



HEALTH & HEALING

Slowing the aging process

by **Mike Ventresca**
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Recently, I've been receiving quite a few questions about red wine and its health benefits. Researchers at Harvard Medical School made headlines when they isolated a plant chemical they believe may be able to slow the aging process. The plant chemical is called **Resveratrol** and is naturally created by certain vines, pine trees, grapes and other plants as a response to environmental stress.



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Harvard researchers demonstrated that resveratrol activates a "longevity gene" in yeast that extends life span by 70%. The effects mimic those of calorie restriction, the only proven way of extending maximum life span. While this research grabbed headlines, it is by no means the only evidence of this beneficial compound. Studies in 2000 and 2003 showed the cardiovascular benefits of resveratrol. Increased nitric oxide production (important for arterial health), decreased platelet aggregation and reduced oxidation of LDL-cholesterol have all been observed. Other research suggests that

resveratrol may play a role in cancer prevention as well as provide anti-inflammatory benefits at the cellular level.

How much resveratrol is in red wine? Well, here's the odd thing—the answer could be...none! Because resveratrol is created in response to fungal infection, how much resveratrol is in a glass of wine depends on how it was grown. If the grapes were sprayed with pesticides that prevent fungal infection then the final wine may have little or no resveratrol at all (This is yet another reason to choose organic wines). Therefore, for many the most reliable way to get resveratrol daily is to take it in supplement form. After reading the latest round of research, I've decided to start taking Resveratrol Synergy from Jarrow Formulas. This powerful formula combines resveratrol with several research-proven antioxidant extracts from grape seed, grape skin and green tea.

Mike Ventresca is co-owner of Vital Choice, a health food and nutrition store located at 9243 Sprague Road in North Royalton's Timber Ridge Plaza. The phone number is 440-885-9505. Open Monday thru Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.

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