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Chocolate! Chocolate! Chocolate!

In recent years at least two studies demonstrated the benefits of flavonoid-rich dark chocolate over milk chocolate as to improved vision. This was good news for chocolate lovers.



In a new double-blind randomized clinical trial, the short-term benefits of dark chocolate were once again put to the test. Unfortunately, this time they saw no benefit to visual function of either dark or milk chocolate.

Researchers admit sample size was small (22 participants) and further trials would be needed to rule in or out possible long-term benefits.

Conclusion: Chocolate tastes good ... dark or light.

Trial Information Source: Department of Ophthalmology
Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich, Germany.

Resources

Magnification
Glasses Order
Information
800-426-4846
www.american-readingglasses.com

NFB Newsline
866-504-7300

Choice Magazine
Listening
888-724-6423

National Library
Service
888-657-7323
(Audio Books)

Free Low Vision
Catalogs and
Independent
Living Catalog
800-537-2118

Maxi Aids
800-522-6294

Jewish Heritage
for the Blind
800-995-1888

LS&S Low Vision
Catalog
800-468-4789
lssproducts.com

EyeSmart
<http://www.get-eyesmart.org/eyesmart>

MD Foundation
Resources
Dan Roberts
888-866-6148
Email: director@mdsupport.org

Amsler Grid ... Continued from Page 1



Written by:
Liz Trauernicht

Edited by:
Joe L. Fontenot MD

The Amsler Grid is basically a square of horizontal and vertical lines. It gets its name from Marc Amsler, a Swiss ophthalmologist who began promoting its use in 1947.

When used properly, it can help the user to detect visual distortions and loss of vision caused by such diseases as macular edema, central serous chorioretinopathy (CSC) and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Early detection of macular disorders is very important ... especially today when effective treatments are available when caught early in the process. The Amsler Grid has helped people with macular

disease to identify changes in their condition and report it to their eye doctor for evaluation.

What Forms Do Amsler Grids Take?

1. Paper

Amsler Grids on paper are the most common form and are available from your doctor and many sources over the Internet for free. In an attempt to improve accuracy, some use colored backgrounds and lines, while others use a special number of lines and line spacing.

2. Mobile Device “Apps”

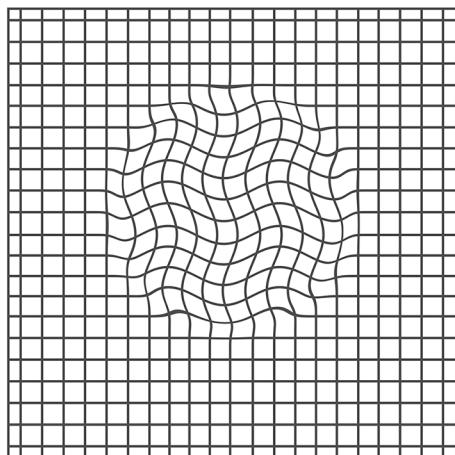
Amsler Grid “Apps” are also available for tablets and cell phones for both Android and Apple brands.



3. Portable Viewers

We evaluated a portable key chain “viewer” (as pictured above). It is a novel approach, but we found it to be imprecise and subject to misinterpretation.

Limitations of the AMSLER GRID



Because the Amsler Grid has limitations, some eye care professionals do not recommended it as a way to “self-assess” disease progression. Here are some of the reasons why:

1. Vision

It requires reasonably good near vision to discern the grid lines.

2. Compliance

Poor patient compliance. Meaning, not everyone is willing or able to maintain a good routine of self-assessment.

3. Interpretation

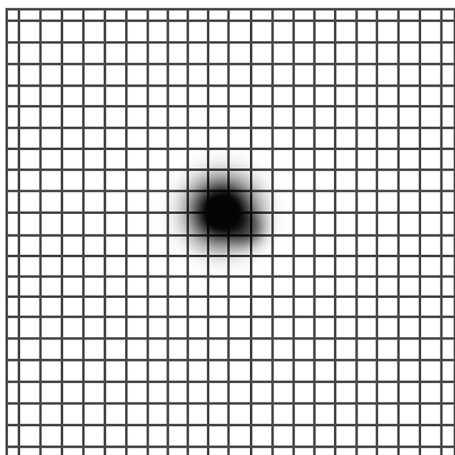
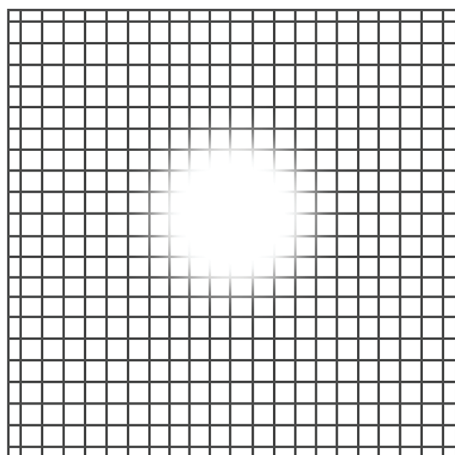
The Amsler Grid is a “subjective” test and prone to misinterpretation.

