

**Please Take One!**



## **SUPPLEMENT OF THE MONTH: Pycnogenol**

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### **What is Pycnogenol?**

Pycnogenol is an antioxidant with immunostimulating properties that is extracted from the pine bark of a tree known as *Pinus pinaster*, also known as French Maritime Pine Bark. It contains flavonoids, including catechin, and taxifolin, and the bioflavonoid, procyanidin. Pycnogenol is a trademarked French name, but similar compounds are found in other pine bark extracts, grape seed extract, and peanut skins.

### **Where is it found?**

It is a supplement. However, it can also be brewed as a tea made from pine bark.

### **What are the benefits?**

Pycnogenol has been shown to be effective in treating allergic rhinitis and asthma. It also seems to increase athletic endurance and decrease hypertension. Further, it appears to slow or prevent retinopathy and improve circulatory function. Pycnogenol is added to many skin creams and products because of its anti-aging properties. It may help slow the aging process and maintain healthy skin. Some people also use pycnogenol for diabetes, leg cramps, menopausal symptoms, and coronary artery disease.

### **Are there interactions with medications?**

Because of its immunostimulating properties, pycnogenol may interfere with immunosuppressant therapy and should not be taken with immunosuppressant drugs or by people with autoimmune disorders.

### **Are there side effects?**

Pycnogenol may cause dizziness, gut problems, headaches, and mouth ulcers.