(Date)

Dear \_\_\_\_patient\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

As we discussed during your recent hospitalization, we have started you on a new medication called simvastatin which is one of a class of medications called “statins”. Statins have been shown to be effective in reducing the risk of stroke, heart attack and death in patients with peripheral arterial disease (PAD), carotid artery disease and aneurysmal disease.

This medicine works by lowering low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol. Statins also make atherosclerotic plaques (cholesterol build-up in blood vessels) more stable, so they are less likely to break apart and cause heart attack or stroke. This occurs even in people with normal cholesterol levels. Therefore, all people with PAD benefit from taking a statin.

We are also sending a letter to your primary care physician to ask him or her to order an important blood test in four to six weeks. This test will measure how well your liver is working. In a small number of patients, statins can affect liver function. Also, it is important to notify our office or your primary doctor if you develop severe muscle aches after starting simvastatin.

This initiative to optimize statin use in patients with vascular disease is a component of the **So**uthern **Cal**ifornia **V**ascular **O**utcomes **I**mprovement **C**ollaborativ**e** (So Cal VOICe), in which I am a member and active participant. The So Cal VOICe is a regional voluntary cooperative group of vascular disease specialists dedicated to improving outcomes and advancing the care of vascular patients. Our regional group is part of a national network of quality improvement organizations sponsored by the Society for Vascular Surgery.

As always, if you have any questions please contact our office at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and we would be happy to speak with you.

Sincerely,



http://www.vascularqualityinitiative.org/