

FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE UPDATE

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Functional Medicine and Ocular Health

Macular degeneration is quickly rising to be a leading cause of blindness in both the Western world and in developing countries. It is known that there is an age-related change in the metabolism of the retina and of the eye in general. In terms of the manifestation of diseases of the eye, there is growing evidence of the role of environmental and nutritional influences on disease risk.

In this issue, Dr. Bland discusses ocular health and disease from a functional medicine perspective. Vision has become a priority concern among the aging baby boomer population, especially with the global rise in cases of insulin resistance, hyperglycemia, and type 2 diabetes. Dr. Bland begins with a review of the literature and discusses such topics as: dietary carotenoids, oxidative stress and macular degeneration, fatty acid research on decreased risk of eye disease, and studies specific to lutein and zeaxanthin supplementation. REF #1-12

Clinician/Researcher of the Month

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Dr. Bland was inspired to focus an issue of *Functional Medicine Update* on ocular health after meeting Dr. Shalesh Kaushal, a vitreoretinal specialist. Dr. Kaushal earned his medical degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland and his PhD from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. Kaushal completed his residency at the University of Southern California Doheny Eye Institute, and also completed surgical retina training at the Barnes Retina Institute/Washington University St. Louis. He completed a medical retina fellowship at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.

Dr. Kaushal is board certified in ophthalmology and is a recognized researcher specializing in inherited degenerative retinal and macular diseases. He is one of the first in his field to conduct gene therapy as a treatment. Prior to a recent move to Florida and his consulting work, Dr. Kaushal was Chairman and Associate Professor, Department of Ophthalmology, at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Dr. Kaushal has recently been researching how functional medicine principles apply to eye health. In addition to seeing patients clinically, he is actively engaged in epidemiological work on potential therapeutics for eye disease.

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