



Fluorescein Angiography

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What is Fluorescein Angiography?

This is a test which allows us to examine the back of the eye (called the retina) in detail. The retina is light-sensitive and is examined using a dye. This helps the doctors to make a diagnosis and to decide on the best treatment for you. It can be used to monitor the progress of an existing retinal condition. There are two types of dyes used in Angiography. One is called Fluorescein and the other is called Indocyanine green. The doctor organising the test will decide on the type of dye to be used. You might have the test done with both dyes during the same visit.

What does the test involve?

It involves taking a rapid series of photographs of the retina with bright flashes of light. These photographs give an accurate map of the changes in the retina including the blood vessels , particularly the central area called the macula. This is the centre of the retina which helps us see fine details and colours.

You are advised not to drive to or from your appointment. It is a good idea to bring a relative or friend with you.

Where is the test carried out?

The test is carried out in the photography room in the eye department at the hospital.

What will happen?

The details of the test will be explained and you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your vision will be checked

and some dilating drops put into your eyes to enlarge your pupils. These drops take up to half an hour to work and causes temporary blurring of vision for at least 2 hours. Your blood pressure will be taken. You will be then be seated at a camera in a darkened room and the photographer will take some colour photographs using a digital camera and a bright flash. A doctor or a trained specialist nurse will then inject a small quantity of dye into a vein in the back of your hand or your arm. This dye then travels through the blood vessels very quickly to the back of the eye. The photographer then takes another series of photographs. When you come for the test, please bring a list of any prescription drugs you take, and tell the nurse if you are allergic to anything. Please wear a short sleeve blouse or shirt so it is easier to inject the dye. No X-rays or radioactive materials are used.

How long will it take?

The actual procedure takes about 10 – 20 minutes or up to 45 minutes if you have Indocyanine green angiography. Your overall appointment may last up to 1 hour. After the test you may also be asked to wait for about 10 – 15 minutes before you leave.

When will I know the results?

A doctor will look at the results later and make a treatment decision that is appropriate for your eye condition. You will be sent another appointment for Injection treatment, if needed, or a clinic appointment for follow-up. The nurse practitioner and later the doctor who sees you at follow up will explain to you about the dye test results and the treatment plan.

Are there any side effects?

Most people feel no ill effects from the test apart from temporary blurring of vision and some dazzle from the camera's flash. Fluorescein dye tints the skin a slight yellow colour and the urine turns bright yellow, both of which fade within 48 hours. Drinking plenty of water will help to flush the dye out of your system more quickly. Occasionally, people feel nauseous for a few minutes which passes quite quickly. Shortness of breath and skin rash is also known.