

RAMC Offers More Timely Access to Cardiology Stress Tests

Provided by a familiar face



Heather Cherney,
Nurse Practitioner

When Heather Cherney joined RAMC as a registered nurse in the ER, little did she know that nearly 20 years later it would lead to stress-exercise

stress testing, that is.

This past summer, Heather transitioned to a new role as a nurse practitioner at RAMC and started training in the stress test lab. She also partnered with Gundersen Health System, training on site in La Crosse for several months. The goal of her training? To provide exercise stress tests, here at RAMC, to a growing number of patients who need them.

"Right now there is quite a wait to have a stress test done at our hospital," explains Heather. "now having someone on staff, we can provide the tests nearly every day of the week."

Heather completed her training in November and has already begun to schedule additional stress tests. She is also looking forward to continuing her partnership with doctors Stone and Kaji, visiting cardiologists from UW Hospital and Clinics.

"We don't have anyone in Cardiology here on a daily basis," says Heather. "So I'm excited that I am that daily face. I am able to communicate back to Dr. Stone and Dr. Kaji about their patients and help our family practice providers with general cardiology questions."

Stress tests key to diagnosing heart problems

According to the American Heart Association, cardiovascular disease affects nearly half of all American adults. Exercise stress tests are often

used to help detect coronary heart disease and evaluate patients with known cardiac disease.

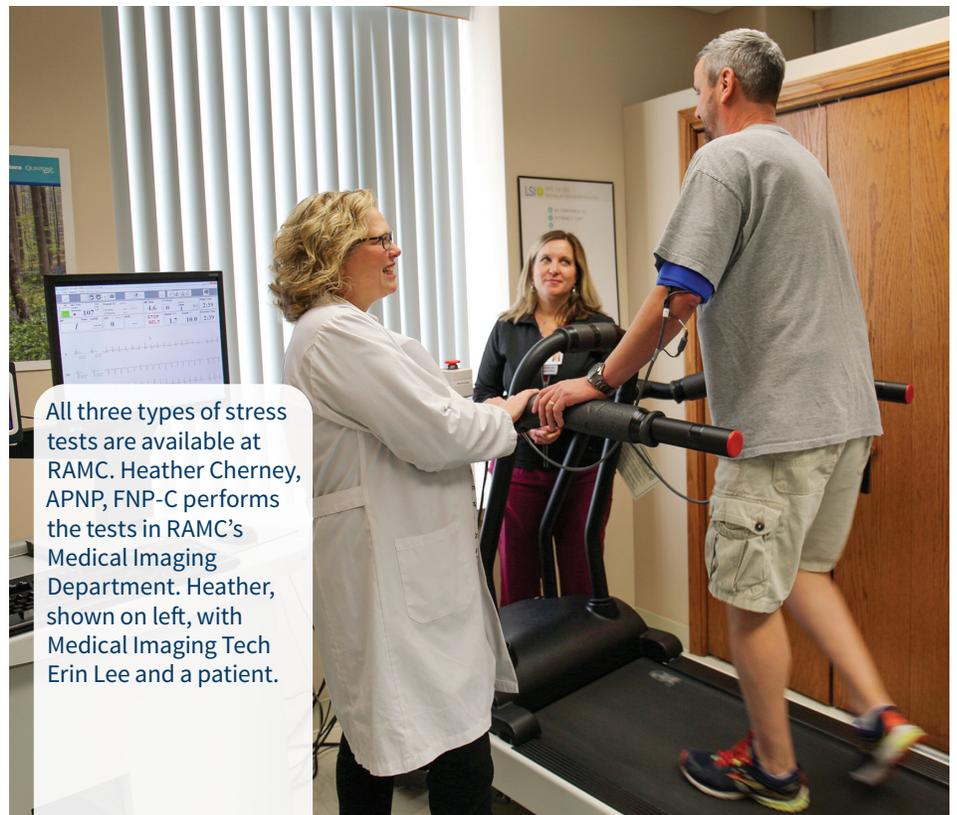
There are three main types of stress tests—and all are available at RAMC.

The first is a general stress test, which involves walking on a treadmill while your heart rhythm, blood pressure and breathing are monitored.

In some cases, a nuclear exercise stress test may be recommended. During the test, a small amount of radioactive tracer is injected. A special camera detects the radiation released by the tracer to produce computer images of the heart. Combined with exercise, the test can help determine if there is adequate blood flow to the heart during activity. If you have physical limitations and are unable to walk on a treadmill, a third type of stress test is performed

by administering a medication that mimics the effects of exercise.

Results of an exercise stress test can help guide your doctor in treatment recommendations. +



All three types of stress tests are available at RAMC. Heather Cherney, APNP, FNP-C performs the tests in RAMC's Medical Imaging Department. Heather, shown on left, with Medical Imaging Tech Erin Lee and a patient.