

Longevity Gene Found to Rejuvenate Blood Vessels

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Italian researchers discover link between longevity gene and cardiovascular health.

Italians have long been revered for their generally long life spans credited to their healthy lifestyles, environments, and other variants. Now, a study published in the *European Heart Journal* by I.R.C.C.S MultiMedica, I.R.C.C.S Neuromed, and the University of Salerno teams is proving to bring us much closer to finding a real reason why some people have naturally lived longer than others.

Proven through studies done on mice vulnerable to cardiovascular disease and atherosclerosis (due to a harmless virus given to them through gene therapy done in order to carry out the experiment) and test tube human blood vessel trials, it has been discovered that people who have lived past the age of 100 share one thing in common in their DNA: a longevity gene that rejuvenates the blood vessels.

The gene is responsible for increasing production of the BPIFB4 protein, which in high amounts has been found to protect the blood vessels, and as a result leads to rejuvenated cardiovascular health. Through these findings, researchers have found that the increase in protein due to the gene helped against cardiovascular diseases, and the research teams suspect the gene may help with tumors and neuro-degenerative diseases as well.



The study, sponsored by the [Cariplo Foundation](#) [2] and Italian Health Ministry, is in its earlier stages. The outcomes of the study are looking positively upon, as researchers are discovering how to transfer the longevity gene to those who were born without it. As Carmine Vecchione, one of the leaders of the study alongside Annibale Puca, stated "Of course a great deal more research will be needed, but we think it is possible, by administering the protein itself to patients, to slow down age-related cardiovascular damage."

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