

Article

## Biopsy in inflammatory arthritis explained

Ultrasound guided biopsy procedures are being increasingly used to take tiny samples of tissue out of joints for research.

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## World-leading UK research advances understanding of inflammatory arthritis

NRAS has been involved, alongside other patient organisations who focus on autoimmune mediated inflammatory diseases (such as Crohn's & Colitis, Psoriatic Arthritis, Axial Spondyloarthropathies, Sjogren's Syndrome) in helping to raise awareness of clinical trials that include people undergoing synovial biopsy and blood tests as part of the clinical trial process. Ailsa Bosworth, NRAS' National Patient Champion, went to Birmingham to visit Andrew Filer PhD FRCP, Professor of Rheumatology at the NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre, to see the work of this specialist unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, one of the UK sites where such translational research is taking place.

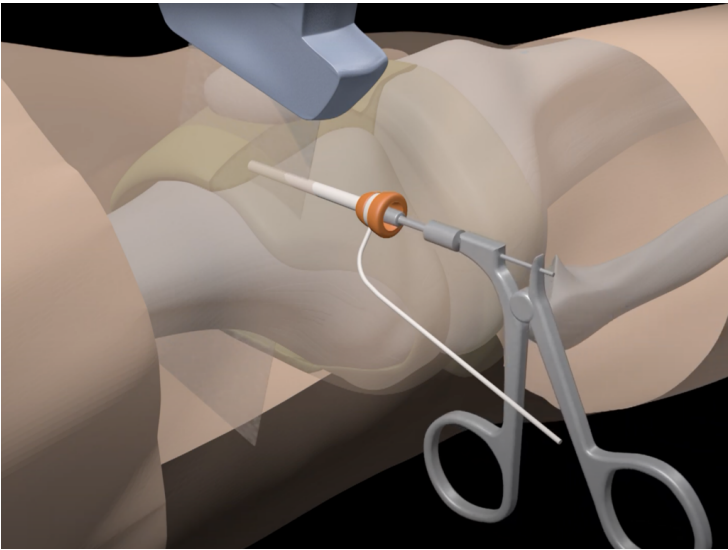
## Furthering our understanding of how inflammatory arthritis starts in the joint

Ultrasound guided biopsy procedures are being increasingly used to take tiny samples of tissue out of joints for research. These procedures were carefully designed to be as comfortable for patients as possible, allowing them to get on with normal life<sup>1</sup>.

Over the last few years, being able to analyse these pinhead sized samples has led to a revolution in our understanding of how arthritis starts in the joint and how both existing and new therapies work<sup>2</sup>.

## Intensive studies using tissue and blood samples

The UK is becoming a world leader of this type of research, where small numbers of patients take part in intensive studies taking tissue and blood samples which rapidly advance our understanding of inflammatory arthritis, and to test new treatments in order to make them available at an earlier stage for patients.



## More people are needed to help with this type of translational research

Prof. Filer said “We need more participants to come forward to help with our research: These videos show how simple the procedure is; Ailsa talks to one of our patients who has had several biopsy procedures, and also asks me about the use of this technique to improve our understanding of inflammatory arthritis.”

We hope that these videos will inform and encourage people to get involved in such research when opportunity presents.



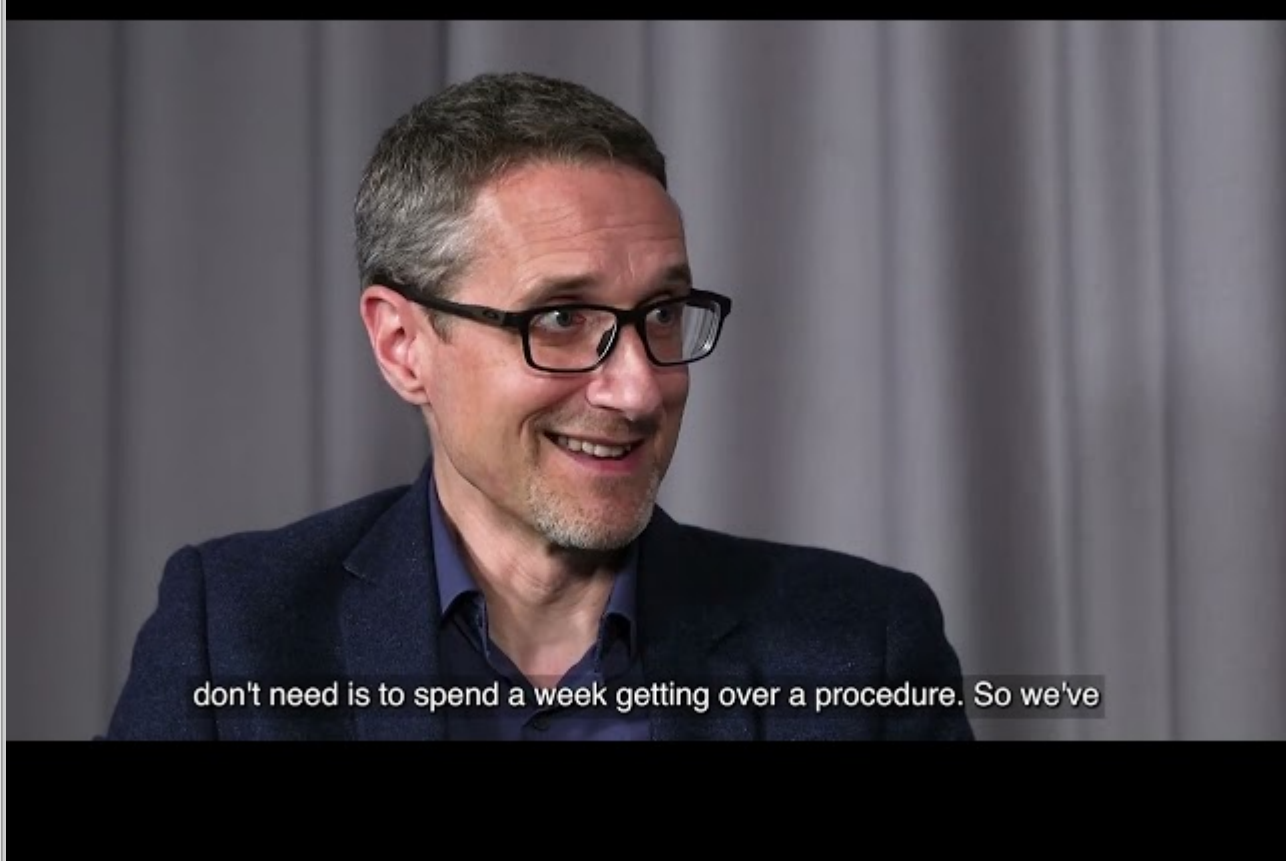


## Biopsy Explained

The Biopsy process explained.

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## Researchers Perspective

Interview with Prof. Andrew Filer about the importance of biopsy in cutting edge research.

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## Patients Perspective

Interview with patient Rita Bradley, who has experienced biopsy procedure.

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We will be adding details here in due course of how to contact centres where research of this type is being conducted should you be interested in participating in any current/on-going trials.

## Video Feedback

Prof. Filer and his team are interested in understanding how your thoughts or views about the possibility of having a joint biopsy prior to watching the videos may have changed after having seen the videos.

[Click here to give feedback](#)

## References

- <sup>1</sup> <https://rmdopen.bmj.com/content/rmdopen/4/2/e000799.full.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-023-06708-y>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33485455/>
- <https://arthritisresearch.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13075-022-02803-z>
- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1263-7>
- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-020-0939-8>