower quality than one with a low glycemic index, which breaks down more slowly. A diet rich in complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains (whole wheat, rye, barley) and non starchy vegetables (broccoli, cucumbers, tomatoes), which has a low dGI, is better for you and your eyes than a diet containing a large portion of low quality carbohydrates, such as refined flours and sugar sweetened beverages, which has a high dGI.

Simple changes, like substituting whole wheat toast for white toast at breakfast and water for soda at lunch, can lower your dGI and improve your health. Including more fruits and veggies in your diet is a delicious option that will protect you from chronic disease and help manage your weight. To add more fruits to your diet, try a fruit smoothie for breakfast and replace less nutritious mid day snacks with fruit or nuts. Whole grains have proven benefits for disease prevention and cardiovascular health, and now it seems they protect your eyes as well. Try making oatmeal

or bulghur wheat from scratch, or picking up some pumpernickel bread at your local bakery.

Eating better not only protects your health and your eyes, it opens an exciting world of culinary options. Borrow a new cookbook from the library, and try some new ingredients—it’s good for your taste buds—and your health!

NEED HELP MAKING SENSE OF ALL THIS ADVICE? The USDA publishes *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* every five years (available at www.health.gov). Although these suggestions do not directly address concerns about nutrition and vision loss, they do provide a comprehensive set of rules designed to help you make healthy and satisfying food choices every day.

SOURCES

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3. J. M. Seddon; U. A. Ajani; R. D. Sperduto; R. Hiller; N. Blair; T. C. Burton; M. D. Farber; E. S. Gragoudas; J. Haller; D. T. Miller; et al. “Dietary carotenoids, vitamins A, C, and E, and advanced age-related macular degeneration. Eye Disease Case-Control Study Group”. *J. of Am. Medical Association*, Nov. 1994; 272: 1413-1420.
4. Chung-Jung Chiu, Roy C Milton, Gary Gensler, and Allen Taylor. “Association between dietary glycemic index and age-related macular degeneration in non diabetic participants in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study”. *Am. J. Clinical Nutrition*, Jul. 2007; 86: 180-188.

BROWSE YOUR WAY TO FREEDOM

TWO TYPES of software allow blind and visually impaired users to access computers. Screen readers and screen enlargers (magnifying software) are important adaptive aids that are widely available, but commercial versions can be expensive for those on a fixed income. However, there are screen readers and screen enlarger/magnifiers that are free or very low price, so explore the options below, and browse your way to freedom!

Apple OSX v.10.4 and above come with a built in screen reader called Voice Over and a zoom view, which acts as a screen magnifier. Turn on Voice Over with command+F5 and zoom with command+option 8 (zoom in with command+option + and out with command+option -).

Windows XP and Vista have a built in screen reader called Narrator and a screen enlarger called Magnifier. Turn them on by pressing window+u.

www.satogo.com is a site supported by Serotek Inc., in partnership with the Air foundation, which lets visitors download the free Satogo screen reader. Satogo also has some text enlarger features. It works best with systems running Internet Explorer 6 or later, and remains on your computer until shut down.

NVDA (Non Visual Desktop Access) is another free screen reader. Created by Michael Curran with funding from the Mozilla Foundation, NVDA is compatible with Windows.

Download NVDA at www.nvda-project.org.

WebAnywhere is also a screen reader, but unlike other software, it can be used without download and installation; this means you can use it anywhere—at the library, a public kiosk or a friend’s house! It only works within a web browser, but works with most browsers and operating systems. It was developed at the U. of Washington by Jeffrey Bigham, Craig Prince and Richard Ladner with funding from the National Science Foundation. This free program is available at www.webanywhere.cs.washington.edu.

LowBrowse is a screen enlarger and text reader that runs in conjunction with the Firefox web browser. It is expected to be available via addons.mozilla.org in early fall 2008, and will be free. LowBrowse is part of a larger research project headed by Aries Ardit at Lighthouse International, with funding from the National Eye Institute. Read more at www.lighthouse.org.

In addition to these free options, all major commercial screen access companies make their software available for short free trials. Furthermore, there are loan programs that let users pay for assistive technology in monthly installments.

For more information about assistive technology call Lan Nguyen, Assistive Technology Specialist at CSBPS at **(800) 458-4888**. Email lnguyen@csbps.com.

WHAT'S THE TIME?

