



**PAN MERSEY AREA PRESCRIBING COMMITTEE**  
**PRESCRIBING POLICY STATEMENT**  
REF: PS151 FINAL  
APC BOARD DATE: 13 FEB 2013  
LAST UPDATE: 30 SEP 2015



**Pan Mersey**  
Area Prescribing Committee

## Antioxidant supplements for Age-Related Macular Degeneration

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**The Pan Mersey Area Prescribing Committee does not recommend the prescribing of antioxidant supplements based on the AREDS or AREDS2 formulae for patients with age related macular degeneration.**

*Brands marketed for this indication include MacuLEH Light<sup>®</sup>, iCaps<sup>®</sup>, Ocuvite<sup>®</sup> Lutein, Ocuvite<sup>®</sup> Lutein Forte, PreserVision<sup>®</sup> Lutein, Visionace<sup>®</sup>, Visionace<sup>®</sup> Plus, Bio-Vision<sup>®</sup>, Vitalux<sup>®</sup> Plus, Viteyes<sup>®</sup> Original plus Lutein, Viteyes<sup>®</sup> Advanced, Viteyes<sup>®</sup> Smokers plus lutein. These supplements do not have a medicinal product licence.*

Whilst acknowledging that one subgroup of the original AREDS study (patients with moderate or severe age-related macular degeneration (AMD) had a reduced risk of progression to advanced AMD in those who took antioxidant supplements for a mean of 6.3 years), the Pan Mersey APC has historically not recommended the prescribing of AREDS supplements on the NHS due to a lack of high quality evidence to support this. This statement was to be reviewed when AREDS2 was published.

**AREDS2 failed to demonstrate any clinical benefits when lutein and zeaxanthin or omega-3 long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (DHA and EPA) or all of these were added to the AREDS formula supplement. The results of this study do not provide any evidence to support the prescribing of antioxidant supplements to reduce the risk of developing AMD or to slow its progression to more advanced forms of the disease.**

Patients should be encouraged to ensure that their diet contains sufficient fresh fruit and vegetables. Including oily fish in the diet is recommended for other health benefits, and should be promoted as it may help reduce the risk of AMD.

### References

Group. A-REDSR. A randomized, placebo-controlled, clinical trial of high dose supplementation with vitamins C and E, beta carotene, and zinc for age-related macular degeneration and vision loss: AREDS report no. 8. Arch Ophthalmol. 2001;119(10):1417-36

Lutein + Zeaxanthin and Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Age Related Macular Degeneration. The Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2) Randomised Clinical Trial. JAMA, 2013; 309(19): 2005-2015

**Note:** Patients who are not eligible for treatment under this statement may be considered on an individual basis where their GP or consultant believes exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the rule of this policy. In this situation, follow locally defined processes.