INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE & ADVOCACY

Kathey Avery, RN, BSN

Avery Health - Education and Consulting brings extensive experience and knowledge to help individuals and groups achieve positive health outcomes and implement equity.

Kathey Avery, founder and owner of Avery Health - Education and Consulting, has more than 35 years of experience in healthcare and community activism. She is dedicated to raising awareness about, and helping in the prevention of, chronic diseases and preventable cancers through patient and public education and personal accountability.

Contact Kathey Avery today at 828-768-2369 to schedule a talk or workshop. For more details, please visit **www.AveryHEC.com**

The mission of the **Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy** is to promote optimum health for all residents of Buncombe County and surrounding areas by addressing the social determinants of health and the inequities in access to affordable and preventive healthcare.

www.ifpha.org

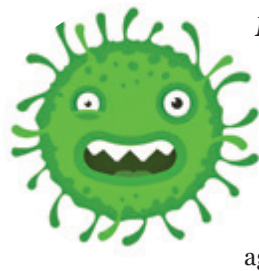
The IFPHA is grateful for the support of our sponsors.

MAHEC
DOGWOOD HEALTH TRUST
EAGLE MARKET STREETS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
HRSA
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Keeping Safe This Fall

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

A letter from the BA.2.86 Coronavirus.

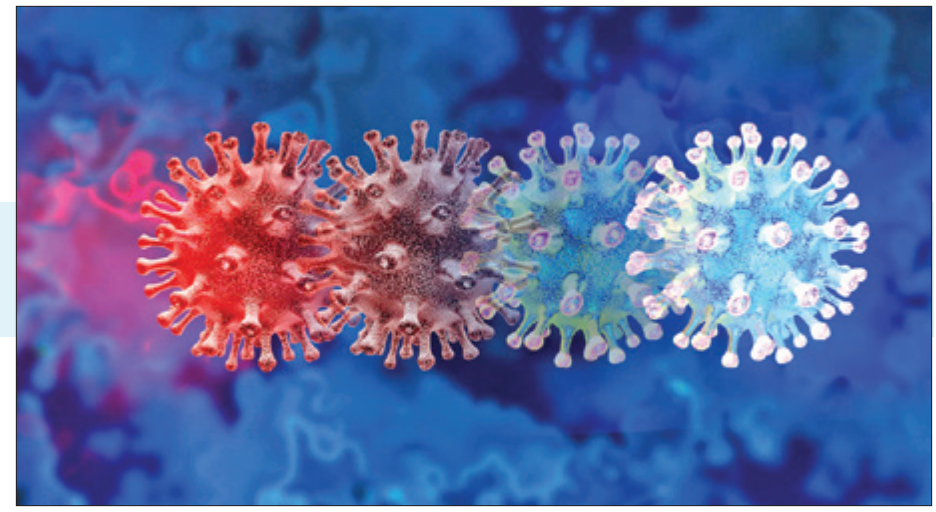


Dear unvaccinated and unmasked humans, I'm back, and I have changed for the winter!

Thank you again for your gracious hospitality and willingness to be a host. Your efforts to help me stay alive and multiply makes it possible for me to exist. I am happy to share that I finally reached Kathey Avery. Your community nurse went on vacation in another state and let her guard down. I knew if I waited for just the right time, I would get her! No masks in a crowded room of humans—my favorite place!

My new variant name is BA.2.86. I can be detected by the methods used to detect Covid-19. So far the medications used to treat Covid-19 are effective, even though I am a new variant. As BA.2.86, I am happy that I am more capable of causing infection in people who have previously had Covid-19, or those who have received Covid-19 vaccines. I work hard every time I change to infect as many as I can.

Since I cannot replicate alone, I need a host cell to make copies so I can kill your cells and cause damage to the host organism. Letting your guard down like Kathey Avery, who of course is only human (it appears), has helped me reach her, a person who had not yet been infected. I see that my plan to spread is working.



A new variant, called BA.2.86, has emerged.

Humans, you continue to make me a very happy virus!

Even though I have changed to a new variant, as I do over time, only antiviral medications or vaccines can treat or prevent the work I am here to do. If you follow expert medical advice, you reduce the ability of viruses like me to use your body to survive and thrive. It's so unselfish of you to let me make you sick!

Please don't remember the science classes you had in high school, or listen to scientists who are offering medications to help prevent long Covid. They just want me gone!

Listen, I only want to spread and kill. But, because so many have gotten boosters, and over the past few years many have built up immunity, I am in a different place with trying to infect people. I am still a major cause of serious respiratory illnesses in the United States. I have been able to cause more than 200,000 deaths (including more than 600 in children and adolescents 0-19 years old) reported since January 2022. Yes, I am here to stay.

I look forward to others letting their guard down and not getting vaccinated. Unfortunately for me, IFPHA's community nurse, Kathey Avery, and her team of CHW's, will be calling their community members to let them know when and where the vaccines will be available. Hopefully you won't answer, or you'll forget to get that vaccination. Make me happy! I have to live too, don't I?

IFPHA's team knows that getting vaccinated is the most effective tool to protect yourself this fall and winter.

I, BA.2.86, make this plea again: please don't help humans who are trying to keep me from growing. I am asking that you not think about yourself, your family, or neighbors. If you keep me from multiplying and mutating, I won't be able to infect so many people. Please continue to do nothing to protect yourself; you are saving me and giving me time to mutate.

I eagerly await your next unprotected gathering in a crowded place. When you forget or decide not to wear a mask or use your hand sanitizer, I will be right there waiting. I look forward to growing and spreading just like the flu.

About the BA.2.86 Variant

BA.2.86, a new variant nicknamed "Pirola," carries more than 30 mutations. This is the largest leap in viral evolution since Omicron, which caused a massive wave of cases when it first emerged in 2021. This new variant may be more likely to cause breakthrough infections in people who were previously infected or vaccinated, compared to other circulating variants.

Protect Yourself

Updated versions of Covid vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna have been released, and while initially designed to target earlier variants, research shows these vaccines should protect against newer variants, like BA.2.86, as well.

Covid-19 vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months and older. Vaccination continues to be the best way to protect yourself against severe disease. Covid-19 vaccines also reduce the chance of having Long Covid.

The BA.2.86 virus is serious. We all need to continue to be vigilant and stay well this coming season. Take the following actions to protect yourself and others from infection.

- Get your Covid-19 vaccines, as recommended
- Stay home if you are sick
- Get tested for Covid-19 if needed
- Seek treatment if you have Covid-19 and are at high risk of getting very sick

Updated vaccines should work well against currently circulating variants of Covid-19, including BA.2.86.

- If you choose to wear a mask, wear a high-quality one that fits well over your nose and mouth
- Improve ventilation
- Wash your hands