

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is the “commonest cause of vision impairment in older Australians with 28% of those in their 80’s experiencing end-stage AMD”¹.

AMD is a degenerative condition affecting the macula, a small area at the centre of the retina. The macula is responsible for fine detailed vision needed for activities such as driving, reading and distinguishing colour. AMD blurs the central vision, which affects both distance and near vision. It can lead to partial loss of vision or blind spots appearing in the central vision. Fortunately, a person’s side (peripheral) vision remains intact.



6/6 Vision



AMD

Some common problems of AMD are:

- problems in identifying the edge of steps if there is no colour contrast on the nosing of the tread
- being unable to tell the difference between where the footpath ends and the road begins
- not being able to know when the traffic light changes
- misjudging the speed and distance of oncoming traffic when crossing the road
- Missing dark coloured cars due to their lack of contrast with the road
- glare and light sensitivity
- difficulty with changes in lighting conditions, especially in areas with little illumination
- difficulty in distinguishing peoples’ faces
- finding close work a challenge
- problems with reading as the words become blurred and letters run into each other
- a lack of distinction in objects of a similar colour due to colour vision being affected by AMD
- straight lines appearing distorted or curved

People with AMD might still be able to move around safely with minimal difficulty or even be able to pick out items with their peripheral vision.

¹ <http://iris.medoph.unimelb.edu.au/new/eyecare/amd.html>

How we can help

People who have Age Related Macular Degeneration can receive assistance from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT.

- Orientation and Mobility services are designed to meet individual needs and are provided on a one-to-one basis. Our Instructors will assist the person with a vision impairment to become confident travelling safely and efficiently in familiar and unfamiliar environments.
- Our Low Vision Clinic is a joint venture with the University of New South Wales School of Optometry and assessments are billed through Medicare. The clinic is located at Guide Dogs office in Chatswood, Sydney.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT provides all of its services, including mobility aids, free of charge.

To refer someone to us, with their permission, please phone your nearest Client Services office on:

Sydney East Region:	(02) 9412 9300	Lismore:	(02) 6621 8475
Sydney West Region:	(02) 9891 4914	Newcastle:	(02) 4925 3066
Low Vision Clinic:	(02) 9412 9392	Orange:	(02) 6362 6625
Guide Dogs Centre:	(02) 4579 7555	Tamworth:	(02) 6761 3152
ACT:	(02) 6285 2988	Wagga Wagga:	(02) 6925 3559
Albury:	(02) 6041 5201	Wollongong:	(02) 4225 9247
Coffs Harbour:	(02) 6652 7424		

Or contact us at www.guidedogs.com.au/contact