
Retired optician 'cures own blindness with marigolds'

A retired optician believes he is the first person in Britain to recover from a degenerative eye condition – after taking a food supplement containing marigolds.

By Murray Wardrop (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/murray-wardrop/>)

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Harry Marsland feared he would lose his sight completely after developing dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD) – a condition responsible for half of all cases of blindness in this country.

AMD had claimed the sight in his right eye and the 73-year-old's vision had become so bad that he could not get around without the help of his wife. He was even considering learning Braille, fearing that his left eye would follow the same fate.



Macushield contains meso-zeaxanthin, derived from marigolds Photo: AFP/GETTY

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However, after trying various treatments to no avail, Mr Marsland finally decided to experiment taking a vitamin supplement containing extracts from the orange flowers.

Within months of taking the capsules, which are not available on the NHS, he regained vision in his left eye.

Mr Marsland, from Oundle, Northants, said: "I now know, professionally, that I have recovered almost completely from the effects of the dry AMD in my left eye. I am the first person to have such good fortune.

"I have recovered 95 per cent of the sight in my left eye which is miraculous, considering that at one point I was literally blind in the dark."

The improvement in his sight has allowed Mr Marsland to drive a car again and enjoy reading without the aid of a magnifying glass.

He lost vision in his right eye in 2001 to wet AMD, a more severe form of the condition, and since then also began suffering problems with his left eye.

Mr Marsland had tried an experimental laser treatment – photo dynamic therapy – and various vitamin preparations – including Visionace, Vita-Lux plus, I. Caps and PreserVision, without success.

But in 2007, his ophthalmologist handed him a leaflet he had picked up at a conference, extolling the benefits of a supplement containing marigolds – called Macushield.

He decided to try it, spending £150 on a year's supply and was shocked by its effectiveness.

Mr Marsland said he believes it could offer hope to millions of AMD sufferers.

He added: "I decided to this off my own back. I treated myself, which is the very thing you're not supposed to do in any profession.

"As a retired professional, I feel a responsibility to get this message across to as many people as possible."

Macushield contains lutein, found in spinach, and zeaxanthin, the yellow pigment found in corn – both of which are used in other treatments. It also contains meso-zeaxanthin, derived from marigolds, which was a nutrient Mr Marsland had not tried before.

Dry age-related macular degeneration happens when light-sensitive cells in the macula slowly break down and sufferers experience a gradual loss of central vision and a fading of colours. It is the most common cause of blindness in the over-60s.