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Prevent Blindness Offers Free Resources to Educate Public on Age-related Macular Degeneration, Low Vision

CHICAGO (Jan. 21, 2014) – Today, more than [2 million Americans ages 50](#) and over have age-related macular degeneration (AMD). AMD is an eye disease that causes central vision to gradually deteriorate. According to the 2013 [“Cost of Vision Problems: The Economic Burden of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders in the United States,”](#) report, blindness and low vision annually costs more than \$3.7 billion, with an annual per-person treatment cost of \$6,680. Almost 3 million Americans have low vision, according to the [National Eye Institute](#).

Prevent Blindness, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, has declared February as Age-related Macular Degeneration/Low Vision Awareness Month. As part of the observance, the group offers educational materials at no cost through its dedicated web pages and its toll-free number.

Prevent Blindness resources providing information and materials on AMD and low vision include:

Living Well with Low Vision- This new online resource, <http://lowvision.preventblindness.org>, offers a wealth of information ranging from an extensive list of searchable, local low vision resource directories to an informative blog with news for people living with age-related eye disease and significant visual impairment, authored by patient advocate and low vision educator Dan Roberts, M.M.E.

AMD Awareness Makes a Difference- Through its annual campaign, Prevent Blindness offers a free magnetic Amsler grid. An Amsler grid is a grid of horizontal and vertical lines used to monitor a person's central vision and can help identify vision abnormalities linked to AMD. To request a grid with instructions for use, go to: preventblindness.org/age-related-macular-degeneration-amd.

Prevent Blindness AMD Learning Center- The AMD Learning Center, found at preventblindness.org/amd, provides a variety of educational tools including AMD risk factors, treatment options, an Adult Vision Risk Assessment tool, fact sheets and more.

See Jane See- More women than men have eye disease, and 65 percent of those diagnosed with AMD are women. Prevent Blindness offers SeeJaneSee.org, a new online resource that includes free eye health information tailored to women on a variety of topics.

“The number of cases of those with AMD, retinal disorders and low vision are growing at an alarming rate,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Only through education, early detection and treatment can we prevent considerable vision loss.”

Making a commitment to maintaining a healthy lifestyle also helps to save sight. Prevent Blindness recommends:

- Visit an eye doctor regularly
- Stop smoking
- Eat healthy foods, including foods rich in certain antioxidants
- Stay active
- Control blood pressure
- Avoid eye injuries that may cause permanent damage by wearing eye protection during physical activities
- When outdoors, no matter what time of year, always wear UV-blocking wrap-around sunglasses and a brimmed hat

For more information on AMD, low vision and other eye disease, please contact Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020 or visit preventblindness.org/amd.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call (800) 331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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