



# Indian Wine Academy

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## Is Red Wine Good for Hypertension

*In yet another study with many ifs and buts, researchers in Spain have claimed that the compounds found in red wine could potentially help ease hypertension in postmenopausal women but cautioned that the results may not yet be applicable to red wine.*

The study conducted at the University of Granada, and led by Rocío López-Sepúlveda, a researcher at the department of pharmacology is scheduled to be published in the April issue of *Hypertension*.

Women who have gone through menopause are at a greater risk of hypertension than men of the same age, underlining the need to identify potential therapeutic measures, write the study's authors.

The study indicates that the red-wine compounds may help reduce hypertension as well as the complications associated with it, such as inflammation of the arteries, a restricted aorta or oxidative stress on the blood vessels.

Reported in the *Wine Spectator*, the study has also included research from the University Complutense of Madrid. Researchers used female rats that were genetically engineered to have high blood pressure. They then stimulated menopause by removing the rats' ovaries, after which time the rats' blood pressure rose due to the altered DNA. The scientists treated half the rats with a mixture of several types of red-wine chemicals associated with improved circulation, including resveratrol, for a period of five weeks. The remaining rats serving as a control group received only water with their diet.

After five weeks, the scientists examined the rats' blood vessels. They found that the high blood pressure had been alleviated in the rats that received a regular red-wine-compound treatment added to their food. The rats had more relaxed aortas, healthier linings to the veins and arteries, as well as less oxidative stress—all of which are associated with lower blood pressure.

The scientists cautioned, however that while their results indicate that the risk of hypertension in postmenopausal women could potentially be reduced through the use of regular red-wine-chemical supplements, they may not extend to women who drink red wine.

### Excess wine shrinks brain

In the meanwhile, according to another study, consuming wine might make parts of your brain shrivel more quickly than the consumption of beer or liquor.

Researchers at Göttingen University in Germany have found that the hippocampus, a part of the brain important for memory and brain performance shrinks particularly quickly in wine drinkers.

Using a magnetic resonance tomography unit, the researchers measured the brains of wine, beer and liquor consumers. According to the study, wine drinkers on average had a hippocampus that was ten per cent smaller than that of beer drinkers. Non-drinkers had the largest hippocampus.

The researchers believe beer may contain some substances that counteract the damaging effect of alcohol.

*Amidst increasing absurdity in the various recent studies on wine and health, one trend is clear-there is nothing like drinking quality wine regularly and in moderation. Rather than drinking primarily for the health benefits one should drink for pleasure with the potential benefits being only as a side benefit.-editor*

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