

INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE & ADVOCACY



Kathey Avery, RN, BSN, CN

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 Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy



Promoting 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

IFPHA is grateful for the support of our sponsors and partners.



IFPHA PARTNERS:
Bounty and Soul
Rock Hill Baptist Church
Shiloh Association

May is Lupus and Stroke Awareness Month

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

This month I am sharing information on two health concerns that impact many lives.

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease in which the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy tissue, causing inflammation, pain, and potential damage to joints, skin, and internal organs. Symptoms often come in waves—periods of flare followed by remission—and may include extreme fatigue, fever, joint pain, and the characteristic “butterfly” rash.

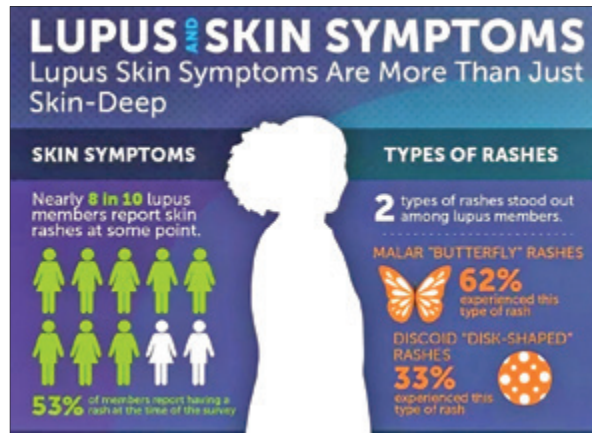
As of early 2026, data show that Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) disproportionately affects African Americans, especially women, who face higher incidence, more severe disease, and increased mortality compared to white populations.

According to the Lupus Foundation of America:

- Lupus prevalence is three times higher in Black/African American and Native American communities than in white populations.
- Lupus prevalence is twice as high in Hispanic patients compared to white patients.
- African American patients have a significantly worse prognosis; progression to kidney failure is nine times greater than in white patients.

Lupus and Nutrition

Vitamin D, a fat-soluble nutrient essential for bone health, has also been linked to the possible prevention of autoimmune diseases and the reduction of their symptoms. Food sources include fortified milk and salmon, plus, your body can produce it naturally when your skin is exposed to ultraviolet-B (UVB) rays from the sun.



Healthline reports that over 80% of people with lupus have low vitamin D, and deficiency may contribute to the development or worsening of autoimmune disease. Always consult your doctor before taking any medication or supplement, including over the counter products.

Vitamin B12 deficiency is also more common in people with autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and lupus. Patients should be monitored for B12 levels, especially if they experience anemia.

In general, people with lupus should aim for a well-balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. It should also include moderate amounts of meats, poultry, and oily fish.

Key Healthy Foods for Lupus

Omega-3 Fatty Acids (Anti-inflammatory): Salmon, mackerel, sardines, flaxseed, chia seeds, walnuts, and soybeans.

Fruits & Vegetables (Antioxidants): Berries (strawberries, blueberries), citrus

fruits, broccoli, kale, spinach, avocados, and cherries.

Whole Grains (Fiber): Oatmeal, brown rice, quinoa, whole-wheat bread, and barley.

Lean Proteins: Chicken, turkey, eggs, tofu, beans, and lentils.

Calcium & Vitamin D (Bone Health): Low-fat yogurt, low-fat milk, fortified dairy alternatives, and fortified cereal.

Healthy Fats & Spices: Olive oil, avocados, turmeric, and ginger.

5 Things to Avoid If You Have Lupus

The following substances can trigger lupus symptoms or flares and should be avoided by people with lupus or autoimmune conditions:

Sunlight: Sun exposure can cause rashes and flares. Use sunscreen with SPF 70 or higher and ensure it contains Helioplex to block both UVA and UVB rays.

Bactrim and Septra: These sulfa-based antibiotics can increase sun sensitivity and lower blood counts, leading to lupus flares.

Garlic: Compounds such as allicin and ajoene stimulate the immune system, which can worsen autoimmune activity. Avoid garlic except in very small amounts.

Alfalfa Sprouts: Contain Leucanavanine, which can increase inflammation and stimulate the immune system.

Echinacea: This immuneboosting supplement may trigger flares in people with autoimmune diseases.

Sources: Lupus Foundation of America; Johns Hopkins Lupus Center

Stroke Awareness

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

B.E. F.A.S.T.

Key stroke indicators:

Balance: Sudden dizziness, loss of balance, or lack of coordination.

Eyes: Sudden blurred or double vision, or loss of vision in one or both eyes.

Face: Facial drooping, uneven smile, or numbness on one side.

Arms: Weakness or numbness, especially on one side; inability to raise both arms.

Speech: Slurred speech, difficulty speaking, or confusion.

Time: Call 911 immediately if any of these signs appear.



Save a life by identifying the signs of a stroke.

Lunch & Learn

LUNCH & LEARN Join Kathey Avery on the third and fourth

Wednesdays of the month from 12-1 p.m. at the Linwood Crump Shiloh Community Center, 121 Shiloh Road in Asheville. The community nurse will address “Hot Topics” and provide education and knowledge to help keep you healthy. All are welcome!