

Information on nutrition and eye health

In conjunction with the pending release of the newly revised American Optometric Association (AOA) Optometric Clinical Practice Guidelines on Care of the Patient with Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD), the AOA Communications Group has expanded its line of patient education materials on the importance of proper nutrition.

- The new AOA Nutrition Counter Display Kit (see Figure 1) offers optometrists an eye-catching way to

New American Optometric Association materials can assist optometrists in helping patients understand the importance of good nutrition. A growing number of Web-based services offers nutrition information that may be interesting to both patients and practitioners.

promote awareness of proper nutrition as patients step into the reception area or examination room. This free kit includes:

- o Clear acrylic counter card with brochure pocket
- o Two counter card inserts
 - “Eating Healthy and Your Vision”
 - “March is Save Your Vision Month” (can be used March 2010)
- o Two pads of the AOA “Recommended Nutrients for Healthy Eyes” brochure
- o Template news release for Save Your Vision Month (can be used March 2010)
- “Diet, Nutrition and Eye Health,” a new 12-page AOA booklet (see Figure 2), explains why good nutrition is important in preventing not only AMD but cataract. The booklet outlines the 4 nutrients recommended in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study (vitamin A, vitamin C, copper, and zinc) plus the 3 (lutein, zeaxanthin, and omega-3 fatty acids) that are now the subject of the AREDS 2 research. The booklet lists foods that provide each of those nutrients as well as a recommended daily intake. Advice on healthy lifestyle (smoking cessation, weight control) is also offered.

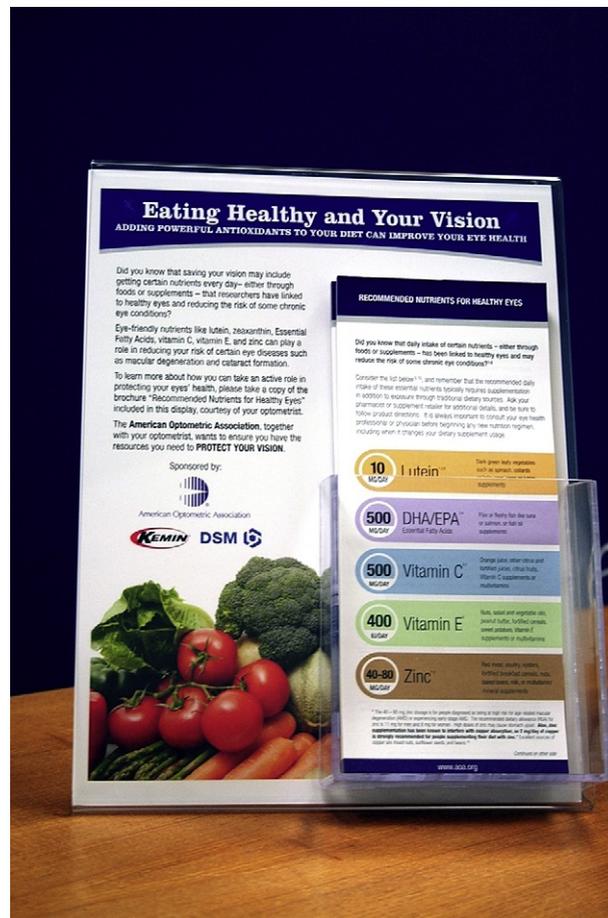


Figure 1 AOA Nutrition Counter Display Kit.

- “Recommended Nutrients for Healthy Eyes,” the AOA’s popular 4” x 9” brochure, lists nutrients that are important for eye health, plus the foods that provide them, and suggested questions that patients may wish to ask an optometrist regarding good nutrition (e.g., “I take a multivitamin every day, is that enough?”). The brochure is available as part of the AOA Counter Card Kit or for use by itself in tear-off pads of 50.

AOA members can order the AOA Nutrition Counter Display Kit by logging onto www.aoa.org/syvm-kits.xml and providing the requested information. (Please allow 5 to 7 business days for delivery.) Copies of the “Diet, Nutrition and Eye Health” booklet and “Recommended Nutrients for Healthy Eyes” brochure can be ordered by contacting the AOA Communications Group staff at publicrelations@aoa.org.



Figure 2 “Diet, Nutrition and Eye Health” booklet.

Nutraceutical manufacturers also offer a variety of education materials. “Lutein: Facts About Nature’s Nutrient for Healthy Eyes” (see Figure 3), a free brochure from Kemin Health, L.C., explains what lutein is, how it works in the body, the foods that naturally contain lutein, and the lifestyle factors that can influence good eye health. The brochure features a removable list of nutritional supplements containing lutein. It is available in English or Spanish and comes in packages of 50. To view the brochure online or to order free brochures for a practice, visit www.luteined.org/aoa or e-mail floraglo@kemin.com.

Web-based resources

Optometrists and their patients can obtain additional information on eye health and nutrition through the following sources.

The AOA Web site Nutrition page offers an overview of the importance of antioxidants in preventing age-related eye disease, special sections on the importance of nutrition in preventing age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, recipes incorporating eye-friendly nutrients, as well as a review of emerging research on lutein and zeaxanthin (www.aoa.org/x4732.xml).



Figure 3 “Lutein: Facts About Nature’s Nutrient for Healthy Eyes” brochure.

The AOA Ocular Nutrition Library is an exclusive, new resource designed to help AOA members stay abreast of the ever-expanding field of ocular nutrition research (www.aoa.org/x11877.xml). Research packets can be obtained by e-mailing requests to floraglo@kemin.com.

The Lutein Information Bureau provides Web-based, user-friendly information on antioxidants for a variety of audiences (from curious members of the general public to

health and business professionals). The Web site offers extensive background, news on the latest research, and video of a “Today’s Health” television program on lutein. A large-print version of the site is offered (www.luteininfo.com).

The National Eye Institute (NEI) Age-Related Macular Degeneration Web page offers information on

AMD, AMD research, video illustrating AMD-related changes in the eye, and information on how patients can find financial assistance for AMD care (www.nei.nih.gov/health/maculardegen). Similar information is offered on the **NEI Cataract Web page** (www.nei.nih.gov/health/cataract).