



The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology
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Vision research: An under-valued investment

The CDC estimates that over 90 million Americans are living with (or are at high risk for) vision loss that severely impacts their quality of life. The U.S. has a history of providing support and funding to scientists dedicated to studying eye diseases and interventions to delay or even prevent vision loss.

Anti-VEGF

One notable success in vision research funding was the creation of anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (Anti-VEGF) therapy supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), specifically the National Eye Institute (NEI). Anti-VEGF therapy slows or blocks the growth of blood vessels in the eye effectively slowing vision loss and can improve vision. This treatment has greatly enhanced the quality of life for numerous Americans. Stories from patients and researchers about how anti-VEGF therapy has impacted their lives and work can be found at arvo.org/antivegf.

Therapy Indications

This therapy is primarily used to treat eye diseases such as:

- Diabetic retinopathy (DR)
- Macula edema
- Retinal vein occlusion
- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)
- Retinopathy of prematurity



Eye Health in the U.S.

- Anti-VEGF Injections
 - Annual injections: **2.5 million**
- Prevalence of Eye Conditions
 - AMD, DR, Glaucoma, and Cataracts are each expected to double by 2050
- Estimated Economic Burden of Vision Loss
 - Total: **\$134.2 billion**
 - Indirect Costs: **\$35.5 billion**
 - Direct Costs: **\$98.7 billion**
- Major Contributors to Economic Burden
 - Nursing Home Expenses: **\$41.8 billion**
 - Other Medical Care Services (glasses, home health care, etc.): **\$30.9 billion**
 - Decreased Labor Force Participation: **\$16.2 billion**

We are experiencing a growing epidemic of vision impairment and vision loss. NEI has remained historically underfunded and operating below inflation-adjusted dollars since fiscal year 2012. NEI has only ever received base increases (when provided across all institutes) which is not reflective of the outsized impact of vision research on eye care and medical science. With your support, we can persist in advancing accomplishments such as anti-VEGF treatments, striving to prevent, preserve, and potentially recover vision in the future.

Invest in eye and vision scientists.
Increase funding for vision research.

