

# Patient Information

## Fluorescein Angiography Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is fluorescein angiography?**

Fluorescein angiography is an eye test in which a special camera takes pictures of the blood vessels inside the back of your eye.

A special water-soluble vegetable dye (fluorescein) is injected into a vein in your arm. The dye travels through the veins and arteries. As the dye reaches and passes through the back of your eye, a special camera flashes a blue light into the eye and takes multiple photographs of dye moving through the blood vessels.

### **How long does it take? Does it hurt? Is it safe?**

This test takes only a few minutes and causes little if any discomfort. The test does not use radiation or x-rays, but simply vegetable dye and a regular camera.

### **When is it used?**

Your eye doctor will use this test to find out if the flow of blood is normal in your retina (the tissue at the back of the eye). You may have this test during a checkup when your eye doctor suspects problems with your retina especially if you are at risk for high blood pressure or diabetes.

Fluorescein angiography is most frequently used for evaluation of patients with diabetic retinopathy, occlusive diseases such as retinal vein and arterial occlusions, and evaluation for wet macular degeneration.

This test can also be used to follow the course of disease and monitor treatment results.

### **What does it tell the doctor?**

If the blood vessels are abnormal, the dye will leak into the retina or stain the blood vessels. The test may also show if there is damage to the lining underneath the retina or there were abnormal new blood vessels growing beneath the retina.

### **What happens before the procedure?**

You should arrange for someone to take you home because your vision may be blurry for up to 12 hours after the test.

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### **What happens during the procedure?**

Your doctor will put eye drops in your eyes to dilate the pupils. Then pictures are taken of your retinas to show how they look before you are given the dye.

Then you are seated at a special camera. The dye is injected into a vein in your arm through a needle. You may feel nauseous for a few seconds right after the injection. The dye travels from your arm to your eyes in a few seconds. Photos are taken quickly as the dye moves through the blood vessels in your eyes.

If the dye leaks out of a fragile vein during the injection, some localized burning and yellow staining of the skin may occur. This burning usually lasts only a few minutes and the staining will go away in a few days.

### **What happens after the procedure?**

Sometimes the dye makes your skin look yellow and your urine orange for a few days after the test. These effects are temporary and harmless.

When the test results are available, your doctor will discuss them with you.

### **What are the risks of this procedure?**

Rarely, the dye causes an allergic reaction. You may have hives, nausea, dizziness, sneezing, or an increased heart rate. Your doctor will monitor you for this reaction. He or she may give you antihistamines if it occurs.

### **Where can I get more information?**

For more information, visit us at [www.carolinaeye.com](http://www.carolinaeye.com) or contact our patient services counselor by phone at 910.295.1501 or 800.733.9355, or by email at [info@carolinaeye.com](mailto:info@carolinaeye.com).

If at any time you need to reach our main center, please call 910.295.2100 or 800.733.5357.