



**FLORIDA EYE**  
*Microsurgical Institute, Inc.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Contact: Gwen Cohan  
Director of Marketing  
(561) 736-5050 - office  
[gwen@fleyedocs.com](mailto:gwen@fleyedocs.com)  
[www.fleyedocs.com](http://www.fleyedocs.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Hope for those with Age-Related Macular Degeneration**

**March is Age-Related Macular Degeneration & Low Vision Awareness Month**

**March 1st, 2011, Boynton Beach, FL** - Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of visual impairment for individuals age 50 and older, and while there is still no cure, there is hope for those with AMD.

As part of Age-Related Macular Degeneration / Low Vision Awareness Month in March, Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute's Macular Degeneration & Diabetic Retinopathy Specialist Randy Katz MD is urging those at risk to be screened for age-related vision problems by having regular eye exams and talking with their ophthalmologist about new treatments and low vision resources, if experiencing vision loss.

Macular degeneration is a progressive, usually painless disease that affects the macula, the spot on the retina at the back of the eye responsible for central vision, causing central vision to blur, but leaving peripheral vision intact. Thus, AMD does not lead to total blindness.

"I urge you to know your risk factors and if you experience changes in your vision, such as straight lines appearing wavy, an inability to see details, dark or empty spots in the center of your vision or decreased ability to distinguish colors, see your ophthalmologist promptly," says Dr. Katz, adding that those most at risk are individuals 50 years and older, people that suffer from hypertension, individuals who smoke and those with a family history of AMD.

"Research continues for AMD treatments, and I think we'll see increasingly effective treatments becoming available in the near future. For example, current findings show that high levels of zinc and antioxidants can play a key role in slowing the progression of advanced AMD and that conventional laser and photodynamic therapy can reduce the risk of moderate to severe vision loss in patients with specific forms of "wet" macular degeneration," says Dr. Katz. "Other experimental treatments, including intraocular injections of antineovascular factors and the insertion of a "retinal chip" which may restore vision loss are also currently being investigated."

"Beware of claims being made on the Internet, in newspapers and in magazines announcing cures for macular degeneration. Investigate the claims thoroughly and talk with your ophthalmologist before undergoing any treatments," adds Dr. Katz. "Most of these treatments have not been proven safe or effective and may be very costly."

Vision loss does not have to mean loss of independence or quality of life. If you have low vision, ask your ophthalmologist about low vision rehabilitation. He or she can provide low vision services or refer you to an optometrist who specializes in low vision treatments.

Early detection and treatment is the best defense against losing your vision. If you are at risk for macular degeneration, see your ophthalmologist for a complete eye exam at least every one to two years.

For more information about AMD or low vision and available treatments at Florida Eye please contact Gwen Cohan at (561) 736-5050, or [gwen@fleyedocs.com](mailto:gwen@fleyedocs.com).

The Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute offers a full range of comprehensive ophthalmologic care, including routine eye care and examinations, pediatric eye care, dry eyes, advanced corneal, retinal and cataract procedures, laser treatments, glaucoma and diabetic procedures, ophthalmic plastics, orbital surgery and various other sophisticated treatments. With its own pediatric wing and fully accredited outpatient surgical center in Boynton Beach, the Institute has additional offices in Boca Raton, Wellington and Juno Beach.