

What does cardiovascular care have to do with dentistry? Plenty, according to Dr. B. Wayne Kong, CEO of the Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC).

“Our goal is to make cardiovascular disease obsolete, and our inspiration is what is happening in dentistry,” Kong said. “Fifty years ago, needing false teeth by age 40 was common and expected. Today, if we follow simple dental practices, we can almost wipe out tooth decay. That’s an amazing achievement.”

“We want to duplicate these results with cardiovascular disease and stroke. If people follow ABC’s Seven Steps to Good Health, and if they do so early in life, death due to heart disease will dramatically decrease,” said Kong.

What are ABC’s Seven Steps? Be spiritually active, take charge of your blood pressure, control your cholesterol, track your blood sugar, eat smart and enjoy regular exercise, don’t smoke, and access better health care and take medication as prescribed. The association stresses prevention, since three out of four deaths from coronary heart disease occur during the first heart attack.

Although most African American middle-aged men and women are more afraid of cancer, AIDS and violence, the reality is that cardiovascular disease is responsible for more deaths in the African American community than all other diseases combined, according to ABC.

“One of the myths about heart disease is that it’s unavoidable. People hear about someone having a heart attack while jogging and think it’s inevitable,” said Kong, who plays tennis and golf regularly. “This is simply not true.”

Preemptive measures must be taken, Kong said, starting with receiving culturally competent care. “Only 2 percent of cardiologists are African American. Seventy-five percent of African American patients get care from non-African American cardiologists. It’s our goal to increase the number of African American cardiologists to 13 percent,” he pledged.

Kong also is an advocate for community involvement in cardiovascular care. In 1979, he and Dr. Elijah Saunders pioneered the organization of church and barbershop health promotion centers throughout Maryland, with a grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. The initiative still exists today, and continues to train lay volunteers to take accurate blood pressures and follow up with patients to assure their compliance to medical regimens.

