

EATING FOR EYE HEALTH

Meridan Zerner
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The eyes may be the window to the soul, but they are also the window to our overall health.

Diabetes, high blood pressure, and cholesterol can all be revealed during a basic eye exam, which medical experts recommend annually after age 40.

Skipping key nutrients in the diet puts your eyes at risk, potentially causing premature damage. However, it's easy to reduce this risk if you exercise good eye nutrition.

Omega-3 rich seafood like salmon, sardines, tuna, and anchovies can decrease your risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD) by 42 percent according to a published study in Archives of Ophthalmology. Fish-oil supplements are also loaded with antioxidants that help prevent the damage from free radicals that can cause diseases like AMD.

Carotenoids, found in green leafy vegetables, are critical to eye health. Research published this year by the National Institutes of Health National Eye Institute shows lutein and zeaxanthin are the real superstars of the carotenoids and are possibly more effective and safer than beta-carotene, which has been linked to heightened risk of lung cancer in smokers.

The study specifically researched a supplement combination using 10 mg of lutein, 2 mg of zeaxanthin, plus omega-3 fatty acids and zinc. The participants who took the combination supplement had an 18 percent lower risk of progressing to advanced AMD compared to those who took a beta-carotene supplement with no lutein or zeaxanthin. Learn more by visiting www.coopercomplete.com.

Meridan Zerner is a registered and licensed dietitian, a board certified specialist in sports dietetics, and is board certified in sports nutrition. She joined the Cooper Clinic Nutrition Department in 2007 and specializes in weight management, exercise and sports nutrition, cardiovascular health, and nutrition through the life cycle. With more than 25

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years of experience in the field of health and fitness, Zerner is a member of the American Dietetic Association and Sports and Cardiovascular Nutritionists, and was a continuing education provider for American Council on Exercise.

Omega-3-rich seafood:

- salmon
- sardines
- tuna
- anchovies

Greens high in carotenoids:

- kale
- spinach
- turnip and mustard greens



Exploring High Cholesterol Treatment Options

Victoria Barksdale McGhee
Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality

If you have high cholesterol, you probably know that keeping cholesterol at a healthy level can help lower your chance of a heart attack or stroke. But how much do you know about the benefits and risks of different treatment options?

Treating High Cholesterol: A Guide for Adults is a short, plain-language brochure from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). This unbiased resource can help you compare your options for managing high cholesterol and prepare to discuss them with your health care provider at your next medical appointment.

The free brochure is available in print and online in both English and Spanish and can help you do the following:

- Review the basics about cholesterol,
- Ask your health care provider important questions about high cholesterol,
- Set blood cholesterol goals,
- Learn about medicines and side effects,
- Talk to your health care provider about options for combining cholesterol medicines, and
- Track your cholesterol levels and medicines.

You can view and download this and similar brochures on a variety of common health conditions at www.effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/options. For free print copies, call the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse at 1-800-358-9295, and provide code C-02 when ordering.

This library of patient treatment summaries is part of AHRQ's Effective Health Care Program, a leading federal effort to compare treatments for health conditions and make findings public. The program provides evidence-based information about the comparative benefits and risks of treatment options, which helps patients and caregivers work together with their doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and others to make informed treatment decisions.