

## Anti-VEGF Injection Information Improving and maintaining your vision.

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### ■ Why do we use Anti-VEGF drugs (Avastin, Lucentis, Eylea)?

VEGF is an enzyme that is present in the body even under normal circumstances. It has been found to be elevated in numerous pathological conditions of the body. When elevated in the eye, it is partially responsible for damage in conditions such as Diabetic Retinopathy, Macular Degeneration, and Retinal Vascular Occlusion. Anti-VEGF agents counteract the harmful effects of VEGF.

These conditions tend to be chronic in nature, and as such, frequent follow-up is commonly required for at least a year. It is not uncommon for follow-up exams to continue indefinitely. Some of these conditions require an initial series of injections on a monthly basis, followed either by treatment in decreasing frequency, or careful follow-up with reinstatement of treatment as needed.

Please understand, treatment of these disorders is not quick and easy, and we don't have a cure. However, injections have proven to be very effective in maintaining or improving vision. Vision does not always improve, but we can usually maintain it at its current level. Research continues, and our physicians will offer additional or alternate therapies as they become available.

### ■ How is the procedure performed?

The medicine is injected into the eye in our offices. It does not require any special pretreatment care. We first deaden the eye with anesthetic drops, or a small injection of lidocaine. Next, we clean the eye in the same manner as would be performed in an operating room. And last, we inject a tiny droplet of the medication into the eye with a very thin needle.

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### ■ After the treatment, what should you expect?

The eye does not typically require eye drops of any kind. You may return to normal activity afterwards, although you should refrain from dirty or dusty activities for 24 hours following the injection, and you should not go swimming or submerge your head under water for 24 hrs.

A bit of eye irritation following the injection is normal, and your vision will be blurry in the affected eye for the remainder of your injection day. A small hemorrhage (red spot) at the injection site is not uncommon, and can persist for 1 - 2 weeks depending upon size.

Severe pain or decreased vision are not normal; **if you experience these symptoms, please call our main office for further discussion at 505-982-5716.**

■ Please call our office immediately if you experience; severe redness, yellow discharge, increased sensitivity to light, and increased floaters, lasting more than one day.

■ Please call our office immediately if you experience; a peripheral curtain or shadow in your vision, or pronounced worsening of vision.

■ Infection and retinal detachment following an injection are rare but they can be devastating to vision, so please do not delay calling if you have any concerns.

We always have someone on call for our practice to assist you. If you are concerned about your vision and you cannot reach anyone from High Country Macula, please present yourself to the nearest Emergency Room.