

Abstract

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The importance of nutrition in the prevention of ocular disease with special reference to cataract.

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BACKGROUND: The lens is the ocular structure most susceptible to oxidative damage. Antioxidants, micronutrients and phytochemicals have been extensively studied for their possible effects to prevent or delay the progression of various eye diseases.

OBJECTIVES: A brief overview of the updated literature on the role of antioxidants and micronutrients in the prevention and treatment of ocular diseases is to be presented with an emphasis on cataract.

DATA SOURCES: PubMed search and individual papers from journals.

DATA SYNTHESIS: The review discusses linkages of various micronutrients and antioxidants as well as oxidative stress with cataract. Dietary interventions as strategy for prevention of cataract and other ocular disorders are also reviewed.

CONCLUSIONS: Consumption of food-based antioxidants like β -carotene lutein and zeaxanthin seem to be useful for the treatment of macular degeneration and cataracts. Supplements of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E and zinc may prevent advanced age-related macular degeneration only in high-risk individuals.

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