

MACULAR REGENERATION

A bold new treatment restores the vision of Jiffy Lube's founder.

A doctor in Baltimore gave him the grim news: he had age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Jim Hindman, then 57, basically shrugged. After all he had been through and accomplished, this seemed minor. After spending part of his hardscrabble childhood in a state home, he had become a self-made millionaire by the age of 35 and later rose to even greater heights when he founded the oil change giant Jiffy Lube International.

Hindman could see just fine when he received his diagnosis. He pretty much forgot about it—until small black spots began marring his central vision, followed by an ever-increasing blurriness. Fifteen years after his initial diagnosis, a doctor told him, “You are legally blind.”

His world grew darker. He was not able to walk outside by himself. He could not recognize the faces of friends. Despair gripped him. Did he lift himself up by the bootstraps only to be brought low and helpless?

Hindman, 79, grew up in Sioux City, Iowa, after the Great Depression. His single mother, emotionally troubled, was unable to provide for him and his two younger brothers. When he was 10, the state ordered that Hindman be sent to the Boys and Girls Home in Sioux City. There he received structure and discipline, two things he desperately needed.

Hindman excelled at football, earning him a partial scholarship to college. He eventually received a master's degree in hospital administration and used that as a springboard to become a business leader in the nursing home industry. He made millions and decided to retire at the ripe age of 35.

Soon bored, he coached football at Western Maryland College (now McDaniel), accepting an annual salary of \$1. At Western Maryland he transformed the team into a winner and also changed his life. At Jiffy Lube, the pivotal moment is now known as “the Challenge.”

A student visited Hindman's office one day, complaining about the lack of job prospects after graduation. Hindman was shocked and annoyed. “There is plenty of opportunity,” he told the student. “You just have to know where to look and be willing to sacrifice for it.” The student glibly shot back, “I bet you couldn't do it again.” Hindman replied that he would not only achieve another success but that he would also enrich some of the student's classmates. The promise came to fruition in 1986, just eight years after the Challenge when Jiffy Lube became a publicly traded company and a number of former Western Maryland players found themselves overnight millionaires.

Hindman continued his run of success. He took another company public, Youth Services International, which helped rehabilitate adjudicated youth. He raised and raced horses and received two honorary doctorates. He treasured his beautiful family: his wife, Dixie, two children and grandchildren. Things couldn't have been better—until he lost his sight.

He was diagnosed with AMD at Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, which is supported by Lions. He may have been an extraordinary businessman, but he was now one of the 11 million Americans with the dreadful disease. That number is expected to more than double by 2050.

Hindman has always prided himself on being a person who tackled every situation head-on. But AMD laid him low. There were no “cures” for it. He began an intensive search for any possible treatment. Eventually, through the recommendation of a friend, he returned to Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Medical Center. He opted to be the first person to try a new strategy at Wilmer. Doctors inserted a pea-sized telescope into his left eye two years ago. The Implantable Miniature Telescope (IMT™) is



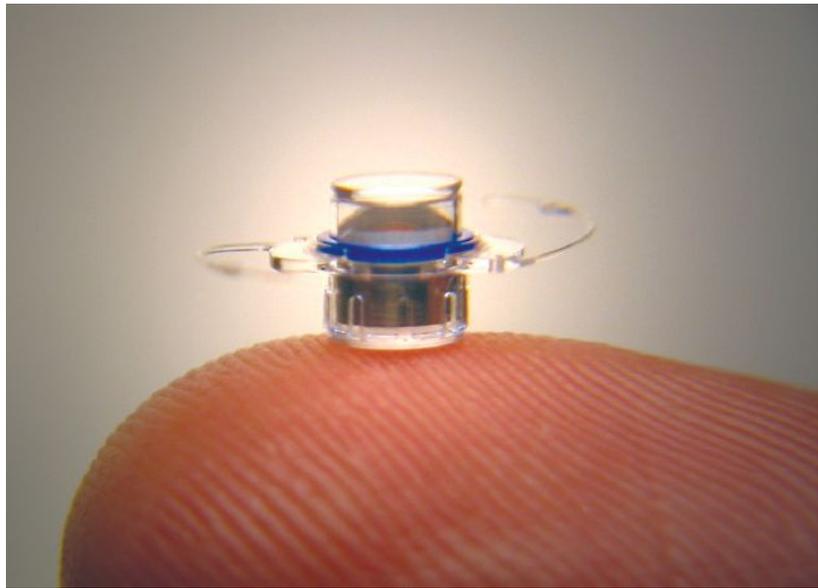
An Implantable Miniature Telescope (IMT™) restored the sight of Hindman.

Patients' Vision Improves

About 600 people have received the Implantable Miniature Telescope to mitigate macular degeneration. The clinical study to assess its effectiveness enrolled more than 200 patients and found that they were able to see on average three to four lines better on the eye chart, according to CentraSight, which sells the IMT. This improvement made the difference in some patients between being able or not being able to recognize a friend or facial expressions.

The treatment does not restore vision to the levels a person enjoyed before the permanent macular degeneration developed. However, nine of every 10 patients with the telescope implant improved vision enough to meet or exceed the FDA study's effectiveness endpoint (at least two lines on the eye chart).

