Rita is a 54-year old Caucasian female, who complains of weakness and fatigue, although she continues to work in the interior design firm that she owns. For the last six months, she has attributed how run down she feels to menopause. She notes that her menstrual periods have been irregular, but occasionally heavy. She reports having lost around 10 pounds in the last 6 months, but does not attribute it to a change in diet nor exercise.

The patient was embarrassed to report that she suffers from chronic constipation and hemorrhoids. She also reports mild dyspnea on exertion, and chronic arthritis in her knees and hands. Current medications include Prinivil, Furosemide, and ibuprofen as needed. She took oral contraceptives for 10 years, but has ceased. She has not receiving hormone therapy. Her last mammogram was 8 months ago and was normal. The patient reports never having had a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy.

Her family history contains an 83-year old mother with a 35-year history of type-2 diabetes, and a father who died at 60 of acute myocardial infarction. Her only brother is alive at the age of 61 with a history of hypertension.

Rita is divorced with two grown children and lives alone. She has never smoked and rarely drinks alcohol. She is an avid tennis player.

Rita appeared as a pale, thin women. She is not in acute distress. She is 5’6” tall and weighs 128lbs. Vital signs were as follows: blood pressure, 132/86 mmHg; pulse 86 bpm; respiratory rate is 22 breaths/ minute. Temperature is 37 degrees C. Her lungs were clear bilaterally. Bowel sounds were normal in all quadrants.