

Oxford Eye Hospital

# Photographic examination of the blood vessels of the eye (Fundus Fluorescein Angiography)

Information for patients





## What is fundus fluorescein angiography?

Fundus fluorescein angiography is a procedure used to examine the tiny blood vessels in the eye. It is carried out by a specialist nurse and ophthalmic (eye) photographer. The procedure is used to help diagnose certain eye conditions.

A dye called fluorescein (see below) is injected into a vein in your arm or hand. The dye travels very quickly through the bloodstream and when it reaches the blood vessels in the eye a series of photographs are taken. The photographs show any abnormal or leaking blood vessels that may be causing your eye problems. This information is essential for the eye consultant to diagnose the problem and plan your treatment.

**We advise you to bring someone with you and not to drive home following this procedure.**

## What are the risks and side effects?

Fluorescein is a deep orange coloured dye which is commonly used as an aid to confirm patient diagnosis. It has been proved to be safe in all age groups and is used every day for many thousands of people. However, as with all medications, there are some possible side effects.

The most common side effects are:

- nausea
  - light headedness
  - skin rash
- } *These should go away within about half an hour*

We will not send you home until the above symptoms have passed.

- a yellow tinge to the skin – lasts approximately 12 hours
- bright yellow urine – lasts for 24-48 hours

## Serious risks

In **extremely rare** cases allergy to the dye can be very serious and cause anaphylactic shock. This would require emergency treatment. **Before carrying out this procedure the nurses take great care in checking your medical history with you and asking you about any allergies you may have.**

## What happens on the day of the procedure?

When you arrive at the Eye Hospital Photography Department the nurse will make sure you understand the Fluorescein Angiogram procedure before asking you to sign the consent form. She will also check your medical history, any medicines you are currently taking, and whether you have any allergies.

The nurse will test your vision and put eye drops into both your eyes to enlarge the pupils. She will insert a small needle into a vein in your hand or arm in preparation for the fluorescein injection. This leaves a tiny plastic tube in the vein which will be secured and remain in place until after the procedure.

It takes 20 minutes for the eye drops to take effect. You will then be taken into the photography room and asked to sit in front of the camera.

A series of photographs are taken of the back of your eye. The injection of fluorescein is then given through the tiny tube and further photographs are taken.

The nurse remains with you throughout this stage of the test. The lights on the camera are very

bright, but it is important to keep your eyes open. The nurse can help you if necessary. **It is normal to temporarily see bright colours after the photographs have been taken.**

## After the procedure

We like you to rest after the test so that your eyes can adjust to normal light and to make sure you are well before you leave the hospital. The nurse will remove the tiny tube in your vein after 15-20 minutes.

## Follow-up

If you do not already have a follow-up appointment to discuss the results with the doctor and plan your treatment, this will be booked before you leave , or posted to you once the consultant has viewed your photographs. Sometimes it is possible to discuss the results on the same day as the test.

## Further information

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you don't understand, please telephone the:

**Eye Clinic, Oxford (01865) 231099.**

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

Rebecca Turner, Matron, Specialist Surgery  
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