4. Imprecise

When compared to the tools available to eye doctors, the Amsler Grid detects only about one-half of the areas in the visual field where vision is absent or deficient.

5. Unreliable

The eyes and brain can play tricks on you. One of these is called “Perceptual Completion”. This is when the brain fills in or completes gaps in the visual field of each eye. Another challenge is called “Central Fixation”, which causes visual confusion when looking at multiple lines. Perceptual completion and central fixation can make the Amsler Grid unreliable.



MD Support and Prevent Blindness America Establish New On-Line Resource

The new resource provides an extensive list of searchable resource directories, a database of 1,500 municipal paratransit services, a library of self-help guides and workbooks, and up-to-the-minute news.

This marks the first time in Internet history that two major organizations have joined in such a dramatic way to bring both education and support to the entire global low vision community.

See lowvision.preventblindness.org or mdsupport.org

Are You Missing Out on Benefits?

April Issue of AARP by Joan Rattner Hellman

If you're struggling to pay for health care, food, or utilities, help may be closer than you realize.

Older Americans miss out on more than \$20 billion worth of benefits every year. A nationwide campaign launched by the National Council on Aging and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging aims to help older adults learn about two easily accessed resources that can connect them to needed support.

BenefitsCheckUp (benefitscheckup.org)

Eldercare Locator (1-800-677-1116 or eldercare.gov)

Amsler Grid ... Continued from Page 3

Specialized Amsler Grids

A search of the Internet will find references to these less common, high-tech Amsler Grids.

- * Threshold Amsler Grid (TAG)
- * Accelerated Amsler Grid
- * Deformable Amsler Grid
- * Three-dimensional Computer-automated Threshold Amsler Grid (3D-CTAG)

These (and other) modified Amsler Grids are attempts to improve the test for use at home between routine eye examinations. Progress is being made in the area of computer and tablet based software to identify macular disorders. All, however, have limitations that make regular visits to your optometrist, ophthalmologist and/or retinal specialist the best way to monitor your vision.

Summary

1. First and foremost, have your eyes examined on a regular basis. How often depends on your age, risk factors and whether you currently wear eyeglasses or contact lenses. Most eye care professionals recommend a comprehensive test every year or two.
2. If you notice a change in your vision, contact an eye care professional immediately.
3. If you have a diagnosis of macular degeneration, an AMSLER GRID may be useful as a "follow-up" tool for monitoring changes in your central vision between eye exams. However, it should never be used to screen yourself for macular disease. Leave that to a trained professional.



Call it “research” ... or just plain laziness, but for the past two years my wife and I have been using a device that allows us to control much of our home environment without lifting a finger. I can assure you, turning on a reading light behind your easy chair with a voice command is kinda cool.

Except for the normal age-related farsightedness common to people like us in their 70’s, we enjoy good vision. But for those with little or no vision, there are now assistive devices that not only make life easier, but can be a literal life saver.

One such device, called Echo, is manufactured and sold by Amazon. Actually, they produce a family of devices including the Echo Dot (pictured here), Echo Show and a multitude of “smart” accessories. (Note: Google Home is another line of similar products and services)



The Amazon Echo Dot and Echo Show must be plugged in to a power source. Otherwise they operate wirelessly using your home’s wifi network. Setup is not difficult, but I recommend any 13 year old to give you a hand.

Continued on Page 6

Latest Audio Newsletters and Video’s from the MD Foundation

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Talking Books

The National Library Service provides qualifying individuals a bimonthly large print catalog of recorded books and magazine at no charge.

Patrons may order talking books by contacting their local cooperating library. Contact information is online at www.loc.gov/nls/find.html or call 1-888-657-7323

Chaplains on Hand

Chaplainsonhand.org for spiritual support or call toll free 1-844-242-7524

Definitions

Ophthalmologist

a practitioner in the medical science of surgery and care of the eye and its related structures. An M.D. degree is required.

Retina specialist

a medical doctor trained as an ophthalmologist, who has received additional training in diseases and surgery of the retina and vitreous.

Optometrist

a degreed (O.D.), independent, primary health care provider skilled in the co-management of eye health and vision care, including examination, diagnosis, treatment, management of diseases/disorders, prescription of eye-glasses/contact lenses, and provision of low vision aids and therapy.

