

# Fluorescein angiography



## **What is Fluorescein angiography?**

Fluorescein is a synthetic yellow coloured dye which is injected into your vein to identify the circulation at the back of the eye. This injection of dye is called angiography.

## **Why do I need it?**

This test will give your doctor more information about the condition of the blood vessels which supply blood to the back of your eye. It helps the doctor to decide the best form of treatment and management of your eye condition. The test will be carried out by an experienced nurse and ophthalmic photographer.

## **Is it suitable for everyone?**

You should not have the test if you:

- have had a previous reaction to Fluorescein
- are pregnant.

## **What does it involve?**

On arrival at the Outpatient Department:

1. A nurse will test your vision by asking you to read the letters on a vision chart.
2. You will have drops put into both eyes to dilate your pupils. It usually takes 20-30 minutes for your pupils to fully dilate.
3. You will be asked a few questions about your general health, current medications and any allergies that you may have, by an experienced Staff Nurse. Please inform the nurse if you have previously had any bad reactions to medication or to Fluorescein in the past.
4. You will be asked to give verbal permission for a cannula (small needle) to be inserted into a vein in your arm. This will be used to inject the dye into your blood stream in the photography room. It is advisable to wear clothes that will allow access to your lower arm.
5. Once your pupils are dilated and the cannula is in place you will be taken to the photography room.

6. The photographer will position you comfortably at the camera. When he is ready a small amount of dye will be injected by the nurse, through the cannula into your vein. Within a few seconds the dye travels to the blood vessels at the back of your eye.
7. Initially a rapid series of photographs will be taken, then intermittently over a period of around 10 minutes. These photographs will show where the dye circulates around the back of your eye. The eye will not be touched by the camera during this procedure.
8. On completion of the photographs you will be asked to wait in the department for 20 minutes to ensure that you do not have any side effects and are well enough to go home.
9. Before you leave the department a nurse will remove the cannula from your arm.

### **What happens afterwards?**

The eye drops can cause blurring of vision for 4-6 hours, but this can last as long as 36 hours. It is important that you do not drive yourself on the day of the appointment and have somebody to drive you home afterwards. It is advisable to wear dark glasses after the procedure as the light can often seem brighter than usual.

### **Can I take my normal medicines?**

Yes, you may take any tablets or medications as usual on the day of the test.

### **Can I eat and drink before the test?**

Yes, you may eat and drink as normal before and after the test.

### **What are the possible side effects?**

- The Fluorescein dye is yellow and will give your skin a yellow tinge. Your urine will be bright yellow for one to two days afterwards.
- During the injection you may experience a passing wave of nausea which rarely lasts for more than a few seconds.
- You will experience blurred vision due to the dilating drops, which should settle after 36 hours.

- You may experience some dazzle caused by the camera flash, which should settle over 24 hours.
- You may develop a rash or itching skin following the test.
- In rare cases patients may have a severe reaction to the dye – this is called anaphylaxis. This may cause severe breathing or circulatory difficulties. The department is well prepared should this occur.

## **When will I get my results?**

You will receive a clinic appointment through the post, where you will be seen to discuss the findings of the procedure and any future treatment you may need.

## **Any questions?**

If you would like any further information or have any questions about this procedure, please contact:

The Eye Unit  
Ophthalmology  
Royal Cornwall Hospital  
Truro

Tel: 01872 253926

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690

