



AMD
AWARENESS
WEEK

7th - 15th September

SIGHTSEE WITH ME

**Age-related Macular Degeneration is the No.1
cause of sight loss in Ireland for over 50s***

Take a peek inside to learn more or visit www.amd.ie

 **NOVARTIS**

*The Cost of Sight Loss Report NCBI 2011

Foreword by Deirdre O’Kane

2019 AMD Awareness Week Ambassador

Ireland really is a stunner isn’t it? We live in one of the most picturesque countries in the world.

So we shouldn’t let something like Age-related Macular Degeneration – or AMD – stop us from enjoying Ireland’s sights. Having recently entered my 50s I’m more conscious than ever of taking care of my health but I also know it’s easy to ignore symptoms when we’re busy and don’t want to burden our families. The Sightsee With Me campaign is an important reminder to consider the lasting memories we create with loved ones, through sightseeing, especially in such a beautiful country as Ireland. It gives us the opportunity to learn about the symptoms, prompting us to get our eyes tested regularly and continue to enjoy these special moments. Conditions such as AMD should never be a reason to miss out on seeing the things you love with the ones you love.



What is Age-Related Macular Degeneration?

AMD affects the macula at the back of the eye, which is responsible for central vision and allows you to see detail. As the leading cause of sight loss in Ireland, it is vital that people over 50 get eye tests regularly, so that AMD can be diagnosed and treated as early as possible.

There are two types of AMD: dry and wet.

Dry is the more common (80-90%), and while there is no known cure, oral supplements may slow its progression. Dry AMD can progress to Wet AMD, which is responsible for 90% of cases of severe vision loss².

References:

1. Akuffo KO, Nolan J, Stack J, Moran R, Feeney J, Kenny RA, Peto T, Dooley C, O'Halloran AM, Cronin H, and Beatty S. Prevalence of age-related macular degeneration in the Republic of Ireland. *British Journal of Ophthalmology*. 2015. (<http://bjo.bmj.com/content/early/2015/02/23/bjophthalmol-2014-305768.short> accessed: 14/07/2017)
2. Arnold et al. *BMJ* 2000;321:741-744 Clinical Evidence AMD.
3. <http://www.eyedoctors.ie/your-eye-health/eye-conditions.asp>

In Ireland over
100,000
people over 50
have AMD¹

Wet AMD
causes
90%
of severe
sight loss²

Sightsee With Me

Loretto Callaghan

Managing Director, Novartis Ireland

“Novartis is committed to helping people with eye diseases and we are proud to continually support AMD Awareness Week. Our ‘Sightsee with Me’ campaign returns for a second year, encouraging people over the age of 50 to get their eyes tested. We’re delighted to also launch the AMD Symptom Checker, a practical tool designed to help those at risk, their caregivers and the general public to identify some of the symptoms of AMD.”

Mr Mark Cahill

Consultant Eye Surgeon, Irish College of Ophthalmologists

“Symptoms of AMD can often go unrecognised so it’s vital that those aged over 50 arm themselves with as much information as possible and get their eyes tested every two years. When AMD is diagnosed and treated early it is a very manageable condition, as effective treatments are now available. We know that many living with AMD depend on their caregivers heavily for support, so the AMD Symptom Checker is a very welcome addition in not only educating those at risk of developing AMD, but those who may be able to identify symptoms in a loved one also. There are many ways people can improve their eye health such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, increasing intake of leafy greens into your daily diet, regular exercise and not smoking. If you notice any change in your sight or if there is a history of AMD in your family, it is important to get your eyes tested regularly.”

Lynda McGivney-Nolan

Optometric Advisor to Association of Optometrists

“The most effective way to detect AMD is by having regular eye examinations with your optometrist. AMD testing is routinely carried out by all optometrists during the eye examination. Optometrists are trained to identify the early changes at the macula that can appear before your eye sight is affected. Optometrists are also trained to give you advice on how to reduce and manage your risk of developing AMD. If you have any concerns about your vision, you should talk to your optometrist.”



Mairin Hourihan
Middleton, Co. Cork

Mairin is a retired nurse from Cork. After noticing she could no longer read the time on her clock radio, Mairin made an appointment to see her GP who then referred her to an eye specialist. She was unaware of AMD, or the potential benefits of catching it early.

Since that time, almost one year ago exactly, Mairin has undergone treatment and is very pleased to report that her vision is now better than ever. She credits the early detection by her GP, who she fondly refers to as “Mr. G,” with helping her vision before it had gotten any worse.

Mairin recognises how fortunate she was in catching AMD in the early stages. She is eager to help spread awareness about AMD and convince anyone over the age of 50 in Ireland to get their eyes tested regularly.



