

Figure 2. Sample patient notification letter

Date _____

Dear ___(Patient Name)_____,

The _____ health department and the _____ clinic are investigating possible infections that could have resulted from colonoscopy procedures conducted at this clinic between January 1, 2007 and March 3, 2007. In March, the clinic discovered a colonoscope that had not been properly cleaned. Although the problem has been corrected, we are contacting patients who might have been exposed to this colonoscope to notify them of the problem.

You are being contacted because you may have undergone a colonoscopy procedure at this clinic involving the colonoscope that was improperly cleaned. We are in the process of contacting all patients who underwent this procedure at the clinic and their healthcare providers. Thus far, there has been **no evidence** of any infections in patients who were exposed to the improperly cleaned colonoscope.

Multiple steps are needed to process a colonoscope between uses, including cleaning several parts of the equipment and rinsing it with a disinfectant. When performed correctly, these steps remove germs from the equipment. One part of this colonoscope, the biopsy channel, was not properly cleaned out with a brush before it was placed into a machine to be disinfected. Some germs could have remained on the equipment as a result of this error. However, this type of error has not been shown to cause serious infections such as hepatitis C, hepatitis B, or HIV in the past. We believe there is only a **very small** chance that you could have been exposed to hepatitis C, hepatitis B, or HIV from this error. We do not recommend that you be tested for any of these infections.

However, if you have concerns or would like to be tested, we encourage you to discuss this with your healthcare provider. We understand that you or your healthcare provider may have additional questions or concerns. To help answer questions, we have set up a telephone information hotline.

The information hotline may be reached by calling: (____)____-_____

Signed,

