

Other forms of arteritis

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Arteritis occurs in association with many connective tissue disorders, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus and polyarteritis nodosa. Temporal arteritis is a disease in which localised infiltration with inflammatory and giant cells leads to arterial occlusion, ischaemic headache and tender, palpable, pulseless (thrombosed) arteries in the scalp. Irreversible blindness occurs if the ophthalmic artery becomes occluded. The surgeon may be required to perform a temporal artery biopsy, but this should not delay immediate steroid therapy to arrest and reverse the process before the ophthalmic artery is involved. Takayasu's disease is an arteritis that obstructs major arteries, particularly the large vessels coming off the aortic arch. It usually pursues a relentless course.

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