

Rapid Access Giant Cell Arteritis Clinic

Royal Perth Hospital



Use this cover sheet to refer a patient for specialist assessment and treatment if you suspect Giant Cell Arteritis

Patient name:

Referrer:

DOB:

Address:

Address:

Tel:

POSTCODE:

Tel:

Date of referral:

Name of Rheumatology Doctor case discussed with: _____

Referral Criteria (all 5 must be ticked to be eligible)

1. Age > 50 years
2. Suspected Giant Cell Arteritis e.g. new headache, jaw claudication, scalp sensitivity, tenderness over the temporal arteries, fevers, visual disturbance*
3. No other diagnosis is more likely
4. Within Fiona Stanley Hospital or Royal Perth Hospital catchment
5. Patient has been discussed with Rheumatology at Royal Perth Hospital



*If there are any associated visual symptoms e.g. transient/persistent loss of vision, this may necessitate urgent transfer to the Emergency Department for further assessment. Please contact the RPH Rheumatology Registrar (in hours) or Rheumatology Consultant (after hours) via RPH Switchboard (ph 9224 2244) to discuss case.

Making the referral:

1. Please contact the RPH Rheumatology Registrar via RPH Switchboard (ph 9224 2244) at the time of referral to discuss the case and whether steroids should be initiated. Patient details will be documented so the referral can be chased. After hours please contact the on call Rheumatology Consultant, also via Switchboard.
2. **Fax this cover sheet with additional clinical details attached to 6477 5199** or email RPH.OutpatientReferrals@health.wa.gov.au
3. Give the patient the form below providing instructions about when to attend the clinic.

INFORMATION FOR THE REFERRING PRACTITIONER
Rapid Access Giant Cell Arteritis Clinic

What is the Rapid Access Giant Cell Arteritis Clinic?

This is a new service established to streamline rapid outpatient Rheumatology and Ophthalmology assessment and management of patients with suspected Giant Cell Arteritis. The aim is to avoid unnecessary inpatient admission whilst ensuring gold standard investigation and care of these patients. It is modelled on successful European models that have demonstrated improved healthcare outcomes and cost effectiveness.

When and where will my patient be seen?

Patients referred to the Rapid Access GCA Clinic will be seen by a Rheumatology consultant within 72 hours of referral wherever feasible. The Clinic will be based at RPH. Temporal artery biopsy will be arranged within a week, which may occur on the same day or as a separate appointment at RPH. This will be done under local wherever possible.

Should I start my patient on steroids?

If you have a high index of suspicion for giant cell arteritis, than early treatment with high dose oral steroids is warranted as per eTherapeutic Guidelines. In the case of any visual symptoms, urgent treatment (often with intravenous methylprednisolone) is imperative and these patients should be referred to the Emergency Department for further assessment and management. *Either way this should be discussed with the Rheumatology team at RPH when making the referral as outlined above.*

What is the study being conducted from this clinic?

As of February 2019, there is a study running to investigate the effectiveness of this new Rapid Access Giant Cell Arteritis Clinic and answer other research questions about this condition. Patients will be enrolled if they consent to the use of their data for study purposes. A subgroup of study participants will be asked to undergo two PET/CT scans which is the only study-specific difference in management. *Patients will otherwise be managed in exactly the same manner whether or not they choose to participate in the study.*

How can I find out more about this study?

You can contact the Study Coordinator Dr Julia Murdoch via email at Julia.Murdoch@health.wa.gov.au for more information.



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When will my appointment be?

You are suspected of having an uncommon but serious condition called giant cell arteritis which means inflammation of blood vessels, commonly around the head and neck. You need to be seen in the Royal Perth Hospital Rapid Access Giant Cell Arteritis Clinic for further investigation and management.

(Medical practitioner to check/highlight one of the following)

- Please attend the Royal Perth Hospital Rapid Access GCA Clinic in A Block, Level 7 (near Ophthalmology) on Tuesday morning at 8:30 am*
- OR**
- Please attend the Royal Perth Hospital Rapid Access GCA Clinic in Goderich Street Outpatients (Ground Floor) on Thursday morning at 8:30*

***You may be contacted by the Rheumatology Department if this appointment time needs to be changed.**

Before your appointment:

If you have been commenced on steroid medication (e.g. prednisolone) by your doctor, ensure that you take this as instructed every day.

