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## **INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY ("Biopsy of an artery near the hairline")**

### **WHAT CAUSES THE NEED FOR A TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY?**

There is a disease called giant cell arteritis or temporal arteritis. It is a condition which causes inflammation of blood vessels. Sometimes, inflammation can affect the blood vessels supplying the eye. If this happens permanent vision loss can occur. Common symptoms associated with giant cell arteritis or temporal arteritis may include headache, scalp tenderness, discomfort when chewing, eye pain or vision loss. There are blood tests that can suggest giant cell arteritis, but the diagnosis typically requires examination of an artery under the microscope.

### **HOW IS A TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSIED?**

The temporal artery is located in the temple area close to the hairline. The temporal artery is located by feel or using an ultrasound instrument to hear the vessel's pulse. Occasionally, a small area of hair needs to be shaved at the temple. Through an incision along at the temple, a segment of the temporal artery is removed. Sutures are then used to close the skin incision. The biopsy is then sent to a pathologist for examination to determine whether the artery shows signs of inflammation

### **HOW WILL A TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY AFFECT MY VISION OR APPEARANCE?**

A temporal artery biopsy requires an incision in the skin, which will leave a faint scar. This scar is typically near the hairline and generally heals well. If the location of your temporal artery requires shaving of hair, this usually grows back in time. It is common to have bruising and swelling after a temporal artery biopsy.

### **WHAT ARE THE MAJOR RISKS OF A TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY PROCEDURE?**

Risks of temporal artery biopsy include but are not limited to bleeding, infection, and scarring. In addition, if the surgical specimen is inadequate or inconclusive an additional biopsy may be necessary. There are additional costs if the surgery needs to be repeated or if revisions are required.

### **WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY?**

You may decide to do nothing and choose to be treated with steroids for giant cell arteritis or temporal arteritis even though your provider can not be sure this is the cause of your symptoms. The risks of steroids include increased blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, heartburn, weight gain, loss of bone density, stroke and even death.

### **WHAT TYPE OF ANESTHESIA IS USED? WHAT ARE ITS MAJOR RISKS?**

Temporal artery biopsy procedures are usually done with local anesthesia (injections around the area of the temple area). Depending on the patient, sedation or general anesthesia may be offered. Risks of anesthesia include but are not limited to damage to the eye and surrounding tissues and structures, loss of vision, breathing problems, and, in extremely rare circumstances, stroke or death.

**PATIENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF RISKS**

I have read the above information and have discussed it with my physician. I understand that it is impossible for the physician to inform me of every possible complication that may occur. My physician has told me that results cannot be guaranteed and that adjustments and more surgery may be necessary, which can result in additional costs. By signing below, I agree that my physician has answered all of my questions and that I understand and accept the risks, benefits, and alternatives of temporal artery biopsy surgery, and understand the costs involved.

I consent to temporal artery biopsy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient (or person authorized to sign for patient)      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Patient (or person authorized to sign for patient)