

Dear Friends



I do hope you are enjoying summer and the festive season and that you have happiness and good health in 2017.

As the leading cause of blindness among Australia's working

population, diabetic eye disease affects an enormous number of people from all age groups right across the country. This makes our work to save sight so important.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, I thank you for your support during 2016. It is an honour and a pleasure to work for you.

Much has been achieved this year to improve diagnosis and treatment of diabetic eye disease. Medicare will provide a rebate for ocular coherence tomography (OCT) used for the initial diagnosis of diabetic macular edema and other similar conditions.

Some patients with diabetic macular edema may benefit from another treatment option recently added to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, whereby the Government subsidises the cost of the drug. In addition,

approval of a new Medicare item will help general practitioners screen for diabetic eye disease.

At our recent annual general meeting we welcomed Robert Kaye SC to the Foundation's Board in the role of Chairman and thanked long standing retiring Directors Elizabeth Carr, Ashley Chapman and John McCarroll. They were given a huge vote of thanks for their outstanding service to the macular disease community over the last 12 years.

The festive season is a time for holidays and celebrating. In this issue, celebrity chef Michael Moore, who lives with diabetes, provides a delicious healthy recipe and puts forward his tips on how you can enjoy the festive season.

Take care.

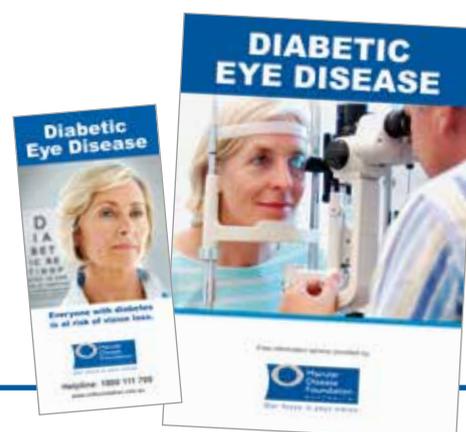
Julie Heraghty
Chief Executive Officer

Please note: The Foundation is closed from 25 December 2016 to 2 January 2017.

Diabetic Eye Disease Information Kit

If you have a friend or a family member who has diabetes, tell them to call the Foundation to register for a free information kit and ongoing information. It could save their sight.

Helpline 1800 111 709



Treatment for diabetic macular edema

Diabetic macular edema (DME) occurs when excessive blood sugar levels change the structure of blood vessels in the central retina (the macula) at the back of the eye. This leads to fluid leaking from these vessels, which causes the retina to swell and change its shape. In some people, the early stages of DME produce no obvious symptoms, but in time, it results in distortion and eventually, major loss of central vision.

Most people with DME are treated with a series of injections into the eye using an anti-VEGF drug. Two of these drugs, Lucentis and Eylea, are subsidised via the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Initially, one injection is given per month for three to five months in the affected eye(s), with timing of further injections adjusted depending on each person's response. For most, these injections will control or reduce the leakage and vision may improve.

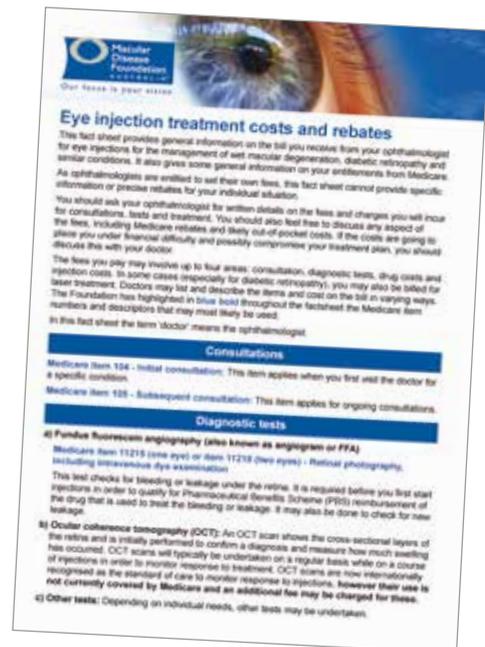
In addition, a new treatment called Ozurdex has been added to the PBS (available for people who have already had their cataracts removed, or are scheduled to have them removed). This treatment involves the insertion of a tiny rod inside the eye using a technique similar to an eye injection. The rod dissolves over four to six months, releasing a steroid called dexamethasone, after which, another rod can be inserted.

