

Study Finds Grapes can Prevent Blindness from Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

By John Phillip, Natural News

Age-related macular degeneration is a progressive eye condition, leading to the deterioration of the center of the retina, called the macula. It is the leading cause of blindness in the elderly. The result of a study published in the journal *Free Radical Biology and Medicine* finds that eating grapes over a lifetime may slow or help prevent age-related macular degeneration as we age.

The antioxidant actions of grapes are believed to be responsible for these protective effects, as they are shown to specifically target the eye to provide a protective shield against repeated assaults perpetrated by exposure to the sun and high-intensity light sources. Silvia Finnemann, principal researcher from Fordham University in New York commented, "A lifelong diet enriched in natural antioxidants, such as those in grapes, appears to be directly beneficial for retinal pigment epithelium cells and retinal health and function."

Red grapes found to offer significant protection against AMD and blindness

The study compared the impact of a diet rich in antioxidants on vision in mice prone to developing retinal damage in old age in much the same way as humans do. Mice either received a grape-enriched diet, a diet with added lutein, or a normal diet. Researchers found that the diet enriched with grapes offered dramatic protection, as it was shown to protect against oxidative damage of the retina and prevent blindness. While a diet supplemented with lutein was also effective, grapes were found to offer significantly more protection.

Dr. Finnemann noted "The protective effect of the grapes in this study was remarkable, offering a benefit for vision at old age even if grapes were consumed only at young age." The result of this study determined that age-related vision loss is a result of cumulative, oxidative damage over time. A diet rich in antioxidants, especially those provided by lifelong consumption of red grapes are directly beneficial to retinal health and function.

This study showed that adding grapes to the diet prevented blindness in mice by significantly decreasing the build-up of lipofuscin and preventing the oxidative damage to the retina. Red grapes contain the powerful antioxidant, resveratrol that has been demonstrated to provide essential support for optimal brain function and heart health. Consuming several ounces of red grapes each day may provide an important key to prevent eye damage and blindness from AMD.

Sources for this article include:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0891584911012081>