

## Spirulina extract may provide new therapeutic to fight hypertension: Research

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According to a new research by researchers from the Vascular Physiopathology Laboratory of the IRCCS Neuromed in Pozzilli (Italy), one of the extracts from spirulina (*Arthrospira platensis*) may counteract arterial hypertension by dilating blood vessels.

Neuromed researchers, working in collaboration with the University of Salerno, Sapienza University of Rome, and Federico II University of Naples, isolated a peptide from a spirulina extract capable of dilating arteries, thus leading to antihypertensive action. The study, published in *Hypertension*, was conducted both in the laboratory, on isolated arteries, and on animal models.

Albino Carrizzo, first author of the paper said, “Our research started by conducting simulated gastrointestinal digestion on the raw extract of spirulina. In other words, we reproduced what happens in the human gut after ingesting the substance. This way we have been able to isolate the peptides that would be absorbed by our body.”

According to Carmine Vecchione, professor at the University of Salerno and head of the Vascular Physiopathology Laboratory at Neuromed Institute, “We know that hypertensive patients often have a defect in the natural processes that, by the action of nitric oxide, regulate endothelium. The peptide we isolated in spirulina extract acts positively on this mechanism. Of course, further research will be necessary, but we think that SP6 could be a natural adjuvant to common pharmacological therapies in order to improve endothelial function and, consequently, combat hypertension.”

One of the isolated peptides, named SP6, has been identified for the first time. Administered to isolated blood vessels in the lab, it showed vasodilatory action, a potentially antihypertensive effect. This led researchers to administer SP6 to hypertensive animals, resulting in an effective lowering of blood pressure.