Medicare covers the treatment for patients who meet certain physical requirements and are over the age of 65. Many people who have AMD will not qualify for the device. Many AMD patients have had cataract surgery, and cataract patients cannot receive the device because of certain physical and surgical dangers. The rehab process also is rigorous. Learning to use the device can take up to two years. The treatment is available at more than 100 eye care centers in the United States.



Functioning as a magnifying lens, the tiny IMT™ is placed directly into an eye.

essentially a magnifying lens placed directly into an eye. It does not cure macular degeneration or even treat the disease per se. But the remarkable device worked as intended for Hindman. His vision in his IMT-implanted eye improved from 20/400 to 20/60.

Hindman chronicles his business success, blindness and journey to sight in "Was Blind, but Now I See," recently published. His goal is to raise awareness and understanding about the disease, help people get connected to services and raise funds for research to eventually find a cure. All the revenue from book sales will go toward macular degeneration and low vision education, rehabilitation and research efforts.

Proceeds from the sale of Hindman's book will be distributed to Lions Clubs International Foundation, the Wilmer Eye Clinic/the Multiple District 22 Lions Vision Research Foundation/LOVRNET), and Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia. The book is available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble or Club Supplies at Lions Clubs International.

Age-Related Macular Degeneration on the Rise

BY DANIELLE NATALE, O.D.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the most common cause of blindness in people over the age of 65 in the United States. Currently, 11 million people have the eye disease, and 7 million people are at risk for developing advanced AMD. It is estimated that the number of people with AMD will increase by 50 percent by the year 2020.

AMD impacts the retina. A part of the retina, called the macula, has a highly concentrated area of seeing cells and is dedicated to providing central, detailed

vision. As a person ages the macula is the most susceptible spot on the retina to the buildup of cellular waste, resulting in degeneration of the seeing cells in the macula (hence, the name “macular degeneration”).

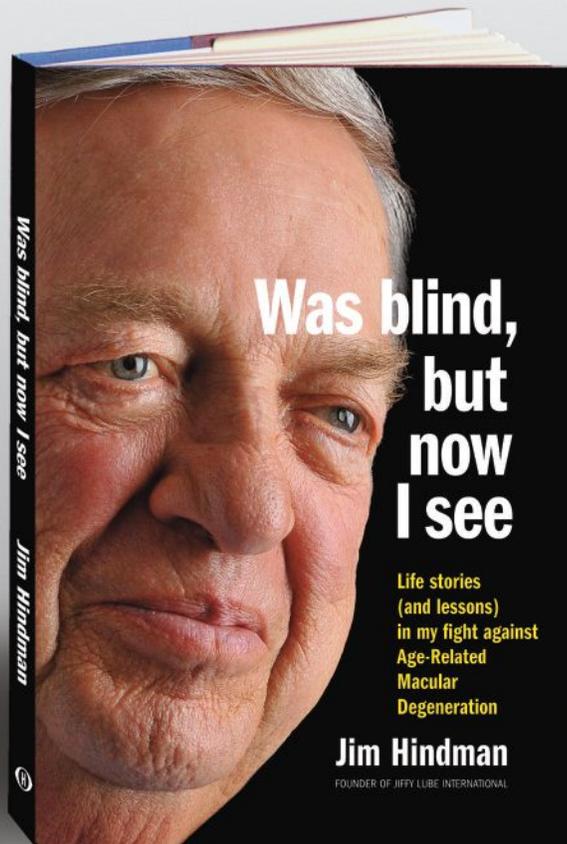
Non-modifiable risk factors for AMD include genetics, race, gender and age. People with a family history of AMD are at higher risk for developing AMD themselves. Caucasians are more likely to get AMD than African Americans. Women are at higher risk than men. The risk of getting AMD increases with age. Modifiable risk factors include diet, weight and smoking.

AMD comes in two forms, wet and dry. Both forms can lead to progressive central vision loss and/or distortion. It is not associated with pain. Since the macula is located inside the eye, AMD is also not associated with any tearing, discharge, redness or other visible symptoms. Dry AMD is more prevalent, making up 90 percent of all cases of AMD. However, wet AMD is often more severe and is responsible for 90 percent of severe vision impairment in cases of AMD.

Although there is no treatment for the dry form of AMD, recent studies have shown that taking a vitamin with a special formula can help slow the progression of some stages of AMD. Taking this vitamin has not been shown to prevent AMD from developing in people that do not already have the disease. Treatment for wet AMD previously used a laser, but this would often lead to further vision loss. In recent years, medicine has been developed that can be injected inside of the eye in order to cause stabilization or regression of the wet AMD. A person has potential even to gain some vision after injections.

People with vision loss and functional deficits due to AMD can benefit from low vision rehabilitation. Various devices and strategies can help a person regain independence and safety.

Danielle Natale is a Lions Low Vision Fellow at Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.



“You are legally blind!”

With these four words Jim Hindman, renowned entrepreneur and founder of Jiffy Lube International, would face the biggest challenge of his life when he was diagnosed with Macular Degeneration, an age-related progressive disease that leads eventually to blindness.

“This engrossing book tells Jim Hindman’s success story of how a remarkable device, and vision rehabilitation, restored him to a world of sight and mobility. Jim has an extraordinary drive to overcome adversity, and that is clear in every chapter of this engrossing story.”

Judith Goldstein, O.D., F.A.A.O.,
Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins,
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