

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**STUDY MEMORIAL'S CARDIAC CATH LAB:
THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS**

ATTLEBORO, MA, September 29, 2006 – When it comes to cardiac treatment, would you want personalized care and world-class technology close to home, or expert intervention? Patients at Sturdy Memorial Hospital don't have to choose. With its newly expanded state-of-the-art Cardiac Catheterization (Cath) Lab and close partnership with Boston Medical Center's cardiac intervention team, Sturdy Memorial offers patients the best of both worlds.

When patients have a diagnostic cardiac catheterization at Sturdy Memorial, they get the comfort of local and referral medical excellence. They are treated by a friendly, familiar expert care team close to home using the latest imaging technology. A new four-bed pre- and post-operative area allows families to remain with patients before and after the procedure. When treatment options are discussed, the larger area means family can be involved in the explanation and decision-making process.

When heart trouble is suspected, Sturdy Memorial's specially-trained cardiologists use cardiac catheterization to pinpoint heart artery blockages and heart valve and function issues. During the cardiac catheterization procedure, a thin catheter (tube) is inserted into a blood vessel and guided toward the heart. Contrast fluid is injected through the catheter, creating digital x-ray video of the procedure. These images provide vital information needed to assess and treat cardiac conditions. In some cases, the procedure helps to rule out heart trouble. In others, it may indicate the need for stenting or open-heart surgery.

“Approximately one-third of the cardiac catheterizations we perform rule

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out blockages and valve issues as the cause of a patient's illness, " explains Dr. George Waters, cardiologist and Director of the Cath Lab. "Another third will require stenting, and the remaining patients will undergo open-heart surgery."

The Ruth and Ernest H. Augat Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory at Sturdy Memorial features the latest diagnostic technology and image-archiving software. Each cardiac catheterization is recorded and stored in the PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication System) computer. PACS image-sharing allows Sturdy Memorial's Cardiac Care team to transmit the video from a patient's procedure directly to cardiac intervention specialists at Boston Medical Center for real-time consultation. This collaborative approach helps ensure the best treatment plan for each patient. If intervention is necessary, transfer arrangements begin immediately.

Before the patient arrives at Boston Medical Center, they will already be fully informed of their treatment plan and a spot will be waiting for them upon arrival. Their record, including the digital video from their cardiac catheterization, will already be with their interventional cardiologist, making the process flow quickly and seamlessly. When they return home, the patient will know their local cardiologist is up-to-date on their condition, making follow-up care much more effective.

To learn more about Cardiac Care at Sturdy Memorial, visit www.sturdymemorial.org. To find a Sturdy Memorial Hospital affiliated cardiologist, call the Physician Referral Line at 508-236-8500.

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