

ABSTRACT

Low vision rehabilitation for patients with Age-related Macular Degeneration

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Purpose: To assess the effectiveness of low vision rehabilitation in the management of age related macular degeneration.

Participants and methods: The study was carried out at Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital Rawalpindi. All consecutive newly diagnosed patients of both sexes, 55 years of age and above, with observable lesions of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), presenting to the retina clinic, over a period of one year were included in the study. Patients having best corrected visual acuity less than 6/18 in the better eye were referred to the low vision clinic.

Results: During the duration of study 79 patients presenting to the retina clinic met the inclusion criteria. Lesions gradable as early AMD were found in 54 eyes and those graded as late AMD were found in 69 eyes. Twenty four (30%) patients received intra vitreal therapy with anti vascular endothelial growth factor (Bevacizumab) ± Triamcinolone acetonide and/or Argon laser treatment. Thirty seven (47%) patients were referred to the low vision clinic, while 18 (23%) patients were taught self monitoring of symptoms and kept under observation. Appropriate low vision aids were used in 37 patients. Extremely statistically significant improvement in near vision was seen from mean 14M to 4M ($p < 0.0001$) in 36 patients.

Conclusion: Low vision aids improve residual visual function in patients of AMD, more so for near. The patients are able to continue most of the usual activity of their daily life. Al-Shifa Journal of Ophthalmology 2010; 6(1): 17-21 © Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.