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Prevent Blindness Declares Third Annual Geographic Atrophy Awareness Week as Dec. 4-10, 2023

-- Prevent Blindness provides free geographic atrophy educational resources for patients, care partners and healthcare professionals, including new Focus on Eye Health Expert series episode, Web resource, Fact Sheets and More --

CHICAGO (Nov. 30, 2023) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's leading nonprofit eye health organization, is announcing the third annual Geographic Atrophy (GA) Awareness Week as Dec. 4-10, 2023. GA is a medical term that refers to later-stage cases of dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Macular degeneration is an eye condition that affects the macula of the retina. More than 8 million people in the world have GA, with an estimated 1 million in the United States, according to the [Cleveland Clinic](#).

Prevent Blindness offers a variety of free, educational resources on GA including [a dedicated webpage](#), expert videos, a [comprehensive fact sheet](#) and a series of [social media graphics](#). The fact sheet and graphics are available in English and Spanish. This year's GA Awareness Week is supported by funding from [Apellis Pharmaceuticals, Inc.](#), and [Iveric Bio](#), an Astellas Company.

Additionally, Prevent Blindness is participating in the first World Geographic Atrophy Day on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023. The goal of the new initiative is to empower the voices of the global GA community, and provide education, advocacy, and support. World Geographic Atrophy Day is a partnership between [BrightFocus Foundation](#), [Fighting Blindness Canada](#), [Macular Society](#), and Prevent Blindness, and is supported with funding provided by Apellis Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

As part of GA Week at Prevent Blindness, a new episode in the Prevent Blindness [Focus on Eye Health Expert Series](#), "Advancements in Treatments for Geographic Atrophy," will be available featuring Rajeev S. Ramchandran, MD, MBA, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Flaum Eye Institute, [University of Rochester Medical Center](#). Dr. Ramchandran also serves as the volunteer chairperson of the Prevent Blindness Scientific Committee, and is a member of its Board of Directors.

Additional Focus on Eye Health Expert Series episodes include "[Geographic Atrophy and Patient Support](#)," featuring [Prevent Blindness Ohio](#) Past President and CEO, Sherry Williams, sharing her story as a care partner for her mother diagnosed with GA, and the

[“Geographic Atrophy”](#) episode, with Janet S. Sunness, MD, medical director of the [Richard E. Hoover Low Vision Rehabilitation Services](#) at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center.

GA can lead to progressive and permanent vision loss. Patients with GA in one eye are more likely to develop it in the other eye. There may be no symptoms in the early stages until the disease progresses or affects both eyes. Vision changes due to GA may include some of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty seeing in the center of vision
- Numbers or letters disappearing or missing when reading
- A dim or dark spot in central or near central (side) vision
- Trouble seeing in dim light
- Needing extra light to read
- Dull or washed-out colors
- Vision not as clear or sharp

“The good news is that promising new treatments for GA are now available, with additional options in development,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “By working closely with their eye doctors, people with GA have hope to preserve their vision from the damaging effects of GA.”

For GA and/or AMD patients and their care partners, Prevent Blindness also offers the free resource, [Living Well With Low Vision](#). This program provides a variety of free directories, a library of self-help guides, downloadable apps including “GuideME for AMD,” access to clinical trial research, and recent AMD research news.

For more information on geographic atrophy, please visit <https://preventblindness.org/geographic-atrophy>. For a listing of vision care financial assistance programs in English or Spanish, visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/vision-care-financial-assistance-information>.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at PreventBlindness.org, and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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