

# Information for patients and carers

## Fundus Fluorescein Angiography

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy horizontal bands in shades of blue, transitioning from a lighter blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the questions below about your health and bring this leaflet with you to your appointment.

**Do you have any allergies? If so, please give details:**

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**Do you suffer or have you suffered from any of the following conditions?**

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Heart problems                      | Yes | No |
| 2. Irregular heart rate                | Yes | No |
| 3. High blood pressure                 | Yes | No |
| 4. Respiratory conditions              | Yes | No |
| 5. Diabetes                            | Yes | No |
| 6. Epilepsy                            | Yes | No |
| 7. Kidney problems                     | Yes | No |
| 8. Liver problems                      | Yes | No |
| 9. Are you pregnant or breast feeding? |     |    |
|  | Yes | No |

**Please bring a list of any medication you are currently taking to your appointment.**

## What is Fundus Fluorescein Angiography (FFA)?

FFA is a series of photographs of your retinal blood vessels (the blood supply at the back of your eyes) taken after having an injection of fluorescein dye into a vein (intravenous injection).

It is an investigation and an aid to diagnose your eye condition. The results may help your ophthalmologist decide on appropriate treatment for your eye condition.

## What are the benefits of the FFA procedure?

- To help diagnose your eye condition and decide on best management
- To check on the progression of your eye condition
- To pinpoint areas in need of laser treatment

## What does FFA involve?

When you attend your appointment, a nurse will explain the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form for the FFA dye test. Please feel free to ask any questions.

Your blood pressure and pulse will be checked before starting the procedure.

You will then have drops put into your eyes to dilate (enlarge) the pupils so that we can get the best possible photographs of the retina at the back of your eyes.

A cannula (small plastic tube) will be inserted into a vein in your arm or the back of your hand. You will be seated at a camera with your chin on a rest, the nurse or doctor will inject the yellow fluorescein dye into your bloodstream through the cannula.

A series of photographs will be taken of the back of your eyes as the dye passes through the blood vessels (concentrating mainly on the eye you are having most problems with); you will see bright flashes of light from the camera. No X-rays or radioactive material is used.

## Are there any side effects or risks with FFA?

- Blurring of vision and light sensitivity due to the dilating drops
- The fluorescein dye will cause your skin to have a yellow tinge, and your urine will be bright yellow or orange green for 24-48 hours
- 1 in 10 patients experience nausea 30-60 seconds after the dye injection, however, this tends to pass quite quickly in most people especially if you take deep breaths
- Vomiting (uncommon)
- Fainting or feeling faint 1:100
- Leakage of the dye into the skin from the cannula may cause some discomfort or skin damage
- Skin rash or itching (uncommon)
- Anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction) causing breathing or circulatory problems is extremely rare 1:10,000

## Are there any alternatives to having FFA?

Other types of photographs and scans of your eyes are available; however, FFA provides specific information that is often vital to give the doctor the most accurate information possible. It provides detailed views of the blood vessels at the back of your eye that is not possible with other types of images, this information can be essential for the most accurate diagnosis to help guide the best treatment for your condition.

## How long does the FFA take?

The dye injection and photographs take about 10-15 minutes to complete, however please allow approximately 2 hours for the whole appointment.

## Preparation for the procedure

**On the day:** Please bring sunglasses as your pupils will be dilated and eyes may be light sensitive after. Following FFA, your skin will be sensitive to light for a day. Please bring a hat and long-sleeved clothing to protect your skin from sunlight and possible sunburn. 1 in 100 patients may lose consciousness during the procedure (faint). It is advised to attend with a friend/relative in case you do not feel well to go home on your own.

**Driving:** It is not advisable to drive yourself to the appointment as the eye drops may cause blurring of your vision for up to 12 hours.

**Eating/drinking/regular medications:** You can eat, drink and take your medication as you usually would. After the test, drinking plenty of fluids will help to flush the dye from your body.

## What happens after the FFA?

You will be asked to stay in the clinic for 30 minutes after the FFA to ensure that you have not experienced any side effects; the cannula will then be removed, and you may then go home. The photographs will be reviewed by your ophthalmic doctor after your appointment. You will be informed of the results either at a follow up clinic appointment or by letter.

## Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:  
Ophthalmology telephone triage service: **01257 245346**  
Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)

[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware)

<https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>

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[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team. If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

**Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.**

**This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.**

Our patient information group review our leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:

[patientexperienceandinvolem@LTHTR.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperienceandinvolem@LTHTR.nhs.uk)

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