Optician

a person who designs or manufactures ophthalmic appliances or optical instruments ("ophthalmic optician") or deals in prescriptions ("dispensing optician").

Continued from Page 5

What Can You Do With The Echo Dot and Echo Show?

The list of abilities (called "Skills" in the Echo world) is very long and growing every month. The "Dot" and "Show" work very much alike in that they respond to voice commands, but the "Show" includes a high resolution touch screen and camera. Here is a short list of Echo Skills that may be of interest to those with visual impairments.

Turn lights and appliances on/off

Make phone calls

Tell you the time

Set alarms and timers

Change the thermostat

Create shopping lists

Play music & radio stations

Control speaker volume

Check the weather

Some of Echo Show's Additional Features

Search for, speak, display and save recipes

Make video calls

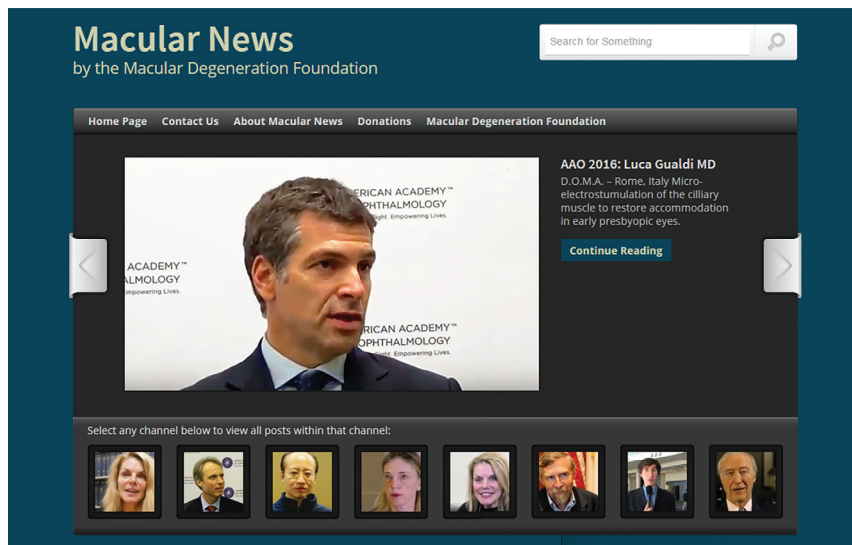
Read and speak the words on labels, packages and medicine bottles



Here are links to two informative YouTube Videos:

1. Echo Dot Demo
2. Echo Show Demo

Exclusive Online Videos Featuring World's Leading Eye Researchers



The Macular Degeneration Foundation interviews the world's foremost scientists, medical practitioners and inventors. Visit **Eyesight.org** for the latest news and register to receive an email notice when new videos are first posted.

Donations Appreciated

The Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc. is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization.

Please visit our website at eyesight.org to make a tax deductible donation.

Checks may be mailed to:

Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc.,
P.O. Box 531313,
Henderson, NV 89053

Call: 888-633-3937 (USA)
Call: 702-450-2908 (Intl)

Email: liz@eyesight.org

Disclaimer - Articles in the Magnifier are for information only and are not an endorsement by the Macular Degeneration Foundation editorial staff.

Organizations That Can Help

National Eye Institute
800-411-1222
www.nei.nih.gov

Community Services for Vision Rehabilitation (AL & MI Areas)
csvrlowvision.org
251-476-4744
228-760-0788

American Council of the Blind
(800) 424-8666
acb.org

Second Sense (Chicago Area)
312-236-8569
second-sense.org

Prevent Blindness America
800-331-2020
preventblindness.org

MD Support
816-761-7080
MDsupport.org

Bible on Tape
Aurora Ministries
941-748-3031



THE MAGNIFIER

Macular Degeneration Foundation
P.O. Box 531313
Henderson, Nevada 89053

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FOR MAILING ADDRESS ONLY

Clinical Trial Information

Nat'l Eye
Institute
800-411-1222 or
www.nei.nih.gov

Clinical trials have guidelines called "inclusion" and "exclusion" criteria. These criteria (age, gender, type and stage of disease, etc.) keep participants safe and ensure researchers will be able to answer the questions they plan to study.

Treat and Extend Regimen

**Nagoya City University & Sugita Eye Hospital
Nagoya, Japan**

Phase 4: Evaluation of the Usefulness of a Treat and Extend Regimen Using Ranibizumab for Neovascular AMD.

Treat and Extend Regimen (TER) may contribute to the improvement to a patients' mentality, since the treatment intervals are extended if there were no signs of recurrence. Therefore, we have planned to examine the psychological impact of TER using Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), in addition to the improvement of visual acuity and central retinal thickness.

Clinical Study Identifier: NCT02321839