Dear **Dr.**
March is Myeloma Action Month. I am writing to you today, both as your patient and as one of approximately 160,000 people in the U.S. living with multiple myeloma. I am writing to you to ask for your help!

The International Myeloma Foundation continues its outreach to increase awareness about myeloma among general practitioners and internists. Although myeloma is the second most common blood cancer, it can go undiagnosed until it begins to seriously damage health.

What symptoms might suggest myeloma?

* 30% of patients can actually have no symptoms! In that situation, red flags for a possible diagnosis for early myeloma are:
	+ Increased total protein and/or an increase in IgG or IgA levels
	+ Abnormal protein in the urine
	+ Unexplained anemia
	+ Unexplained increase in serum creatinine

Any such findings warrant further investigation.

* For the other 70% of patients, the most frequent early warning signals are:
	+ Persistent or recurrent unexplained back or other bone pain
	+ Fever or history of recurrent or persistent infections (including shingles)
	+ Unexplained fatigue
	+ Shortness of breath
	+ Unusual bleeding

The best and most cost-effective screening tools to identify monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS), smoldering multiple myeloma (SMM), and multiple myeloma are:

* SPEP (serum protein electrophoresis)
* IFE (immunofixation electrophoresis)
* Freelite® test

Abnormal findings in the above tests will identify more than 98% of cases of plasma cell disorders. It should be noted that MGUS, SMM, and multiple myeloma are all more frequent in African Americans.

If in doubt, don’t hesitate to seek further consultation. Early diagnosis is a key aspect of achieving best outcomes for myeloma in 2023 and beyond.

For further information about myeloma, please contact the IMF InfoLine (infoline@myeloma.org) and the IMF website ([www.myeloma.org](http://www.myeloma.org/)) for physician guidelines.

Thank you for helping me help other myeloma patients. Early diagnosis of every myeloma case matters so much to the individual patient and the family.

Sincerely,