

**Patient
Information**

Temporal Arteritis (TA)

Introduction

You have been asked to attend our Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) or the Ambulatory Emergency Care (AEC) departments because it is suspected that you may have Temporal Arteritis (TA), also known as Giant Cell Arteritis.

This leaflet contains information about what this means and how you will be looked after.

What is Temporal Arteritis (TA)?

TA is an inflammatory condition (vasculitis) affecting the medium and large blood vessels on the side of the head (temporal arteries). It is more commonly seen in older people and seldom diagnosed before the age of 50.

The cause of TA is unknown but if left untreated can cause a reduction of the blood supply to the eyes or the brain.

TA can therefore cause blindness and/or stroke and is regarded as a medical emergency.

Symptoms

Symptoms of fatigue, loss of appetite, weight loss and fever are often found.

A headache, with pain and tenderness over one side of your head, is usually the main complaint of this disease.

Diagnosis

The diagnosis is usually suspected because the doctor has recognised the typical collection of symptoms and clinical signs. Blood tests are taken to check for inflammation. However, these tests are not specific for TA.

Reference No.

GHPI1368_04_22

Department

SDEC/AEC

Review due

April 2025

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Next steps

Following your visit today you will be referred to the Rheumatology department and the ENT department for a possible biopsy (both care for patients with TA). They will contact you regarding your future treatment and any other tests needed.

What will happen in SDEC/AEC?

The staff will ask you questions about your headache and other related symptoms. They will take some blood for testing and you may be referred for a chest X-ray.

If we think you have TA we will start you on a course of steroid tablets. It is important that you arrange with your GP for further supplies of the steroids and for a review of your treatment needs.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about your care or symptoms, please contact your GP or a member of the SDEC/AEC team.

SDEC

Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
Tel: 0300 422 6677
Everyday, 8:00am to 8:00pm

AEC

Cheltenham General Hospital
Tel: 0300 422 3618
Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 8:00pm

Further information

Vasculitis

Website: www.vasculitis.org.uk/about-vasculitis/giant-cell-arteritis-temporal-arteritis

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