



Mr Mark Thompson
FRCS(OMFS) FDSRCPS MSc
Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon

GMC No. 4316219

GDC No.63002

www.cambridgeomfs.com

Spire Cambridge Lea Hospital
30 New Road
Impington
Cambridge
CB24 9EL

Appointments: 01223 266990

All enquiries & correspondence to:
Secretary to Mr Mark Thompson
Spire Cambridge Lea Hospital
Tel/Fax: 01223 266916
Email: mmp4@btconnect.com

Temporal artery biopsy

What is a temporal artery biopsy?

A temporal artery biopsy involves removing a section of the artery. The artery is found on the side of the head, it passes in front of the ear up onto the scalp. The procedure is carried out under a local anaesthetic. The surgeon makes an incision above the hairline in front of the ear approximately 2-3 cm long. A section of the artery is removed and the incision is closed with stitches.

The procedure takes approximately 40 minutes.

A surgical biopsy is the most reliable way in which to accurately diagnose a condition called temporal arteritis or giant cell arteritis. This condition if not treated can lead to blindness or stroke.

The specimen is sent to a pathologist who will assess the tissue for evidence of inflammation.

Are there any risks?

There are no common major risks. There is a small risk of bleeding. You will have a scar where the procedure has been done. There is a very small risk of numbness near the ear.

Before the procedure

You can eat, drink and take medications normally.

After the procedure

The stitches that are used are usually dissolvable. The wound should be kept dry for 4 days before washing hair. The wound may be sore after the local anaesthetic wears off so take some simple pain killers.