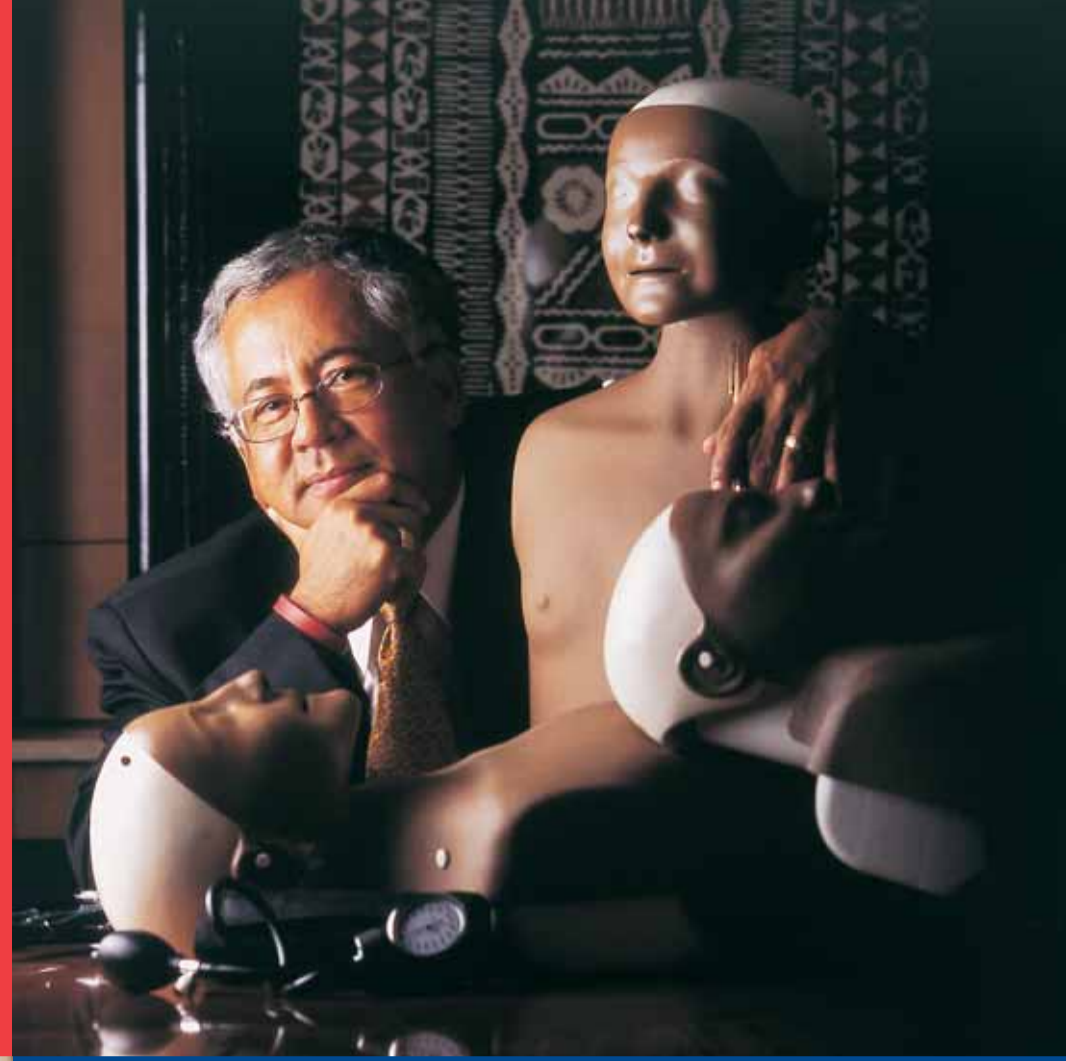
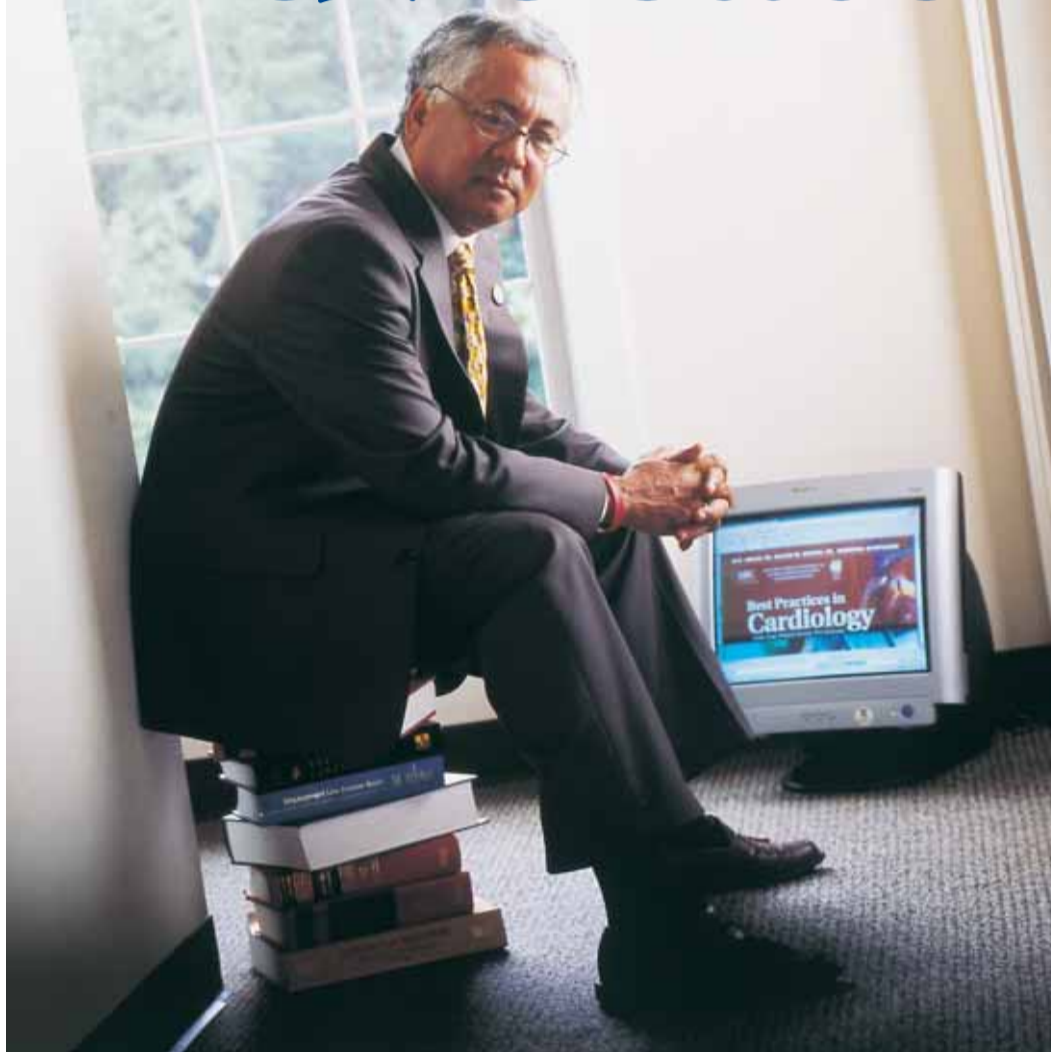
“I try to teach people that health and wealth go hand in hand. If you’re sickly and lying around in bed, you’re not making money, you’re spending it,” said Kong, who grew up in Woodlands, St. Elizabeth Parish, Jamaica. “If you’re healthy and want to stay healthy, you have to keep up the habits of a healthy person.”

