

Fluorescein Angiogram

What is a fluorescein angiogram?

A commonly performed diagnostic procedure using a fluorescein dye to examine the back of the eye (retina). The procedure lasts between 30 minutes to 1 hour. Due to the colour of the dye this will make your urine bright orange in colour. There is also a chance that your skin will turn a slight tinge of yellow. These symptoms usually last 2-3 days. Plenty of water should speed up the process.

Why is the procedure necessary?

This special test helps to supply the additional information needed to confirm or disprove a diagnosis.

It provides information to help manage eye conditions.

It records the progress of a condition or treatment.

If you do not consent to having the test, we may not be able to manage your condition with as much accuracy.

What does a fluorescein angiogram involve?

Drops are put into both eyes to enlarge your pupils. The drops will cause blurring of your vision. You must not drive yourself to your appointment as you will not be able to drive home afterwards.

The drops usually take 20-30 minutes to work (depending on the colour of your eyes) and once the eyes are dilated enough, an ophthalmic

photographer will take colour photographs of your retina.

A small amount of yellow/orange dye will be injected into a vein in your arm or the back of your hand. The dye travels through the blood vessels reaching the back of your eye very quickly.

A video and a series of photographs will be taken as the dye enters the vessels at the back of your eyes. Ten minutes later a further series of photographs will be taken.

At the end of the procedure you will need to stay for another 10 minutes so we can ensure that you are fit to leave the unit.

While you are waiting we will do a non-invasive scan (OCT) in order to have all the information obtained in the same day.

Are there any side effects?

Most people feel no ill effects when the dye is injected.

- A very small number of patients feel slightly nauseated once the fluorescein is administered which usually lasts for a minute or so.
- Very rarely vomiting occurs.
- Due to the colour of the dye this will make your urine bright orange in colour. There is also a chance that your skin will turn a slight tinge of yellow. These symptoms usually last for 2-3 days as the dye passes out of your body. Drinking plenty of water should speed up the process.

- As your pupils are large, you may feel more comfortable wearing dark glasses afterwards.
- Allergic reaction to fluorescein dye is rare. It may cause itching and skin rashes. This can be treated with anti-histamine medication.
- On very rare occasions, people may experience a severe allergic reaction called anaphylaxis, causing swelling, breathing and circulatory difficulties.

Therefore this test is only carried out when it is thought it is fundamental for a diagnosis to formulate the right treatment and management of your condition.

What happens afterwards?

The consultants and other multidisciplinary team members, at a special meeting, will assess the results of your fluorescein angiogram. They will make a decision and formulate the correct management for your condition. The results will be discussed with you at a follow-up appointment, where you are welcome to ask any questions or concerns you may have.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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