

# Fundus Fluorescein Angiography

Information and advice for patients

## *Ophthalmology*

This guide is to help you understand what fundus fluorescein angiography is and how it works. It contains useful information on what you can expect during treatment as well as some advice on what you should do before and after. If after reading this guide you have any questions about fundus fluorescein angiography, please discuss them with your eye doctor.

### **What is the fundus fluorescein angiography?**

Fundus fluorescein angiography is a photographic dye test. The test involves a dye being injected into your arm to highlight any leaking blood vessels in the back of the eye, and a photograph being taken of your eye. This will give doctors more information about the condition of your retina and to decide the best form of treatment.

### **What are the benefits?**

The benefit of the test is that it allows your doctor to confirm your diagnosis and provides an accurate method of monitoring your condition or its response to treatment.

### **What are the risks?**

Most people have no problems however there are some risks:

- Very few people may feel sick or be sick for a short time after the test.
- Less than 1 in 10,000 people are allergic to the dye. The allergy may be very mild (itching or redness) or very rarely a severe life threatening anaphylactic reaction can occur. Our doctors and nurses are trained to deal with this if it happens.
- If a serious reaction occurs you should get medical attention immediately.

### **Breastfeeding**

You should inform the nurse if you are breastfeeding. Fluorescein will pass into the breast milk and is then slowly eliminated. You should not breastfeed for 4 days. During this time breast milk should be expressed and discarded.

### **Pregnancy**

You should inform the nurse if you are pregnant or are planning a pregnancy. If you are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, please inform the nurse as this test may not be suitable for you.

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### **What are the risks of not having the test?**

The risk of not having this test is that the doctor will not be able to make a full diagnosis of your condition.

### **Are there any alternatives to this test?**

There is no alternative test that will give your doctor the same information.

### **Preparing for the test**

Before this test you may eat and drink as normal and take your usual medication.

If you are elderly or have a long way to come, bring someone with you as your eyesight will be blurred and you may be a little dazzled from the camera flash.

### **During the test**

The test is carried out in the outpatients department. Please allow approximately 2 hours for your visit, and longer if you also have a clinic consultation.

1. When you arrive in the department, your general health will be assessed and your blood pressure will be recorded. The test is not suitable if your blood pressure is too high.
2. A doctor or nurse will explain the test to you and ask you to sign a consent form.
3. The test may involve dilating drops being put into your eyes to enlarge the pupils. This will allow the doctor to see clearly into the back of the eye. It may take up to 30 minutes for the drops to work. The eye drops will cause your vision to blur.
4. You will have a cannula placed into a vein in the back of your hand or fold of your elbow.
5. The nurse will then call you into the camera room where a small amount of yellow dye will be injected into a vein in your arm. This dye will highlight any leaking blood vessels.
6. A series of photographs will then be taken of your eye. The dye will give a detailed view of the back of the eye.

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### **After the test**

You will stay in the department for half an hour after the fluorescein injection so we can monitor you to in case you experience any of the severe side effects or have an allergic reaction to the dye. You can go home after this.

The yellow dye may give your skin a slight yellow colour that will usually go over 6-12 hours. Your urine colour may also change for 1-2 days.

You should not drive or operate machinery until 6 hours after the test. You can return to other normal activities as soon as you feel comfortable.

### **Bloodtests**

Small amounts of the dye can remain in the blood for up to 72 hours (3 days) after the test.

If you are due to have any blood tests for any reason you should inform your doctor that you have had a fluorescein angiography.

Some blood tests may be affected by the dye and can result in incorrect readings for up to 72 hours after the injection.

### **Follow-up/results**

If you have a clinic appointment booked on the same day as your test then the doctor will discuss the results with you then. If not then you will be sent a follow-up appointment within the next 2 weeks. If you have not heard from us within 2 weeks please contact the secretary of the consultant who requested the test by calling the hospital switchboard and asking for them.

### **Symptoms to report**

If you feel unwell after you are discharged you should contact the Eye Outpatients department or your GP.

### **Contact details**

If you have any questions or queries please contact:

Eye Outpatients  
Tel: 0121 507 6754

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### Further information

#### **RNIB**

Royal National Institute of Blind People  
105 Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9NE

Website: [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

#### **AMD Alliance**

Website: [www.amdalliance.org](http://www.amdalliance.org)

Email: [info@amdalliance.org](mailto:info@amdalliance.org)

#### **The Royal College of Ophthalmologists**

Website: [www.rcophth.ac.uk](http://www.rcophth.ac.uk)

Tel: 020 7935 0702

#### **Focus Birmingham**

Website: [www.focusbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.focusbirmingham.org.uk)

Address: 48-62 Woodville Road  
Birmingham  
B179AT

Tel: 0121 478 5222

#### **The Macular Society**

Website: [www.macularsociety.org](http://www.macularsociety.org)

Tel: 0300 303 0111

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites [www.swbh.nhs.uk](http://www.swbh.nhs.uk) and [www.swbhengage.com](http://www.swbhengage.com), follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs](http://www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs).

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### Sources of evidence used for the information in this leaflet

- Ciardella AP et al, 'The use of fluorescein angiography in acquired macular diseases' Foundations of Clinical Ophthalmology. 15th ed, chapter 113F, 2009
- National Institute of Health and Care Excellence, TA68, 'Guidance on the use of photodynamic therapy for age-related macular degeneration, September 2003
- The Royal College of Ophthalmologists, 'Age-Related Macular Degeneration, Guidelines for Management' September 2013

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5495 or email: [swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net](mailto:swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net)



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