



## What is Avastin®?

Avastin® is a drug used to treat wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD). It is also used to treat diabetic eye disease and other problems of the retina. It is injected into the eye to help slow vision loss from these diseases.

Avastin is the brand name for the drug, which is called bevacizumab. It blocks the growth of abnormal blood vessels in the back of the eye. It also blocks the leakage of fluid from these blood vessels. This leakage can affect vision, causing vision loss from wet AMD and diabetic eye disease.

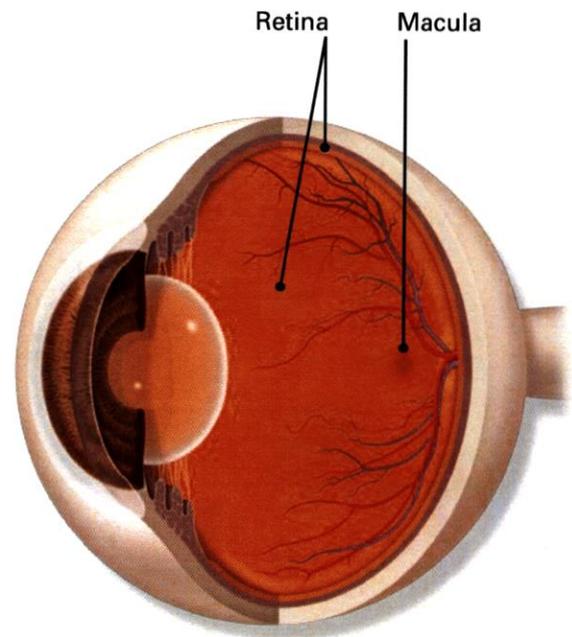
## How does Avastin work?

Abnormal blood vessels need a body chemical called VEGF to grow. Avastin blocks VEGF, slowing the growth of blood vessels in the eye. Drugs that block the trouble-causing VEGF are called anti-VEGF drugs.

## What conditions are treated with Avastin?

Avastin is used to treat the following eye problems:

- Wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD)
- Swelling of the retina, called macular edema
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Retinal vein occlusion
- Choroidal neovascularization (small abnormal blood vessels that can grow under the retina and lead to vision loss.)



## 👁️ Eye Words to Know

**Retina:** Layer of cells lining the back wall inside the eye. This layer senses light and sends signals to the brain so you can see.

**Macula:** Small but important area in the center of the retina. You need the macula to clearly see details of objects in front of you.

## What happens during Avastin treatment?

During an outpatient procedure, your ophthalmologist first numbs the eye to block pain. Then your doctor injects the Avastin directly into your eye.

Before the procedure, your ophthalmologist will clean your eye to prevent infection and numb your eye with medicine. A very thin needle is passed through the white part of your eye and the drug is injected. Usually you do not see the needle itself. You may need to continue having these injections over many months.

Sometimes ophthalmologists will combine Avastin treatment with other treatments for the best chance of saving your vision.

## What are the risks of Avastin treatment?

Every treatment can have side effects. It is important to understand the benefits and risks of any treatment you might have.

Common side effects may include:

- eye redness
- feeling like something is in your eye
- dry or itchy eyes
- eye discomfort
- temporarily blurry vision
- floaters

Any eye injection, including Avastin, may cause these problems, which are very rare :

- eye infection
- detached retina (where the retina lifts up from the back of the eye)
- cataracts (clouding of the eye's normally clear lens)
- being extra sensitive to light
- eye pain
- swelling inside the eye

Avastin was first approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat different types of cancer. Its use to treat eye disease is considered an "off-label" use. The FDA allows "off label" drug use if doctors are well informed about the product and studies prove the drug is helpful. Many studies have shown Avastin as safe and effective for eye disease since it was first used in 2005.

Lucentis® (ranibizumab) and Eylea® (aflibercept) are other drugs like Avastin. Research shows each of these drugs are effective in slowing vision loss.

For about 24 hours after injection, it is normal to feel like there is something in the eye, and to have mild eye pain and light sensitivity if your pupil was dilated. If these or any other side effects last longer, please contact your ophthalmologist right away. Eye redness or a bloody eye can last for a few days.

If you have any questions about your eyes or your vision, be sure to ask. Your ophthalmologist is committed to protecting your sight.

## Summary

Avastin is a drug that is injected into your eye to treat wet AMD and diabetic eye disease. This drug type is called "anti-VEGF." That is because it blocks a chemical called VEGF in the eye. VEGF causes abnormal blood vessels to grow and leak fluid in the eye, affecting vision.

Your ophthalmologist will numb your eye with medicine. Then they will inject Avastin into your eye using a very thin needle.

You may need multiple Avastin treatments to help slow vision loss. Your ophthalmologist might also combine Avastin treatment and another type of treatment.

Like any treatment, there are possible risks and side effects from Avastin treatment. They might include problems with the retina, eye infection, vision problems and more. Talk with your ophthalmologist if you have any questions.

Watch an AMD video from the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeSmart program at [aao.org/wet-amd-link](http://aao.org/wet-amd-link).

### COMPLIMENTS OF:

## LONGWOOD EYE & LASIK

180 Daggett Drive  
33 Riddell Street  
354 Main Street  
33 Electric Avenue  
800.676.5050

West Springfield  
Greenfield  
Gardner  
Fitchburg  
[www.longwoodeye.com](http://www.longwoodeye.com)