

CARE PROCESS

PATIENT OUTCOME CRITERIA

Patient outcome criteria are to reverse or minimize visual loss and improve visual function.

DIAGNOSIS

The initial evaluation of a patient with signs and symptoms suggestive of AMD includes all features of the comprehensive adult medical eye evaluation,²⁷⁴ with particular attention to those aspects relevant to AMD.

History

An initial history should consider the following elements:

- ◆ Symptoms²⁷⁵
 - ◆ Metamorphopsia
 - ◆ Decreased vision
 - ◆ Scotoma
 - ◆ Photopsia
 - ◆ Difficulties in dark adaptation
- ◆ Medication and nutritional supplement use
- ◆ Ocular history^{13, 276, 277}
- ◆ Medical history^{13, 276, 277} (including any hypersensitivity reactions^{278, 279})
- ◆ Family history, especially family history of AMD^{89, 280}
- ◆ Social history, especially a quantitative smoking history³⁸⁻⁴²

Examination

- ◆ Comprehensive eye examination
- ◆ Amsler grid
- ◆ Stereoscopic biomicroscopic examination of the macula

Binocular slit-lamp biomicroscopy of the ocular fundus is often necessary to detect subtle clinical signs of MNV. These include small areas of hemorrhage, hard exudates, subretinal fluid, macular edema, subretinal fibrosis, or pigment epithelial elevation.

Diagnostic Tests

Optical Coherence Tomography

Optical coherence tomography is important in diagnosing and managing AMD, particularly with respect to determining the presence of subretinal and intraretinal fluid and in documenting the degree of retinal thickening.²⁸¹ Optical coherence tomography defines the cross-sectional architecture of the retina, which is not possible with any other imaging technology. It may reveal the presence of fluid that is not apparent on biomicroscopy alone. It also helps in evaluating the response of the retina and RPE to therapy by allowing structural changes to be followed accurately.²⁸²⁻²⁸⁵ Newer-generation OCT modalities, including SD-OCT and swept-source (SS) OCT, are preferred technologies. Advances in OCT have increased the image resolution and enhanced our ability to detect structural changes of the retina and choroid.²⁸⁶⁻²⁸⁹ The implementation of newer technologies, such as SS-OCT, is evolving at this time.²⁸⁷⁻²⁸⁹