

EXAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

Fill out (or modify) the following letter and take it to your primary care provider.

Dear _____,

I would like you to rule out physical causes of the symptoms I'm experiencing (all that apply are checked):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Constipation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Palpitations | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia, early-morning waking | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternating constipation and diarrhea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia, difficulty falling asleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy menstrual bleeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Restless legs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Headaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Skin conditions, acne, eczema, psoriasis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weight gain | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical pain in the following places:
_____ |

OTHER SYMPTOMS:

I understand that the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) requires that a full medical exam (physical exam and blood panel) be performed to screen for preexisting medical conditions before any mental health diagnosis is made.

It is my understanding that the following labs help rule out fatigue:

- **CBC (complete blood count)** rules out overt anemia, which causes fatigue.
- **Comprehensive metabolic panel** rules out liver and kidney problems and identifies issues with glucose regulation (prediabetes and diabetes directly affect brain function).
- **Lipid panel** is important in diagnosing cardiovascular disease. Additionally, when total cholesterol is below 150, suicidal ideation increases (Segoviano-Mendoza et al. 2018).
- **TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone)** rules out hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism. Low thyroid function can look like fatigue; elevated thyroid function can look like anxiety.
- **Ferritin (an iron marker)** levels below 50 correlate with increased fatigue, especially in women (Vaucher et al. 2012).
- **Hemoglobin A1C** is a marker for diabetes. Studies have shown that diabetes predicts depression and depression predicts diabetes: diabetes is a glucose control problem. As we have been discussing, anxiety can also be caused by glucose-regulation disorders.
- **CRP (C-reactive protein)** is an inflammation marker implicated in cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and depression. If elevated, you can experience fatigue.
- **Homocysteine (a vitamin B marker)** elevated levels indicate an increased risk of depression.
- **Vitamin D-25-OH** low levels can cause fatigue, depression, and musculoskeletal pain .

I would appreciate it if you would order these tests. Additionally, if there are any labs that you are unable to request, please include a signed note in my chart that I requested them.

Sincerely,
