



What to Expect: Fluorescein Angiography (FA) & ICG

Retinal Dye Testing — Patient Information

Your doctor has recommended fluorescein angiography (FA) or indocyanine green (ICG) angiography to get a more detailed picture of the blood vessels at the back of your eye. This handout explains what the test involves, what to expect, and what the risks are.

What the Test Shows

A small amount of dye is injected into a vein in your arm. As the dye travels to your eye, it highlights the retinal blood vessels, and a series of photographs is taken. The images are especially useful for showing **leaking blood vessels** and areas where the **blood supply to the retina is poor**.

The test is performed **in our office** and takes about **10 to 15 minutes**. The results help your doctor choose the best treatment for your condition.

Before the Test

- Drops are used to **dilate your pupils**, which gives us a clearer view of the retina.
- **Remove contact lenses** before the drops are given — please bring your glasses.
- You will be asked a few questions about your general health.

⚠ Tell us before the test if you:

- Have **any allergies** — particularly to **iodine**, if you are having an ICG test
- Have ever had an **unexpected reaction to fluorescein or ICG dye**

During the Test

- A small tube (an intravenous cannula) is placed in a vein in your arm, and the dye is injected through it.
- **Bright flashes of light** are used while the photographs are taken.
- The photographs themselves are painless.

Possible Side Effects

Common and expected: your skin may take on a yellow tint and your urine may look yellow or orange for up to 24 hours as the dye clears from your body. Drinking fluids helps flush it through. This is normal and temporary.

Less common (about 5 in 100 people):

- **Nausea**, usually within the first minute or two after the injection. In most cases it passes within seconds; taking slow deep breaths helps.
- A rash, itching, or a tingling sensation in the skin.

Rare: if the tube shifts and dye leaks into the skin around it, you may feel a burning sensation. The injection is stopped if this happens, and the burning usually resolves on its own within a few days.

Very rare: a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) causing breathing or circulatory difficulty. Our office is equipped to manage this emergency, and emergency medical services would be contacted immediately. This is why it is essential to tell us about any previous reaction to these dyes.

After the Test

- Your pupils remain dilated, so your eyes will be **very sensitive to sunlight for at least two hours**. Sunglasses or a hat will make you more comfortable.
- **Arrange for someone to drive you home.**
- Your doctor may discuss the results with you the same day, or may schedule a follow-up visit to review them.

Your decision

This test is the best way for your doctor to get a detailed picture of the blood flow in your retina. If you choose not to have it, we may not be able to monitor your condition as accurately — but your care will not change in any other way, and you may change your mind at any time. Please tell our staff if you have questions or want more time to consider it.

Questions? Call us at **847-488-1030**.