



An Eye on Nutrition



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The CDC reports that recommendations for fruit and vegetable intakes—key sources of eye-healthy nutrients—are met by fewer than 18 percent of us.¹ While supplementation can be a good option to bridge these nutrient gaps, not all supplements are created equal.

“A major concern for both doctors and consumers is the massive confusion in the market when it comes to selecting quality supplements,” says Zac Denning, Product Science Specialist at Science-Based Health (SBH). As the first nutrition company focused exclusively on visual health, SBH pioneered research-based supplements with the highest quality nutrients,” says Denning. Founded by eye doctors, the company’s mission is to provide premium quality supplements that doctors can feel confident recommending to their patients.

Science-Based Supplements

The AREDS trials opened the door to nutrition being regarded as integral to eye care, he says. “We’re learning that nutrition plays a vital role in eye health. Many parts of the eye contain concentrated nutrients that have protective properties.” Beyond AREDS nutrients, research is emerging on other nutrients such as B vitamins for AMD, and plant-based polyphenols for protecting retinal circulation.

Lesser-Known Nutrient

In addition to offering pharmaceutical-grade nutraceuticals, SBH is actively

involved in conducting its own clinical research.

The company’s research has recently focused on a lesser-known omega fatty acid called gamma-linolenic acid (GLA). GLA is a unique anti-inflammatory omega fat that is not found in diet or fish oil. Studies show that GLA, in balance with other nutrients, reduces inflammation and stimulates lacrimal production. In a clinical trial, researchers found that women taking HydroEye had improved symptoms, lower inflammatory markers and smoother corneas versus those taking placebo.² This was the first study to show GLA relieves dry eye in post-menopausal women—who make up the majority of dry eye sufferers.

SBH is engaged in ongoing product research and is now supporting an exploratory project in nutrition and eye health at Harvard Medical School.

“Over the years, we have seen exciting nutrition research open new avenues of treatment in eye care, and this is only the beginning,” Denning says. “We look forward to bringing future developments in nutrition and visual health to our customers.”



References:

1. Moore LV, Thompson FE. Adults meeting fruit and vegetable intake recommendations—United States, 2013. CDC. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6426a1.htm>. Accessed December 17, 2015.
2. Sheppard JD Jr, Singh R, McClellan AJ, Weikert MP, et al. Long-term supplementation with n-6 and n-3 PUFAs improves moderate-to-severe keratoconjunctivitis sicca: A randomized double-blind clinical trial. *Cornea* 2013;32:1297-1304.

Texting Matters

Text messaging is the fastest and most convenient means of communication today and email is the second, according to OptometryCEO.com. Thirty-one percent of American adults prefer text messages to phone calls, reports a Pew survey. A 2014 Gallup poll found that texting is the most frequently used form of communication among Americans younger than 50.

That’s why contacting your patients with a computer platform that reaches out through texting and email is so valuable to expanding your optometry practice. Cloud-based software has been developed that does just that.

Your practice has a much better chance of reaching patients with texting and email because those forms of communication go to the individual as opposed to the household like the telephone. Also, the message remains as a visible reminder in the inbox, unlike voice mail, which is usually gone after it is heard.

Text and email messages from the doctor’s office are impressive and can get patients talking to others about your practice. The easiest way to use texting and email to confirm appointments is to subscribe to one of the software programs that specialize in electronic communication. Some of the best-known companies that optometrists use are Websystem3, Solutionreach, Demandforce and 4PatientCare. These work with patient cellphone numbers and email addresses gathered at patient check-in.

In addition to appointment reminders, you can also text or email thank-you messages, surveys, dispensing notices, recalls, newsletters, videos and more.