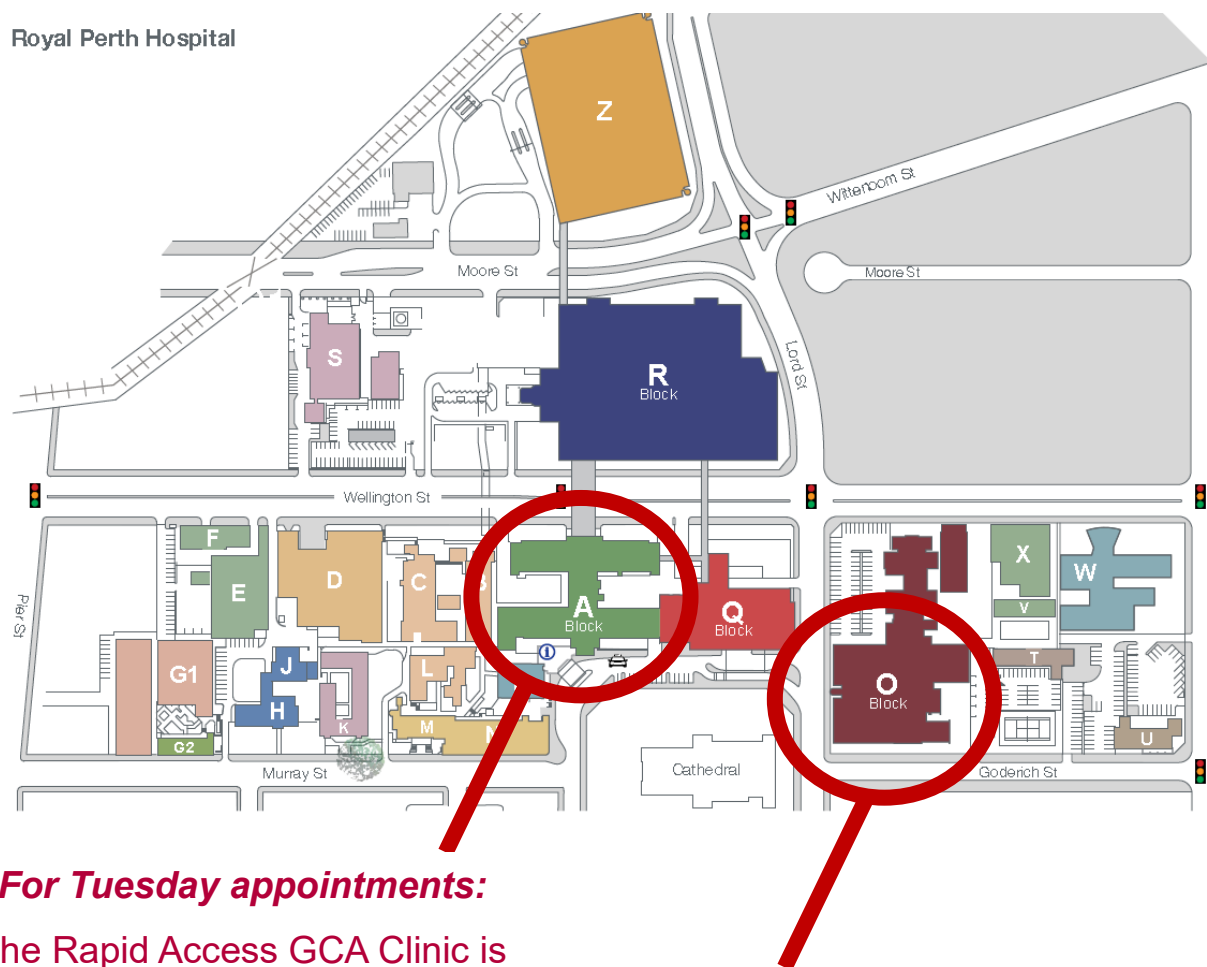
Attend the Emergency Department if you experience **any significant visual changes**.

At your appointment:

Please be aware that this appointment will likely take about an hour. You will be seen by a Consultant Rheumatologist who will perform a thorough assessment of you, including an ultrasound scan of the blood vessels around your temples, and organise blood tests and other scans if necessary. *Please expect delays – unfortunately this is often unavoidable.*

If you can not attend this appointment for any reason, please contact please contact Hospital Switchboard on 9224 2244 and ask for the Rheumatology Registrar to be paged (during business hours)

Royal Perth Hospital Map



For Tuesday appointments:

The Rapid Access GCA Clinic is located in A Block on Level 7

For Thursday appointments:

The Rapid Access GCA Clinic is located in Goderich Street Outpatient Department on Ground Floor