

Why 25?

Many customers have asked us why our formula contains 25mg of zinc as opposed to the 80mg contained in the Age Related Eye Disease Study (AREDS) and follow-on Age Related Eye Disease 2 (AREDS2) studies. The answer is simple. We believe it is the safest formulation to support macular health.

Zinc is an essential element in human cells to facilitate normal cell metabolism. It is found in food such as meat, seafood, dairy, legumes, and whole grains. An Institute of Medicine (IOM) report in 2001 recommended that an adult male consume 11mg and an adult female consume 8mg daily. (Institute of Medicine, “Dietary Reference Intakes for Vitamin A, Vitamin K, Arsenic, Boron, Chromium, Copper, Iodine, Iron, Manganese, Molybdenum, Nickel, Silicon, Vanadium, and Zinc:”, accessed at <http://www.nationalacademies.org/hmd/Reports/2001/Dietary-Reference-Intakes-for-Vitamin-A-Vitamin-K-Arsenic-Boron-Chromium-Copper-Iodine-Iron-Manganese-Molybdenum-Nickel-Silicon-Vanadium-and-Zinc.aspx>, accessed on July 3, 2016). Zinc deficiency is not a common problem in the United States, but is found in developing countries. Zinc is used to reduce the duration and severity of symptoms related to the common cold. Additionally, it is a component in preventing eye disease progression.

The original AREDS study showed a clear benefit of 80mg of zinc as compared to no zinc to reduce the risk of progression of macular degeneration, meaning that the daily intake of eight times the recommended daily intake did reduce the risk of progression. However, there was also a significant increase in hospital admissions due to urinary complications (Johnson AR et al, “High dose zinc increases hospital admissions due to genitourinary complications.” J Urology, 2007; 177: 639-43). In the 2001 Institute of Medicine report, the most commonly reported side effects from zinc supplementation include headache, abdominal cramps and pain, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting. Additionally, zinc supplementation can cause a copper deficiency anemia (not enough red blood cells circulating in the bloodstream).

In the AREDS2 study, investigators compared a formulation containing 80mg of zinc to one with 25mg. Importantly, there was no difference in the rate of progression to advanced macular degeneration in patients who took low dose zinc (approximately 29% at 5 years). (Lutein + Zeaxanthin and Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Age-Related Macular Degeneration The Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2) Randomized Clinical Trial. JAMA. 2013;309(19):2005–2015. doi:10.1001/jama.2013.4997)

Given our desire to provide the safest and most effective product to support the ocular health of our patients, we elected to include a lower dose of zinc than the “recommended” dose from the AREDS2 study. We have offered this product for sale to our patients for over two years and believe it is right for you!

Dr. Marcus Colyer, MD