**Letter to Family** *(copy & paste)*

Dear ***[Insert Family Member Name]***,

I hope all is well. I am writing to you to let you know about some important health information I recently learned that may also affect you as one of my relatives. My healthcare provider gave me this letter to help me notify you about this and to encourage you to take action.

I was recently diagnosed with a serious genetic condition called familial hypercholesterolemia (FH). FH results in very high cholesterol levels and if left untreated, increases the risk of early heart disease including heart attacks and strokes. Fortunately, there are effective treatment options available.

FH is inherited and runs in families. This means that all my first-degree relatives (parents, siblings, children) have a 50% chance of also having FH. Other family members (aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, grandchildren, etc.) may also have inherited this serious genetic condition.

My healthcare provider has recommended that you and all my other first-degree relatives be screened with a cholesterol test (also known as a lipid panel). Any family member with a low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C / bad cholesterol) of 190 mg/dL or above, based on our family history of high cholesterol and heart disease, likely inherited FH. For children, an LDL-C above 160 mg/dL along with a family history makes the diagnosis of FH likely. You may also want to consider having a genetic test for FH to confirm the diagnosis. You may also be able to rule out FH by being tested.

The good news is that FH is totally treatable with medicines. If you have FH, there are many effective treatment options available, to lower cholesterol and lower the risk for heart disease. Starting treatment as early as possible can greatly reduce your risks.

The problem is that most people with FH are not diagnosed so they are unaware of their risk. I am not writing to scare you. I am writing because I care about you and I want everyone in our family to know if they have FH or not, and if they do, to get the best treatment available.

I have sent you this information by email so that you will have in writing and can bring it to your next medical appointment. I also wanted to write to you so you will have time to think about this before I call you. I will plan to call you in a few days. I might not have all the answers to your questions, but I can point you to the Family Heart Foundation website (<http://www.FamilyHeart.org>) which has many resources to support you.

The Family Heart Foundation is a patient advocacy and research organization. The Family Heart Foundation is a collaboration of people living with FH, researchers, and clinicians. I have found the website very helpful and the community I have met through the Foundation to be very supportive.

Fondly,

***[Insert Sender’s Name]***