

Compound found in grapes, red wine may help prevent memory loss

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A compound found in common foods such as red grapes and peanuts may help prevent age-related decline in memory, according to new

research published by a faculty member in the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine.

Ashok K. Shetty, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Medicine and Director of Neurosciences at the Institute for Regenerative Medicine, has been studying the potential benefit of [resveratrol](#), an antioxidant that is found in the skin of red grapes, as well as in red wine, peanuts and some berries.

Resveratrol has been widely touted for its potential to prevent heart disease, but Shetty and a team that includes other researchers from the health science center believe it also has positive effects on the hippocampus, an area of the brain that is critical to functions such as [memory](#), learning and mood.

Because both humans and animals show a decline in cognitive capacity after middle age, the findings may have implications for treating memory loss in the elderly. Resveratrol may even be able to help people afflicted with severe neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease.

In a study published online Jan. 28 in *Scientific Reports*, Shetty and his research team members reported that treatment with resveratrol had apparent benefits in terms of learning, memory and mood function in aged rats.

"The results of the study were striking," Shetty said. "They indicated that for the control rats who did not receive resveratrol, spatial learning ability was largely maintained but ability to make new spatial memories significantly declined between 22 and 25 months. By contrast, both spatial learning and memory improved in the resveratrol-treated rats."

Shetty said neurogenesis (the growth and development of neurons)

approximately doubled in the rats given resveratrol compared to the control rats. The resveratrol-treated rats also had significantly improved microvasculature, indicating improved blood flow, and had a lower level of chronic inflammation in the hippocampus.

"The study provides novel evidence that resveratrol treatment in late middle age can help improve memory and mood function in old age," Shetty said.

More information: *Scientific Reports*,
[www.nature.com/srep/2015/15012 ... /full/srep08075.html](http://www.nature.com/srep/2015/15012.../full/srep08075.html)

Provided by Texas A&M University

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