Longevity and Gene Therapy, With Richard W. Bank, MD, 67 Years Old

Richard W. Bank, MD, is 67 years old and has served as a clinical professor emeritus, a pharmaceutical and biotechnology consultant, and a senior portfolio manager for Liberty View Capital Management. Dr. Bank notes that the average life span has increased dramatically due to positive environmental changes such as healthier sanitation and cleaner water, as well as advanced medicine, including new gene therapies that treat conditions like heart disease.  
  
[Biologists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biologist) in research labs have increased the life spans of organisms such as worms, flies, and mice through adjustments at the cellular level, says Dr. Bank. However, medical technology has had an even larger effect on the life span of humans.   
  
One such advancement is a gene therapy for heart failure. The therapy, a result of more than 20 years of research sponsored by the British Heart Foundation, infuses extra genes into human cells. These genes increase important protein levels in the heart, allowing the muscle to contract more effectively.  
  
Gene therapies such as this one may extend life by equipping the human body to reverse molecular degeneration - and by strengthening bodily functions.