



## THE MINIATURE TELESCOPE: A NEW TREATMENT FOR MACULAR DEGENERATION

*Questions & Answers by Paul M. Pender, M.D.  
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On July 6, 2010, the FDA approved the use of a miniature telescope in patients with 'end stage' age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Presently, there are approximately 2 million Americans with advanced AMD and another 7 million at risk for developing significant vision loss in their lifetime. While various hand-held telescopes and other low vision devices have been used in the management of AMD for a number of years, the use of a surgically implantable, permanent device represents a major advancement for patients who previously had limited treatment options.

### *What is the Implantable Miniature Telescope?*

The Implantable Miniature Telescope (IMT) is small telescopic device that magnifies images entering your eye. The IMT is roughly the size of a pea (3.6 mm) and it replaces the lens of your eye.

### *How does the IMT work?*

People with advanced macular degeneration have very good peripheral vision despite loss of central vision. The IMT works by refocusing the incoming images onto the healthy peripheral portion of the eye that is not damaged.

### *Who are the best candidates for the procedure?*

Ideal patients have to be motivated to undergo the required visual rehabilitation. Potential candidates for the procedure must be able to demonstrate improvement in vision with a handheld telescope before they undergo surgery. This telescope does require considerable effort and practice in order to become familiar with it.

### *What else makes me a candidate for the IMT?*


Potential candidates are eligible if they meet several criteria including:

- Loss of central vision due to irreversible AMD in both eyes with good peripheral vision
- No recent drug treatments for AMD
- A cataract in the eye undergoing the procedure

### *Will Medicare cover the cost of the IMT?*

The company that makes the IMT (VisionCare Ophthalmic Technologies) anticipates that the device and procedure will receive Medicare coverage in the first quarter of 2011.

### *What gains can I expect after I have the procedure?*

In the original FDA trials, two-thirds of patients gained three lines or more of vision on a standard eye chart after the procedure.<sup>1</sup> Patients also noted a significant improvement in quality of life after one year including social functioning, overall mental health, dependency, and general vision. 

<sup>1</sup>Hudson HL, Lane SS, Heier JS, et al. Implantable Miniature Telescope For The Treatment of Visual Acuity Loss Due To End-stage Age-Related Macular Degeneration: One-Year Results. *Ophthalmology*. 2006;113:1987-2001.



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