



Fluorescein Angiography

This test requires a single visit to the Adelaide Eye & Retina Centre, expect to be there for at least 1 ½ hours. For the test to be done, the pupil of each eye will be temporarily enlarged with eye drops. These drops may take some hours to wear off, once they do so, your eyes will return to normal. Due to the drops, it is advisable to bring dark glasses and possibly arrange some assistance with transport. Some patients do drive themselves but need to wait until the effect of the drops has worn off.

The latest computer and digital imaging technology will be used for the test; this allows instant test results with printed images available to you and your specialist at the time of your visit.

A fluorescein angiogram is a simple test (with complicated equipment) in which a series of digital images (not x-rays) are taken of the inner back of your eye (the retina), using a special flash camera following an injection of a yellow water-soluble dye into a vein in your arm or hand. The dye rapidly travels with your circulation and appears in the blood vessels supplying the light sensitive tissue (retina) in the back of your eye. The digital camera with special filters can detect and record the passage of the dye through the finest blood vessels in the tissue with a series of flash images. The images give a very magnified view of the microscopic structures in the back of your eye. Any abnormalities of these tissues or the blood vessels supplying them show up during the flow through of the dye and can be precisely located when the pictures are carefully interpreted.

The computer technology adds a new dimension, allowing not only immediate viewing and printing of the images but also extensive manipulation of them to maximise information (e.g.: editing, enhancing contrast, sharpening, magnifying areas etc). The final

images are permanently stored (backed up of images is made)on the computer.

The test is done when an abnormality is suspected in the back of the eye and assists in the diagnosis as well as helping guide any treatment that may be necessary e.g.: to pinpoint a leaking blood vessel for laser treatment. There are instantly available images, allowing an immediate reference guide for treatment.

Immediately after the fluorescein dye injection, your skin will turn a slight yellow colour for some hours, this will slowly disappear over the next 12-24 hours as the dye is filtered out of your body through your kidneys, hence your urine will turn orange or green over the next 12 hours or so.

Most patients suffer no ill-effects with the fluorescein angiogram; thousands of these tests are done daily world-wide. About 1 in 15 patients may experience a mild hot flush or wave of nausea during the procedure. If this does occur, it usually wears off rapidly, within 10 to 30 seconds. Very occasionally, some dye may leak out of a fragile vein at the site of the injection and this may cause some localised burning and yellow-staining of the skin which will pass off reasonably quickly. It is very uncommon to have any allergic reactions to the dye, if they do occur e.g.: itchy skin rash, they usually respond to antihistamines.

Warning: serious allergic reactions, as can occasionally occur in x-ray tests are extremely rare; treatment for such reactions is kept on hand. Despite judicious treatment of such a reaction there is a very small incidence of potentially life threatening complications such as prolonged hypotension, thrombotic episodes, bronchospasm or heart attack.

All needles, syringes etc. used in the test are sealed, sterile, single-use items that are then disposed of in appropriate closed containers.

If you have any further questions, please ask the nurse or doctor.