TELLING TIME independently is something many people desperately miss after experiencing vision loss; it sometimes becomes symbolic of the helplessness they feel after losing something seemingly so essential.

Luckily, the development of modern adaptive aids lets visually impaired individuals tell time easily, without resorting to undignified means.

At SightConnection we carry clocks and watches specifically designed for people with impaired vision. We have talking clocks and watches, low vision clocks and watches, and Braille watches. We even have atomic timepieces that automatically adjust for time changes, and watches that speak Spanish! These products come in a variety of colors and styles, so everyone can find something perfect.

To see our full selection, go to www.sightconnection.com and browse through the clocks and watches section.

LOW VISION CLOCKS AND WATCHES AVAILABLE AT SIGHTCONNECTION--VISIT www.sightconnection.com



TALKING ATOMIC WATCH
PLU 253



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PLU 175



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PLU 201



LADIES' ONE BUTTON TALKING WATCHES
PLU 164, PLU 226, PLU 165



SPANISH TALKING WATCH
PLU 260

PLANNED GIVING AND ESTATE PLANNING

EFFECTIVE ESTATE planning usually takes time, effort and a good attorney. By taking the time to plan your arrangements, you allow your family to avoid the delay, dissension and needless expense that often occurs when a loved one dies without a will. Once you have taken care of your family's needs, please consider a thoughtful bequest to CSBPS.

CSBPS uses planned gifts to continue to:

- provide programs and services to individuals who are visually impaired
- provide services to those who would otherwise be unable to afford the cost(s)
- educate the public about vision impairment and age related vision loss
- work with individuals, families and the community to ensure people living with vision impairment have continued independence, a healthy sense of well-being and make safe lifestyle adjustments

If you don't already have an estate plan, contact your attorney and discuss bequest and estate planning with him or her. Your attorney will be able to provide you with

the best course of action in planning your estate.

You can include CSBPS in your will or living trust. The most common way people remember CSBPS in a will or living trust is through a charitable bequest. You do not have to rewrite your current documents. You simply add an amendment, called a codicil, to your will or living trust. Your attorney will provide you with instructions, as well as simple language to use. Your bequest is entirely under your control during life and becomes irrevocable only at death.

Alternatively, you can name CSBPS as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. Ask your insurance company for a beneficiary form and discuss this with your insurance agent, who will be glad to help you and answer any questions you may have.

By including CSBPS in your will or living trust, you will become a member of our Visionary Society. If you choose to designate CSBPS as a beneficiary of your planned giving arrangements, let us know by calling **206 525-5556** or emailing giving@csbps.com.

LIVING THE DREAM

For they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible.

T.E. Lawrence, *Lawrence of Arabia*

THIS QUOTE is a favorite of Dr. Tim Carey, a local ophthalmologist. Dr. Carey has spent much of his life working with medical and surgical issues concerning people's eyes. He has long been a supporter of CSBPS, both personally and professionally.

For many years, Dr. Carey has held an annual summer party at his home. As the party has grown with time, Dr. Carey has transformed it into a benefit for CSBPS. This gathering has raised thousands of dollars to benefit CSBPS over the years—this year it raised \$5,020 for us!

But Dr. Carey's commitment to serving people with impaired vision doesn't stop there. This year he spent several weeks in Iraq teaching oculoplastic surgery to Iraqi doctors and personally performing surgery on war trauma victims, both military and civilian.

One person, living the dream, making the dream happen.

GIVING MADE EASY

IT'S AS easy as a mouse click! Visit www.csbps.com, and click on DonateNow. Make a one time gift, sign up to give recurrently, honor an individual or recognize a special occasion! All donations are processed securely and remember—we never share your data. For more information, call **(206) 525-5556** or email giving@csbps.com.

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HOURS

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DID YOU know... Community Services for the Blind operates a fleet of trucks dedicated to collecting donations of used clothing and household goods from homes throughout our community?

Call **800 472-2244**, or schedule your pickup online at www.donatecsb.org. Call us—we're happy to help!

CAR AND TRUCK DONATIONS

HAVE AN old vehicle you can't or don't drive anymore? Donate it to CSBPS. We'll pick it up at your house and handle all paperwork, including title transfers.

Visit www.irs.gov to learn about the tax benefits of vehicle donations. Call **877 870-2659** to schedule your donation today!



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