

Eye Unit: Retinal Services

Eye Angiography

What is eye angiography?

This is an investigation, which involves having your pupils dilated and having a dye injected into one of your veins either in your arm or hand. Following this, photographs will be taken of the back of your eyes (retina).

Within a few moments of the dye being injected it will be possible to see the dye moving around the vessels at the back of your eye. **This is a not a treatment.**

Why is it performed?

There are two dyes used for this procedure. One is orange and enables the doctor to see the blood vessels in the top layer at the back of your eye (retina). The other is a green dye which enables the doctor to see the blood vessels in a deeper layer in your retina.

Your doctor may only prescribe one of these dyes. It depends on the type of eye condition that you have and the type of information that the doctor requires.

Both tests are performed to give the doctor a clearer picture of the condition of your eyes and to determine potential treatment options.



What are the risks involved?

This procedure is considered safe and is carried out routinely in the Eye Outpatients Department. However, there is the possibility that some patients may have some reaction to the dyes.

Fluorescein (orange dye) is a synthetic dye and has few side effects.

The Indocyanine green dye contains iodine and patients who are sensitive to iodine could react to it.

It is important to tell the nurse if:

- You are taking any medication;
- You know that you are allergic to iodine.

You are advised to eat and drink normally prior to having the procedure. Please take your medication as prescribed unless you are told not to.

Do expect your skin and urine to show a yellowy discolouration, this may last up to 24-48 hours particularly with the Fluorescein Angiogram. You should drink plenty of fluids to flush it through your system and everything will return to normal quite quickly.

A few patients may experience

- A nauseous feeling during the procedure: this feeling should pass very quickly;
- An itchy rash: we can give you an antihistamine tablet to stop the itchiness;
- 1 in 220,000 may experience a severe allergic reaction: this is extremely rare. We understand this can cause some anxiety but do bear in mind that we perform these procedures frequently and if they were risky then we would not be able to carry them out in the Outpatients Department and send you home after;

Patient Information

- If the dye leaks into the surrounding tissues during the injection, it may cause discomfort for a number of days. Any permanent damage to the skin is extremely rare;

What happens when you arrive in the Department?

- Your vision will be checked – please bring the spectacles that you normally wear to watch the television or to drive with;
- You will be asked about your general health and it will be helpful if you bring a **list** of your medications with you;
- You will be asked about any allergies you may have;
- You will be asked to sign a consent form to say that you understand the procedure and that you wish to have the procedure done;
- Drops to dilate the pupils will then be instilled;
- A cannula (a fine tube) will be inserted into the back of your hand or in a main vein in your arm to allow the dye to be injected;
- Once your pupils are dilated you will have some photographs taken. Sometimes a scan may also be taken;
- Before the dye is injected the photographer will position you at a special camera. The dye will then be injected through the cannula;
- The dye very quickly reaches the vessels at the back of your eyes and more photographs are taken at certain intervals. The process will take up to 20 minutes;
- Please remember to **breathe normally** during the procedure because holding your breath which is a normal voluntary response, may result in you feeling faint or light headed.
- The cannula will be removed once the procedure is over;
- It is advisable to bring some sunglasses to wear when you leave the Department.

Please note that you will not be able to drive following this procedure because your vision will be blurred.

Patient Information

How long does the procedure take?

The procedure usually takes no more than 90 minutes, you may get the results the same day or you will receive a follow up appointment to see your consultant and discuss the results.

Back Home

You will find that your vision is blurred for most of the day so do not drive or operate machinery.

If you develop any breathing problems or pains in your chest then ring for an ambulance 999.

If you develop an itchy rash over all or part of your body then ask the pharmacist or ask at a chemist for some anti histamine. Try not to scratch it.

If it becomes worse or does not improve then visit your GP, or the nearest Walk in Medical Centre, or in extreme cases your hospital's Accident and Emergency Department.

Contact details

If you are enquiring about your appointment please ring the photographer Pete James on 024 7696 6625.

If you are requiring some information on your eye condition then ring the retinal nurse (Jas) on 024 7696 4000 and ask for bleep 2828 and stay on the phone until you are connected.

UHCW Eye Casualty – Tel: 024 7696 6627

Open from:

Monday to Thursday	08.30am – 4.30pm
Friday	08.30am – 4.00pm
Saturday	08.30am – 12.00pm

Out of hours: ring 024 7696 4000 and ask for the eye doctor on call.

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 4000 and bleep 2828 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

Author	Jasbir Mann (Specialist Ophthalmic Nurse)
Department	Ophthalmology
Contact Tel	024 7696 6474
Published	June 2009
Reviewed	Jan 2019
Review	Jan 2022
Version	5.1
Reference	HIC/LFT/679/08