

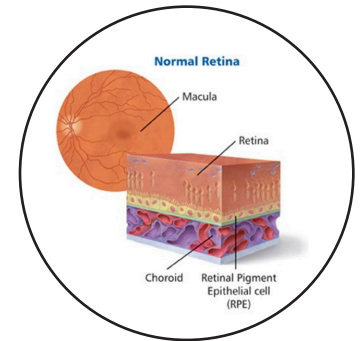


Atrophic Age-Related Macular Degeneration & Geographic Atrophy

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) has different stages and types including mild AMD, intermediate AMD, wet AMD, and atrophic AMD. Wet AMD and atrophic AMD are both advanced forms of the disease which can cause vision loss, and it is possible to have both advanced forms in the same eye.

WHAT DOES ATROPHY MEAN IN AMD?

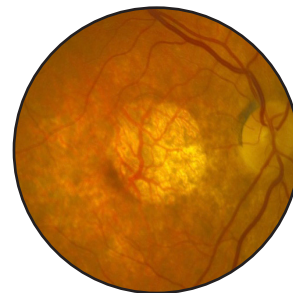
The retina is like the film in a camera and lines the back wall of the inside of your eye. Right behind the retina is a barrier layer called the retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) which is also important for the health of the retina. In atrophic AMD, the RPE cells become sick and degenerate, leaving patches of tissue with poor vision. When atrophic AMD starts, the vision is often decreased in a non-specific manner. The vision is less clear, color and contrast are affected, and glasses do not help. This is equivalent to the film in the camera wearing thin right in the center but still functioning.



When atrophic AMD progresses further, it can result in geographic atrophy (GA), where discrete patches of the retina stop functioning entirely. This results in dark or missing spots in the vision. Atrophic AMD can sometimes cause black “ink spots” that are briefly visible when waking up or when the lighting changes suddenly. Patients will also sometimes experience their vision “jumping” because their eye is rapidly moving around, trying to find a spot with clear vision but struggling because healthy areas of retina are irregular and patchy. There is no treatment available for these symptoms.

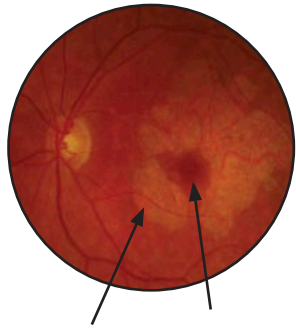


Intermediate dry AMD with patchy RPE atrophy

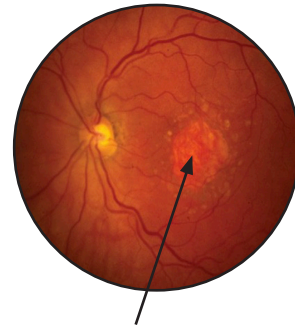


Advanced dry AMD with geographic atrophy

If the GA is located away from the center of the retina, it may have very little impact on visual acuity, as measured on the eye chart, even if the affected region is large. Sometimes non-central GA will affect the peripheral vision in a way that impacts driving safely. If GA is located in the center of the retina, even a small patch of GA may profoundly limit visual acuity. Atrophic AMD usually progresses over time.



GA sparing the center



GA involving the center

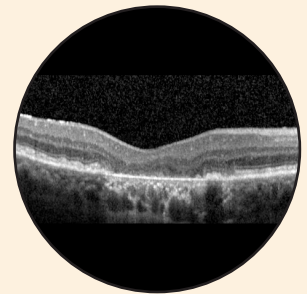
On average, GA enlarges at a rate of about 2.5 mm² per year, but in some patients, the atrophy progresses slower or faster than this. Your BARA doctor can explain how your GA is progressing, often with the aid of specialized retinal images that can highlight areas of atrophy.



Color photograph



Fundus autofluorescence



Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT)

In early 2023, the FDA approved SYFOVRE™ (pegcetacoplan) as the first treatment of geographic atrophy. Clinical trials demonstrated a significant slowing down of geographic atrophy progression in eyes treated with SYFOVRE™. SYFOVRE™ is injected into the eye by your BARA retina specialist at one- to two-month intervals.

For more information about injections into the eye, please see our handout on Intravitreal Injections.



Bay Area Retina Associates
Diseases and Surgery of the Retina and Vitreous

Locations

Antioch | Castro Valley | Fremont | Oakland | Pleasanton | San Leandro | Tracy | Vallejo | Walnut Creek
(800) 5-RETINA (573-8462) | www.BayAreaRetina.com

Bay Area Retina Associates is a group practice of retinal surgeons. All members of the group are board-certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and have completed fellowship training in the medical and surgical care of retinal diseases. All BARA surgeons have expertise in the treatment of common diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and retinal detachment, as well as rare diseases. We have served the Bay Area community for 35 years.