



# What's New in Ophthalmology Today?

## NEW TREATMENT FOR MACULAR DEGENERATION

An experimental first step for treating the **CAUSE** of **Macular Degeneration** was undertaken last week at the University of Florida when researchers injected a new anti-inflammatory drug into the eye of a patient with macular degeneration. Patients with wet or dry macular degeneration end up losing central vision. 15% of patients with macular degeneration have the wet form of the disease which is associated with new blood vessel growth and bleeding. For them, new medicines such as Avastin and Lucentis can stop the bleeding and this has saved their vision. **The majority of patients - 85% - have the dry form of the disease and this new treatment will also help them.** "The problem was, until recently, no one knew how the illness worked" explained Dr. Cedric Francois the president of Potentia Pharmaceuticals Inc., the company that produces the compound. According to Science Daily, a series of reports in the journal Science "revealed a link between the chronic inflammation and the tissue damage that accompanies both forms of the disease (wet and dry) and a genetic defect in the complement system. Complement is a set of proteins that are triggered in inflammatory disease including the eye and may be over stimulated in patients with... macular edema. This new discovery will allow treatment of the disease at the very start of the process." This is an important advance in the treatment of a disease that effects over 9 million Americans.

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