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### Mobile screening drives to save lives

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My father died of cardiopulmonary disease in 1984 at what was then called Tallahassee Community Hospital and is now known as Capital Regional Medical Center.

Dad's adulthood was pocked by a series of cardiac events and one mild stroke. He was 52 when he died.

If anyone's a prime candidate to try out a new vascular- and cardiac-screening procedure, it's my father's 51-year-old daughter.

Which is why I found myself stretched out on a padded table in the Tallahassee Democrat 's conference room Monday afternoon, blood-pressure cuffs strapped around both arms and ankles and an ultrasound doohickey pressed against my neck.

Capital Regional Medical Center had brought its new AngioScreen mobile-testing operation to the Democrat to provide employee screenings, and I was first in line.

"We want people to know about this, and we also wanted to do a real-time test of the equipment," Cole explained. "Ideally, we want to offer to bring (AngioScreen) to local churches, community centers, employers and other locations to do mobile screenings."

Cole said CRMC will initially charge around \$75 for the test. Because it's considered a preventive procedure, some insurance plans may cover it.

The test itself was a piece of cake.

I filled out a brief medical-history checklist and signed consent and privacy forms. I slipped my shoes off, stepped onto a scale to be weighed and then hopped up on the table. The calm, friendly technicians hovered over me, attaching leads and hooking up wires and wrapping sphygmomanometers around my arms and ankles.

It took all of around 10 minutes to do the test, during which I got to hear the eerie Doppler throb of my heartbeat.

Registered nurse Carol Cimarron sat with me afterward to explain the results, which were printed on a glossy page that included ultrasound pictures of my carotid arteries.

Aside from a very minor deposit of soft plaque in one artery, everything checked out A-OK.

CRMC spokeswoman Cole said the test is something everyone - especially those, like me, with a family history of heart disease and stroke - should consider.

"We check the oil in our car more often than we check ourselves," she said. "In a busy world, AngioScreen is an easy way to get vital information that could save your life."

In the community

Find out how to bring Capital Regional Medical Center's AngioScreen team to your community center, church, place of business or other location by calling Ellen Cole at 325-5021 or e-mailing [ellen.cole@hcahealthcare.com](mailto:ellen.cole@hcahealthcare.com).

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