Jean Fitzgerald

Portmarnock, Dublin 13

Jean was diagnosed with AMD in 2005, aged 62. She had noticed some changes in her vision and went to speak with her doctor. She had heard of AMD, but she admits that she wasn't fully aware of what it could possibly entail. Crediting her early detection and treatment, Jean today is able to largely enjoy her vision as normal, with very few restrictions or adverse effects to her lifestyle.

Jean says she enjoys the fact that her daughter has to drive her sometimes, as it gives her time to appreciate the beauty of the Irish countryside that she may not have paid attention to before.

Jean faced the very real possibility of significant sight reduction and is eager to help to inform others on the risks of AMD as well as the benefits of getting tested early.



Joseph Edge
Artane, Dublin 5

When Joe went to get new reading glasses, his optometrist asked him if he had a family history of AMD. Joe knew there was indeed a family history of vision problems, but didn't realise he was at risk. Each year thereafter, Joe underwent his annual eye check and, unfortunately, eventually developed AMD.

Despite the early detection, and continued treatment, Joe's eyesight has deteriorated significantly in the 14 years since his diagnosis. There are numerous challenges that now present themselves to Joe in his daily life – from pouring tea, to putting clothes on the line.

Joe now wishes to help to spread awareness about AMD and eye health in general. He hopes that hearing his story and the difficulties that he faces on a daily basis will help to convince others to have their eyes tested on a regular basis – or maybe just remind us all how much we take the gift of sight for granted.

Take the AMD Symptom Checker



NORMAL VISION

If you notice any of these symptoms, get your eyes tested immediately.



BLURRED VISION



DISTORTION



DARK SPOTS

Learn about Age-related macular degeneration and take the AMD symptom checker at [AMD.ie](https://www.amd.ie)



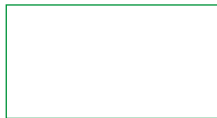
Greetings from **Blurry**
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Blurred vision can be a symptom of AMD.
Learn about AMD and take the AMD Symptom Checker at AMD.ie

SIGHTSEE WITH ME

Blurred vision is can be a symptom of AMD.

Learn about AMD and take the AMD Symptom Checker at [AMD.ie](https://www.amd.ie)



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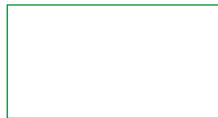
Greetings from *Distorted*
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin



Distorted vision can be a symptom of AMD.
Learn about AMD and take the AMD Symptom Checker at AMD.ie

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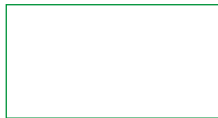


Greetings from **Obscured**
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Dark spotted vision can be a symptom of AMD.
Learn about AMD and take the AMD Symptom Checker at AMD.ie

SIGHTSEE WITH ME

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Sightsee With Me

Chris White

CEO, NCBI

“As the national sight loss organisation, the NCBI is passionate about ensuring that people are equipped with all the information they need about AMD and know what signs and symptoms to look out for. Everyone will experience some changes in sight as part of the natural aging process and recognising the signs of AMD as early as possible is key to ensuring that you have the best vision possible as you grow older. Our NCBI Charity shops nationwide will be hosting coffee mornings for AMD Awareness Week to raise public awareness and to encourage discussion around this important health initiative. NCBI services are available to everyone affected by AMD, their caregivers and their families, and we encourage everyone to get involved in this year’s campaign.”

Siobhan Kelly

CEO, Irish College of Ophthalmologists

“This is a very exciting campaign for AMD awareness and we look forward to seeing this Sightsee with Me campaign take to the nation. The Irish College of Ophthalmologists is proud to support the campaign and to advocate for early detection of the condition. Vision loss associated with a range of eye conditions including AMD, may be preventable and diagnosis and treatment by an eye doctor, at the earliest opportunity is important to ensure the best health outcomes.”

Kevin Whelan

CEO, Fighting Blindness

“The Fighting Blindness team is here to provide information and support to people and families affected by sight loss. We’re very excited to continue to support AMD Awareness Week, an important annual campaign. It is an important health campaign raising awareness of the symptoms of this condition and encouraging people to protect their vision by getting their eyes tested regularly.”

**AMD cannot be prevented;
however, treatment is available, and the onset can be delayed
by making some lifestyle changes and through regular eye tests.**



You should have your eyes tested every two years by an eye care specialist, especially if there is a history of sight loss in your family



Eat more leafy greens rich in Lutein such as kale or spinach



Take supplements like Vitamin E and Zinc



Stop smoking

If you are worried about your sight, please see an eye care professional for a full eye examination.

 **NOVARTIS**

Date of preparation: August 2019
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SiGHTSEE WITH ME