



# Lucentis

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Lucentis<sup>®</sup> (ranibizumab injection) for the treatment of wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in June of 2006. Lucentis is the first treatment which, when administered monthly, can maintain the vision of more than 90 percent of patients with wet AMD.

Vision loss in wet AMD is caused by the growth of abnormal leaky blood vessels that eventually damage the macula (area of the eye responsible for central vision). Lucentis is an antibody fragment that binds to and inhibits the activity of human vascular endothelial growth factor A (VEGF-A), a protein believed to play a critical role in the formation of these new blood vessels.

Lucentis is injected into the vitreous portion of the eye (the clear jelly-like substance that fills the eye from the lens back to the retina). In AMD, VEGF-A is continually produced, so ongoing, routine administration of Lucentis is required. Lucentis was shown to be safe and effective in three multicenter, randomized studies of AMD patients. In clinical trials, nearly 95 percent of the participants who received a monthly injection maintained their vision at 12 months compared to approximately 60 percent of patients who received the control treatment. Approximately one-third of trial participants had improved vision at 12 months.

The most commonly reported adverse events included hemorrhage of the conjunctiva (the membrane that covers the white part of the eye), floaters, eye pain, increased eye pressure and inflammation of the eye. Serious adverse events such as endophthalmitis (severe inflammation of the interior of the eye), retinal detachment, retinal tear, increased eye pressure and traumatic cataract were rare and often related to the

injection procedure. There is also a small increase in the risk of stroke. Clinical trial data indicated that approximately .3 percent of patients suffered a stroke when given a .3 milligram dose of Lucentis, compared to 1.2 percent of patients who received a .5 milligram dose. In addition, patients who have previously suffered a stroke may be at greater risk of having another stroke.

Please contact your physician and health insurance company for more information concerning the cost, treatment regimen and insurance coverage for Lucentis.

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The source for this fact sheet is the Food and Drug Administration. The above information should not in any way substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional and is not intended to constitute medical advice. For further information, contact Macular Degeneration Research, a program of the American Health Assistance Foundation, at 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, Maryland 20871, call 1-800-437-2423, or visit our website at [www.ahaf.org](http://www.ahaf.org).

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