Careful control of diabetes remains critical to minimising the risk of the disease affecting the eyes. If DME develops, early treatment results in the best outcomes, but some people do not notice any symptoms in the early stages. It is therefore critical that everyone with diabetes has regular eye tests - at least every two years, or more often if recommended by the optometrist or ophthalmologist. Any sudden changes in vision should be investigated as soon as possible.

Eye injection treatment costs and rebates

The Foundation has produced a new factsheet to explain various costs associated with treatment for eye injections for diabetic retinopathy, wet macular degeneration and similar conditions. The fact sheet provides information and cost examples including Medicare item numbers and rebates, as well as other entitlements such as the Medicare Safety Net.

To order call the Foundation's Helpline on 1800 111 709.



You should discuss treatment options with your ophthalmologist.

If you would like a comprehensive information kit on diabetic eye disease, please contact the Foundation on 1800 111 709.

Cooking with Michael Moore

Michael Moore is a renowned chef, author and TV presenter on shows such as *Fresh*, *Junior MasterChef* and *The Biggest Loser*. Five years ago personal circumstances changed the trajectory of Michael's career. Already living with diabetes he then suffered a major stroke. It was an episode that changed his life, inspiring his best-selling *Blood Sugar* cook book series - a collection of beautifully presented recipes that break the mould in diabetic cooking.

"Being a diabetic doesn't mean you are stuck in a gastronomic wilderness. You can enjoy great food that's unexpected and exciting while keeping your sugars under control," says Michael.

Michael's tips for managing your diet this festive period:

1. Have a fridge full of healthy snacks so you don't fall into sugary temptations
2. When preparing meals, enjoy the great Australian offerings of seafood, leafy salads, and good grains such as quinoa
3. If you're visiting friends and family, take a dessert to share, so you know exactly what you're eating
4. Enjoy sparkling water with lemons, limes or cucumber - and limit your alcohol intake
5. Everything in moderation!



Mozzarella with red quinoa & black cabbage



Serves 6

Ingredients

- 4 vine-ripened truss tomatoes
- Sea salt and pepper
- 1 bunch black cabbage (cavalero nero)
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tablespoons red wine cabernet vinegar
- 2 small french eschalots/shallots
- 60 ml olive oil
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- Pinch dried chilli flakes
- 250 g cooked red quinoa
- 2 balls fresh mozzarella
- 1 head of red endive
- 1 bunch baby basil leaves

Method

Plunge tomatoes into boiling water for 20 seconds, place into ice cold water immediately then peel skin away. Pat tomatoes dry and slice them approximately 1 cm thick. Season with salt and pepper and allow to sit at room temperature. Wash and dry black cabbage then finely shred. In a mixing bowl, place garlic, cabernet vinegar and eschalots with olive oil and lemon zest and juice. Leave to stand for 10 min then add shredded cabbage and chilli flakes and stir well. Leave to stand for at least 10 min before serving. Stir in cooked red quinoa and adjust seasoning with plenty of freshly ground pepper. Drain mozzarella cheese and slice into 1cm thick pieces. Spoon the quinoa and cabbage salad into a cake ring, then layer slices of tomato and mozzarella cheese alternatively around the top. Garnish with red endive and baby basil leaves.

Awareness

Do You See What I See?

This summer Macular Disease Foundation Australia engaged with local optometrists to support the launch of a clever awareness project “Do You See What I See?” The project aimed to improve the eye health of those at increased risk of developing eye disease, including diabetic eye disease. Optical illusions were used in the promotion to remind people to look twice, to take in what they are seeing beyond face value.



It highlighted the importance of early detection to save sight through regular eye tests. The project was supported by Bayer Australia.

Diabetic Macular Edema - Julia's story

A new training resource called “DME Xplained” tells the real-life story of a woman called Julia and her journey following a diagnosis of diabetic macular edema (DME). The resource, a comic book animation, can be downloaded as an app to run on Apple or Android devices, or it can be run from a computer.

Visit www.dmexplained.com.au for more information.

How can we help you?

Call our Helpline on 1800 111 709

Ask for a copy of the Diabetic Eye Disease booklet

Visit our website for detailed information



How you can support the Foundation?

As a charitable organisation we rely on your generous donations to help service the macular disease community across Australia and fund our Research Grants Program. You can post your donation, make a secure online donation using your credit card at www.mdfoundation.com.au, or contact the Foundation to set up a regular donation. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Bequests are gratefully accepted. Please call the Foundation for more information.

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