

[IMAGE]

Cutting-Edge Compounds: Piceatannol

By G. Douglas Andersen, DC, DACBSP, CCN

Piceatannol is a metabolite (a byproduct of metabolism) of the powerful phytochemical resveratrol, which is found in grape skins, bilberries, blueberries, cranberries and peanuts. Resveratrol has been studied for its effects on longevity, heart disease and cancer. The compound has increased the lifespan of yeast, worms and fruit flies; animal studies have also been promising for the inhibition of some lines of cancer cell growth.

Animal studies on heart disease have been mixed, with high doses showing both benefit and harm. However, two of the world's five documented zones of extreme longevity consume dark red wine that is very high in compounds including resveratrol. Once ingested, some resveratrol is converted to piceatannol.

Piceatannol - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Recently, researchers at Purdue University discovered that piceatannol blocks the development of immature fat cells into mature fat cells (a process called *adipogenesis*) by binding to their insulin receptors. Without insulin, the genes that promote the growth of baby fat cells (which cannot store fat) to adult fat cells (which *can* store fat) are never activated.

More research is definitely needed, but the beauty and simplicity of the process made it worth writing about. Needless to say, the implications for such a supplement are beyond huge. In the meantime, it's another reason to toss some red grapes and blueberries in your smoothies and protein shakes.

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