

Professor Timothy L Jackson

PhD, MB ChB, FRCOphth

Consultant Ophthalmic and Retinal Surgeon

Patient Information: Angiography

What are fluorescein (FFA) and indocyanine green (ICG) angiography?

These are simple diagnostic investigations. They involve the injection of the yellow fluorescein dye and/or indocyanine green (ICG) dye into your bloodstream via a vein in your hand or arm, followed by a series of eye photographs taken over several minutes. Fluorescein fundus angiography (FFA) gives Professor Jackson more information about the condition of your retina in the back of your eye, and ICG angiography provides information about the choroid which lies underneath the retina. The tests help diagnose and characterise retinal and macular disease.

Please take your medication as normal on the day of your procedure. You may eat and drink as normal.

What does the investigation involve?

- You will be asked about your general health. Please tell us if you have any chest or breathing problems. It is also very important to inform us of any allergies, particularly to shellfish, iodine, medications, fluorescein, ICG, sulpha drugs or latex.
- Your pupils will then be dilated with eye drops; these drops blur your vision for a few hours. It is therefore advisable not to drive home after your appointment.
- You will have the procedure explained to you and you will be asked to sign a consent form to agree to the procedure. Please feel free to ask any questions.
- Once your pupils are dilated, you will be taken into the angiography room.
- You will be seated at a camera with your arm supported, and some photos will be taken.
- A cannula (small plastic tube) will be inserted into a vein in the back of your hand.
- The fluorescein and/or ICG will be injected into your arm, into your blood stream. A series of photos is taken after dye reaches the vessels at the back of your eye.

- The whole test only takes about 10 - 30 minutes, but please expect to be in the department for one to two hours so that we can do the necessary pre and post test checks.
- It is important to keep your eye in the position requested by the photographer.

Are there any side effects or risks?

- The fluorescein dye will give your skin a yellow tinge and your urine will be bright yellow for one or two days. The ICG procedure does not affect the colour of your skin or urine.
- You might experience a hot flush sensation as the dye is injected,
- One in 10 patients might feel nauseous or short of breath but this rarely lasts for more than a few seconds.
- You may develop a mild itchy skin rash. This usually settles within a day or two. Occasionally, patients require a short course of oral anti-histamine tablets (like those available over-the-counter for hay fever).
- Occasionally, the injected dye leaks out of the vein and causes pain at the injection site.
- There is a very remote risk of a severe, even life-threatening, allergic reaction to fluorescein or ICG. This occurs in fewer than about 1 in 10,000 people. For this reason, an emergency resuscitation team is always available.

After the fluorescein angiogram

The cannula may be left in your hand or arm until it is certain that you have not suffered any adverse reactions.

The images will be sent to Professor Jackson to review and interpret. Please book an appointment to go through the results with him, if you have not got one already.

If you have any questions regarding angiography please do not hesitate to contact our office on 020 7060 1968.