

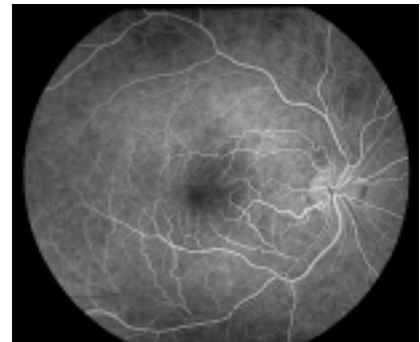
# Fluorescein angiography

## Information for patients from Head and Neck

Now that you have been told that you need fluorescein angiography you will be wondering what happens next. This leaflet explains what fluorescein angiography is and why it is carried out. We hope that this will help you reach a decision on whether you wish to proceed with this test.

### What is fluorescein angiography?

Fluorescein is a fluorescent, non-toxic dye which shows up under a blue light. This is a diagnostic test which allows the blood vessels at the back of your eye to be photographed, as the fluorescent dye is injected into the blood vessels via your hand or arm (see diagram).



### Why is this procedure necessary?

This procedure allows your doctor to examine the minute blood vessels at the back of your eye and thus helps in providing a diagnosis and planning for treatment.

### Are there any alternatives?

Whilst we are able to examine the back of your eye, this is the only effective way of examining the integrity of blood vessels within your eye.



## Should I eat and drink before my procedure?

We advise you to eat a light meal before your procedure and diabetic patients are advised to make sure that they have eaten enough food. There is no need to restrict the amount you drink.

## Should I take my normal medication?

- All medication should be continued as ordered by your doctor. However, eye ointments should be avoided until after your procedure, as they are greasy and would affect the images.
- Please tell medical and nursing staff of any medication that you use.

## How is the test performed?

On arrival in outpatients you will be asked some questions about your general health and any treatment that you may be taking or have taken in the past. You may be asked to sign a consent form.

Please tell the nurse if you have any known allergies (including food allergies), have had any untoward effect after a previous fluorescein angiography test, or you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Your pupils will be dilated (made bigger) with eye drops. Your nurse would then pass a small cannula in to one of the veins at the back of your hand through which the fluorescein dye would be given. A series of photographs are taken as the dye enters the blood vessels at the back of your eye. It is important to keep very still during your procedure.

## When can I go home after my procedure?

Following your procedure, we usually ask you to remain in the department for around half an hour.

## Are there any side effects or risks to the procedure?

All procedures, no matter how big or small, carry a risk.

- During the procedure you may feel rather warm or experience a 'hot flush'. This usually happens in the first minute and then disappears.
- Your skin may be tinged with yellow and your urine may be discoloured for 24 hours after your procedure. This is normal and wears off as the dye leaves your body.
- Occasionally more severe symptoms may occur. You may feel nauseous (sick), a few people experience vomiting, and some people feel faint, but this does not last.
- Approximately one patient in every 20,000 will experience a moderate to severe reaction known as anaphylactic shock (collapse and, or severe breathlessness).
- The dye is not radioactive, so no radiation is involved.

## Will it improve my vision?

No, the procedure will not improve your vision and will not affect your normal vision.

The dilating drops and the bright light of the camera may blur your vision for four to six hours.

## What happens following my procedure?

- We recommend that you do not sit in strong sunshine for 24 hours after your angiography test.
- If you are having a blood test within the next 24 to 48 hours, please tell your doctor that you have had this test.
- If you are diabetic, you may notice some abnormality in the sugar in your urine; this will only last a short while and we recommend that you ignore it.
- Your urine will be orange for up to 24 hours, this is only the dye leaving your body.
- Please drink plenty of fluids following your procedure.

### When will I get the results of my test?

Your results will either be discussed with you straight away or a follow-up appointment will be made for you to attend the outpatient clinic.

### Can I drive home?

You will not be able to drive home or use a mobility scooter after your procedure because of the drops. Please bring someone with you who can drive you home, or make suitable transport arrangements, so you can get home afterwards.

You may resume driving the day after your procedure when your vision has returned to normal.

### In case of emergency

Please contact William Harvey Hospital on 01233 633331 and ask for the on call ophthalmologist.

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients**

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**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 783145, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

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