

LETTER TO BE MAILED TO PATIENTS - ENGLISH

(Place on Clinic Letterhead)

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

<<date>>

Dear _____,

I am writing today to ask you to complete the FOBT card that we have included in this packet. Let me explain to you why it's important and what it's about. We are sending this letter to many of our patients who are older than 50 years of age. We have designed this campaign to encourage our patients to get this prevention test done.

Being 50 years old means that your chances of having problems inside of your large intestine increase. The intestine is an organ that is very important for digestion and for the body in general. Unfortunately colorectal cancer (of the colon or the rectum, two parts of the intestine) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. The good thing is that generally, this cancer begins with a benign tumor that is not cancerous and grows very slowly. These tumors are called polyps and if we find them early, we can remove them before they become cancerous.

It is difficult to know whether or not you have polyps since nothing feels different when one has them. What we can do, is try to find signs through different medical tests. The simplest test is the 'fecal occult blood test' or otherwise known as FOBT. With the FOBT we can see if there are traces of blood in the stool. Usually, the quantities of blood are so small that we cannot see with the naked eye, but they can be examined in the laboratory using the cards that we included in this packet.

The American Cancer Society recommends that every person, after turning 50, completes this test each year. It is very important to do it every year because sometimes blood is not found even though polyps are present in the intestine – as the more times this test is done, the chance increases of knowing if there are problems in the intestine. For this test you need to collect a little bit of your stool everyday, for 3 days, and spread it on the card. I understand that this may be a bit uncomfortable, but I ask that you seriously consider the need to protect yourself against colorectal cancer. You can help prevent this very serious illness. If we find any hidden blood we will contact you to set-up a medical appointment at our clinic.

If you wish to have more information or if you have questions, please don't hesitate to call _____, the coordinator of this campaign at telephone number _____.

Sincerely,

[name and title]