

TEMPORAL ARTERITIS

Vascular Group, PLLC

Temporal Arteritis

Temporal Arteritis is a chronic inflammatory disease of large blood vessels. It occurs primarily in the adults. One in every one thousand people after the age of 50 is affected by this. Usually more females are affected than males. There is some evidence that it runs in families. The incidence is lower in blacks than whites.

Sign and Symptoms

Presentations of symptoms vary and may include the following:

- Severe headache (especially at the sides and front of the head)
- Scalp tenderness
- Visual disturbances
 - Feeling like a shade being drawn in front of the eye.
 - Double vision
 - Area of decreased vision in the eye
 - Drooping eye lid
 - Vision blurring
- Flu like illness
- Fever
- Muscle aching and stiffness especially in the neck and shoulders

Diagnosis

A blood test will be ordered to help confirm the diagnosis. This will check for inflammation in the blood vessel. It is called an ESR or (Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate). If the ESR is elevated this may suggest Temporal Arteritis.

Surgical Procedure

If Temporal Arteritis is suspected a biopsy of the artery is recommended to confirm the diagnosis. The biopsy is taken from a part of the artery located in front of the ear.

What can I expect before surgery?

Before surgery you will have to have pre-operative testing to make sure you will be cleared medically for the procedure. This entails having blood work done, meeting with the anesthesiologist, and signing consent for the procedure. This is done about a week before your scheduled surgery.

What can I expect during surgery?

You will be taken to the operating room and given local and/or monitored anesthesia care. The area where the biopsy is to be taken will be prepped and draped using sterile technique. A small incision will be made and a small piece of the artery will be taken for biopsy. The wound will be closed with sutures under the skin and small pieces of tape called “steri-strips” will be applied over the incision. A dressing will be placed over the area. You will then be taken to the Recovery Room for a few hours and then released home.

What can I expect after surgery?

- You may resume your usual activity after the procedure.
- Remove the dressing 24 hours after the procedure.
- Keep the incision site clean and dry.
- You may shower with no direct stream of water to the incision. Pat it dry.
- The steri-strips will dry fall off on their own. When they are almost off you may gently remove them.
- You will have a post- operative visit about two weeks after your procedure to check your incision site and review the biopsy results.
- After that you will follow up as needed. If further treatment is required it will be provided by your primary or referring physician.

What to Report

- Redness that extends away from your incision.
- Drainage, note the color, odor and amounts.
- Temperature greater than 101F for 24 hours.