

Appendix F

Letters for the Mail Sample



National Institutes of Health
National Cancer Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Advance Letter – Mail Sample, Version 1

Dear Sir or Madam:

I'm writing to ask you to take part in an important national survey sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Information National Trends Survey has interviewed thousands of people in the last few years. From it we've learned that:

- About 4 out of 5 adults believe that there are so many recommendations about nutrition that it is hard to know which ones to follow.
- About one in four adults read the health section of a newspaper or magazine every week.
- Almost half of all adults don't know the age at which to begin screening for certain types of cancer.

With information like this, the survey can help the government and companies better communicate health information to everyone.

Your household was chosen at random for this survey and cannot be replaced. You will receive study questionnaires in the mail within the next few days. It will take perhaps 20 to 30 minutes to answer our questions. What you have to say will help us find out how we can best provide the health information people need.

Westat, a research firm under contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is administering the survey. Your answers will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. More information about the study is provided on the other side of this letter.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. If you have any questions about the study, call Westat toll-free at 1-888-xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bradford W. Hesse".

Bradford W. Hesse, Ph.D.
Chief, Health Communications Branch
National Institutes of Health
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services

Si prefiere recibir la encuesta en Español, por favor llame 1-888-xxx-xxxx

**Some Frequently Asked Questions
about the
Health Information National Trends Survey**

Q: What is the study about? What kind of questions will you be asking?

A: The study concerns health and how people receive health information. For example, we will ask how you usually get information about how to stay healthy, the sources of information you most trust, and how you might like to get such information in the future. We will also ask about your beliefs on what contributes to good health, how best to prevent cancer, your participation in various health-related activities, and related topics.

Q: How will the study results be used? What will be done with my information?

A: Findings will help the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services promote good health and prevent disease, by determining ways of better communicating accurate health information to people.

Q: How did you get my address?

A: Your address was randomly selected from among all of the known home addresses in the nation. It was selected using scientific sampling methods.

Q: Why should I take part in this study? Do I have to do this?

A: Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time. Your household was selected randomly using scientific sampling methods, in order to reach a sample that reflects the entire population of the United States. You represent thousands of other households like yours, and you cannot be replaced. Your answers and opinions are very important to the success of this study, as you represent others who share your knowledge and beliefs.

Q: Will my answers to the survey be kept confidential?

A: Yes. Your answers will not be revealed to anyone but the researchers in a way that identifies you or your household, to the extent provided by law.

Q: How long will it take to answer the questions?

A: About 20 to 30 minutes.

Q: Who is sponsoring the study? Is this study approved by the Federal Government?

A: The study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The study has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the office that reviews all federally-sponsored surveys. The OMB approval number assigned to this study is xxxx-xxxx.

Q: Who is Westat?

A: Westat is a research company located in Rockville, Maryland. Westat is conducting this survey under contract to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



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National Cancer Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Advance Letter – Mail Sample, Version 2

Dear Sir or Madam:

Americans today have access to more health information than ever. However, we don't always know how to find what we really need to know. I hope you'll take part in an important survey sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. By taking part, you can help us do a better job of meeting the health information needs of the nation.

Your household was chosen at random for the Health Information National Trends Survey and cannot be replaced. You will receive study questionnaires in the mail within the next few days. It will take perhaps 20 to 30 minutes to answer our questions. What you have to say will help us find out how we can best provide the health information people need.

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The Health Information National Trends Survey is authorized under 42 USC, Section 285a

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Cover Letter – Mail Sample, Version 1

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- About one in four adults read the health section of a newspaper or magazine every week.
- Almost half of all adults don't know the age at which to begin screening for certain types of cancer.

With information like this, the survey can help the government and companies get valuable information on health to you and your family.

Your household was chosen at random for this survey and cannot be replaced. **We ask that each adult in this household complete a questionnaire and return it to us in the postage-paid envelope at your earliest convenience.** What you have to say will help us find out how we can best provide the health information people need.

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Postcard Reminder for Mail Sample

A few days ago you should have received a packet of questionnaires for your household's participation in the Health Information National Trends Survey. It was sent to your address as part our effort to determine the best ways of communicating important health information to all Americans.

We requested that each adult in the household complete a questionnaire. If you have already returned the questionnaire(s) to us, please accept my sincere thanks. If any adult here has not yet completed and returned a questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible.

Your participation is important to the study's success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bradford W. Hesse". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Bradford W. Hesse, Ph.D.
Chief, Health Communications Branch
National Institutes of Health
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services



National Institutes of Health
National Cancer Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Cover Letter for Final Mailing (Refusal Conversion) – Mail Sample

Dear Sir or Madam:

We ask for your household's participation in this year's Health Information National Trends Survey. This survey is an important opportunity to have your voice heard on health issues.

This research helps America learn more about the health of its people and the problems they have getting accurate health information. The results will be used to help keep Americans better informed on important health issues.

We recently mailed questionnaires to your home. As of today we have not received any completed questionnaires from this home. We know your time is valuable. However, your household is part of a scientific sample representing many other households like yours, and it cannot be replaced. We need to hear from you.

In the event that your questionnaires were misplaced, replacements are enclosed. **We ask that each adult in this household complete a questionnaire and return it to us in the postage-paid envelope within one week.** <<We know that your time is valuable. We've enclosed \$2 as a token of our appreciation for your participation. Of course, your participation is voluntary. You can keep the money even if you decide not to take part in the survey.>>

If you have any questions or would prefer to answer the questions over the telephone, please call Westat toll free at 1-888-xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Bradford W. Hesse, Ph.D
HINTS Project Officer
Chief, Health Communications Branch
National Institutes of Health
U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services

Si prefiere recibir la encuesta en Español, por favor llame 1-888-314-1803