

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.

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Holistic Health Part 3

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month

I hope everyone realized the importance of their vote this year more than any other time in history.

In part 3 of Holistic Health, I hope you can see how local, national, and world events effect our well-being as well as that of our families, our community, and nation.

As I said in parts 1 and 2, we are being affected by the chaos and conflict happening both locally, globally, and nationally. Our vote appears to be one of the only ways left to make sure we continue to take care of our mental wellness—we must be able to think, feel, connect, and function.



The act of voting gives us a sense of mental wellness—we know we did all we can as a people living in a democracy so we can continue to foster resilience and growth, and we are able to flourish and make our needs known as a collective. I fear that without each of us voting for democracy to continue, we will lose the ability to make our voices heard.

Knowledge and History are Key to Our Future

For African Americans, I think about how much we have lost and fought for—for example, to get the right to vote. Think about “Bloody Sunday,” when 600 people walked with John Lewis in 1965 at the height of the civil rights movement. Activists organized a march for voting rights, from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery, the state capital. On March 7, those 600 people assembled at a downtown church, knelt briefly in prayer, and began walking silently, two-by-two through the city streets.

One minute and five seconds after a two-minute warning was announced, troops advanced, wielding clubs, bullwhips, and tear gas. John Lewis, who suffered a skull fracture, was one of fifty-eight people treated for injuries at the local hospital. The day is remembered in history as “Bloody Sunday.”

14th Amendment Made Corporations Into ‘People’

Under US law, some essential rights of the 14th amendment belong not only to American citizens, but also corporations, thanks to a few key Supreme Court cases and a controversial legal concept known as corporate personhood.

President Barack Obama said in his State of the Union address that the decision would “open the floodgates for special interests—including foreign corporations—to spend without limit in our elections.” What is happening in 2024?

Ratified in 1868, the 14th amendment was one of three amendments to the US Constitution designed to grant full citizenship rights to formerly enslaved people. While the 13th and 15th Amendments were relatively limited in scope—the first abolished slavery and the second granted voting rights to black men—the 14th Amendment exponentially expanded the protection of civil rights for all Americans.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Lastly, let’s look at the ways we are experiencing “push back” today in the efforts of activists, individuals, and advocacy groups with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (DEI).

I recently saw this headline: “Florida board bans use of state, federal dollars for DEI programs at state universities.” The board that oversees Florida’s 12 public universities voted to ban using state or federal dollars for diversity programs or activities, aligning with a law signed last spring by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

The work African Americans and our allies have done over the past decade is being dismantled by those who do not want us to realize the American dream.

Don’t despair, give up, or become complacent, keep working and VOTE.

March is Colorectal Awareness Month

Healthcare also shows years of disparities. I am reminded of the quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice of health is the most shocking and the most inhumane.”

African American’s have the highest colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates of all racial groups in the United States. There is a strong link between diet, weight, exercise, and colorectal cancer risk.

Another possible reason for this disparity is the higher prevalence of genetic mutations in the KRAS gene, which affect a cell’s ability to repair DNA errors among African Americans.



Voting improves your health, your families health, and your community. Exert your power!

Screenings for colorectal cancer for African Americans may need to begin at an earlier age.

If you have private health insurance, there is a 30% higher relative 5-year survival compared with that of uninsured African Americans. Deaths from colon cancer could be avoided with health screenings. Doctors suggest that you should get your first screening on your 50th birthday. It can save your life!



There is a strong link between diet, weight, exercise, and colorectal cancer.

Colorectal Cancer Risk Factors

- Age
- Personal history of colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer
- Personal history of inflammatory bowel disease
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- Inherited syndromes such as Familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP)
- Racial and ethnic background
- Lifestyle-related factors such as physical inactivity, obesity, certain types of diets.
- Type 2 diabetes

Sources: www.archives.gov/exhibits/eyewitness/index.html; www.history.com; Colon Cancer Foundation; H/OT, American Cancer Society.