## B. Wayne Kong, Ph.D., J.D.

CEO of the Association of Black Cardiologists

Residence: Atlanta, Georgia

# Advocate



## Cardiovascular Disease

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### FACT

In 2002, cardiovascular disease made up 39.6 percent of total deaths for African American females.

# August 2006

STAGE OF LIFE – *Adult*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b> 1879: Mary Eliza Mahoney graduates from New England Hospital for Women and Children, becoming the first black professional nurse in America.	<b>2</b> 1924: James Baldwin, author of <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> , <i>The Fire Next Time</i> and <i>Another Country</i> , born.	<b>3</b> 1800: Gabriel Prosser leads slave revolt in Richmond, Virginia.	<b>4</b> 1810: Abolitionist Robert Purvis born.	<b>5</b> 1962: Nelson Mandela, South African freedom fighter, imprisoned. He was not released until 1990.
<b>6</b> 1965: President Lyndon B. Johnson signs Voting Rights Act, outlawing literacy test for voting eligibility in the South.	<b>7</b> 1907: Ralph Bunche, first African American Nobel prize winner, born. 1989: Congressman Mickey Leland dies in plane crash during a humanitarian mission to Ethiopia.	<b>8</b> 2005: John H. Johnson, founder and publisher of <i>Ebony</i> and <i>Jet</i> magazines, dies.	<b>9</b> 1936: Jesse Owens wins fourth gold medal at Summer Olympics in Berlin.	<b>10</b> 1989: Gen. Colin Powell is nominated Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, the first African American to hold this post.	<b>11</b> 1872: Solomon Carter Fuller, acknowledged as first black psychiatrist, born. 1921: Alex Haley, author of <i>Roots</i> , born.	<b>12</b> 1977: Steven Biko, leader of Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, arrested.
<b>13</b> 1981: Reagan administration undertakes its review of 30 federal regulations, including rules on civil rights to prevent job discrimination.	<b>14</b> 1989: First National Black Theater Festival held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.	<b>15</b> 1888: Granville T. Woods patents electromechanical brake.	<b>16</b> 1922: Author Louis E. Lomax born.	<b>17</b> 1849: Lawyer-activist Archibald Henry Grimké, who challenged segregationist policies of President Woodrow Wilson, born.	<b>18</b> 1859: Harriet Wilson's <i>Our Nig</i> is first novel published by a black writer.	<b>19</b> 1954: Dr. Ralph J. Bunche named undersecretary of United Nations.
<b>20</b> 1993: Dr. David Satcher named director of the Centers for Disease Control.	<b>21</b> 1904: Bandleader and composer William "Count" Basie born.	<b>22</b> 1843: Henry Highland Garnett calls for a general strike by slaves.	<b>23</b> 1926: Carter Woodson, historian, author, inaugurates Negro History Week.	<b>24</b> 1950: Judge Edith Sampson named first black delegate to United Nations.	<b>25</b> 1925: A. Phillip Randolph founds Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.	<b>26</b> 1946: Composer, singer and producer Valerie Simpson Ashford born.
<b>27</b> 1935: Mary McLeod Bethune founds National Council of Negro Women. 1963: W.E.B. DuBois, scholar, civil rights activist and founding father of the NAACP, dies.	<b>28</b> 1963: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers "I Have A Dream" speech during March on Washington, D.C.	<b>29</b> 1920: Saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker born.	<b>30</b> 1983: Lt. Col. Guion S. Bluford Jr. becomes the first African American astronaut in space.	<b>31</b> 1836: Henry Blair patents cotton planter.		



Your heart pumps a total of 8,000 gallons of blood 12,000 miles through your body every day.

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