

**Sight Loss Services, Inc.
Cape Cod and Islands
The CandleLight Newsletter
October 2025**

“It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.”

-Confucius

Strategy to prevent age-related macular degeneration identified

A National Eye Institute-supported study identifies a possible way to slow or block progression of AMD. The study, conducted by researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and international collaborators, implicated problems with cholesterol metabolism in this type of vision loss, perhaps helping to explain the links between macular degeneration and cardiovascular disease, which both worsen with age. Findings from the research using human plasma samples and mouse models of macular degeneration suggest that increasing the amount of a molecule called apolipoprotein M (ApoM) in the blood fixes problems in cholesterol processing that lead to cellular damage in

the eyes and other organs. Various methods of dialing up ApoM could serve as new treatment strategies for AMD and perhaps some forms of heart failure triggered by similar dysfunctional cholesterol processing.

Strategy to prevent age-related macular degeneration identified | National Eye Institute (nih.gov)

Findings have implications for understanding what goes wrong in retinal diseases

During most eye infections or injuries, neutrophils, immune cells found in the blood, are usually the first line of defense. However, NEI research at the Flaum Eye Institute and Del Monte Institute for Neuroscience at the University of Rochester have discovered that the retina responds differently than many other tissues in the body. When photoreceptor cells in the retina are damaged, microglia, or the brain's immune cells, respond, and the neutrophils are not recruited to help despite passing through nearby blood vessels. "This finding has high implications for what happens for millions of Americans who suffer vision loss through loss of photoreceptors," said Jesse

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Schallek, Ph.D., associate professor of ophthalmology and senior author of a study published in eLife. Using adaptive optics imaging, a camera technology developed by the University of Rochester that allows the imaging of single neurons and immune cells inside the living eye, researchers studied the retinas of mice with photoreceptor damage. They found that while both neutrophil and microglia cells are present in the retina, only microglia cells respond to photoreceptor injury, and they do not call upon neutrophils to help repair the damage. Researchers believe this suggests a type of cloaking occurs during retinal injury to protect the retina from a rush of immune cells that could do more harm than good. “What is remarkable here is that the passing neutrophils are so close to the reactive microglia, and yet they do not signal to them to assist in damage recovery,” said Schallek. “This is notably different than what is seen in other areas of the body where neutrophils are the first to respond to local damage and mount an early and robust response.”

NEI funded research sheds new light on immune cell interactions in retina | National Eye Institute (nih.gov)

**Non-Invasive Glaucoma Treatment Offered
for First Time in U.S.**

The new treatment is part of a clinical trial led by Sunita Radhakrishnan, MD, Principal Investigator of the study. The Glaucoma Center of San Francisco is excited to announce the first treatment of a patient in the U.S. with the non-invasive Eyetronic nerve stimulating therapy. Eyetronic therapy provides external neural stimulation to the optic nerve of patients suffering from glaucoma, a disease in which the optic nerve is permanently damaged resulting in vision loss. Glaucoma affects over 4 million people in the U.S. and more than 80 million people worldwide. The current standard of glaucoma treatment focuses on lowering pressure within the eye, called intraocular pressure or IOP. While treating elevated IOP is necessary, it is not always enough to prevent progressive loss of vision. Optic nerve stimulation with the Eyetronic device has been shown to halt vision loss and in some cases even reverse damage so that some vision is restored. The Eyetronic therapy has been applied to more than 1,000 patients in Europe without a single serious adverse event reported. This therapy is

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applied on ten consecutive days in an outpatient clinic setting. The Glaucoma Center of San Francisco is one of the largest stand-alone glaucoma clinics on the West Coast and has been involved in an array of groundbreaking clinical trials for glaucoma diagnosis and management. This study was funded, in part, by Glaucoma Research Foundation, America's oldest and most experienced institution dedicated solely to its mission: to cure glaucoma and restore vision through innovative research.

<https://glaucoma.org>

Sight Loss Services Donations

Sight Loss Services, Inc. does not charge for the services it provides for those with vision loss. We do, however, rely on the generosity of people donating to keep our non-profit 501c organization going. Will you help to support us? If so, please make your check payable to "Sight Loss Services, Inc." and mail to 900 Route 134, Unit 3-25, South Dennis, MA 02660.

Thank you for your support!

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We now have Eschenbach markolux lighted magnifier bar readers in both the 1:2,2 and the 1:3,6 strengths available for you to try. The lenses are angled and designed to cover a whole newspaper column in a comfortable reading position. Please call the office to make an appointment if you would like to try one. They do retail for about \$300. If you like them and find them helpful, we can give you information to order for yourself or we can help you order one. We are also expecting a delivery of META AI glasses sometime in November. They do require that you have a smart phone (iPhone, Android, Samsung) and that you download the app. There is very limited functionality with Jitterbug smart phones. They do not work with the Jitterbug flip phones. Please call the office to be put on the list for notification when they are ready.

The ESCCI Medical Transportation Grant period has ended. We have reapplied and will know in January whether we will receive funding again. In the meantime, we do have a small amount of funding available for Lower Cape Residents to eye care procedures.

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We are very excited to announce that our website is being redesigned as part of Knowability's Accessibility Internet Rally! A team is working on giving our website not only a whole new look, but also making it completely accessible to those with vision loss. We expect the new site to be live by the beginning of December.

In home or in office Notary Services are available to our visually impaired community by calling the Sight Loss Services Office. Same-day appointments are usually not available, but we will do our best to accommodate your request for timing. We cannot Notarize Real Estate Documents and Last Wills and Testaments.

A monthly Birding By Ear program will be starting at Brooks Free Library in January 2026. If you love birds and would like to learn to identify them by their songs, calls and non vocal sounds please plan to attend second Tuesdays of each month beginning in January 2026 from 1:00-2:00pm, 739 Main Street in Harwich. Pre-registration is not required. Call Carla Burke at 508-430-7562, extension 5 or email cburke@clamsnet.org with any questions.

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(508) 394-3904 or
email: info@sightloss.org**