

# Woolworths: Renovatio's 'surreal' \$5 million vitamins deal with supermarket

Dr Vincent Candrawinata made a world-first discovery in his 20s – and now he's landed a "game-changing" contract with a grocery giant.

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The products will hit Woolies shelves on May 1. Picture: Instagram/@renovatiobio Source:Instagram

Dr Vincent Candrawinata's grandmother went from being a passionate ballroom dancer to virtually housebound as rheumatoid arthritis took its devastating toll.

The young scientist was in the middle of groundbreaking research at the University of Newcastle when his grandmother Rianita's condition worsened, although she refused to have surgery.

Then, in his early 20s, Dr Vincent's PhD project unearthed a world-first method of using water to extract powerful antioxidants, activated phenolics, from apples.

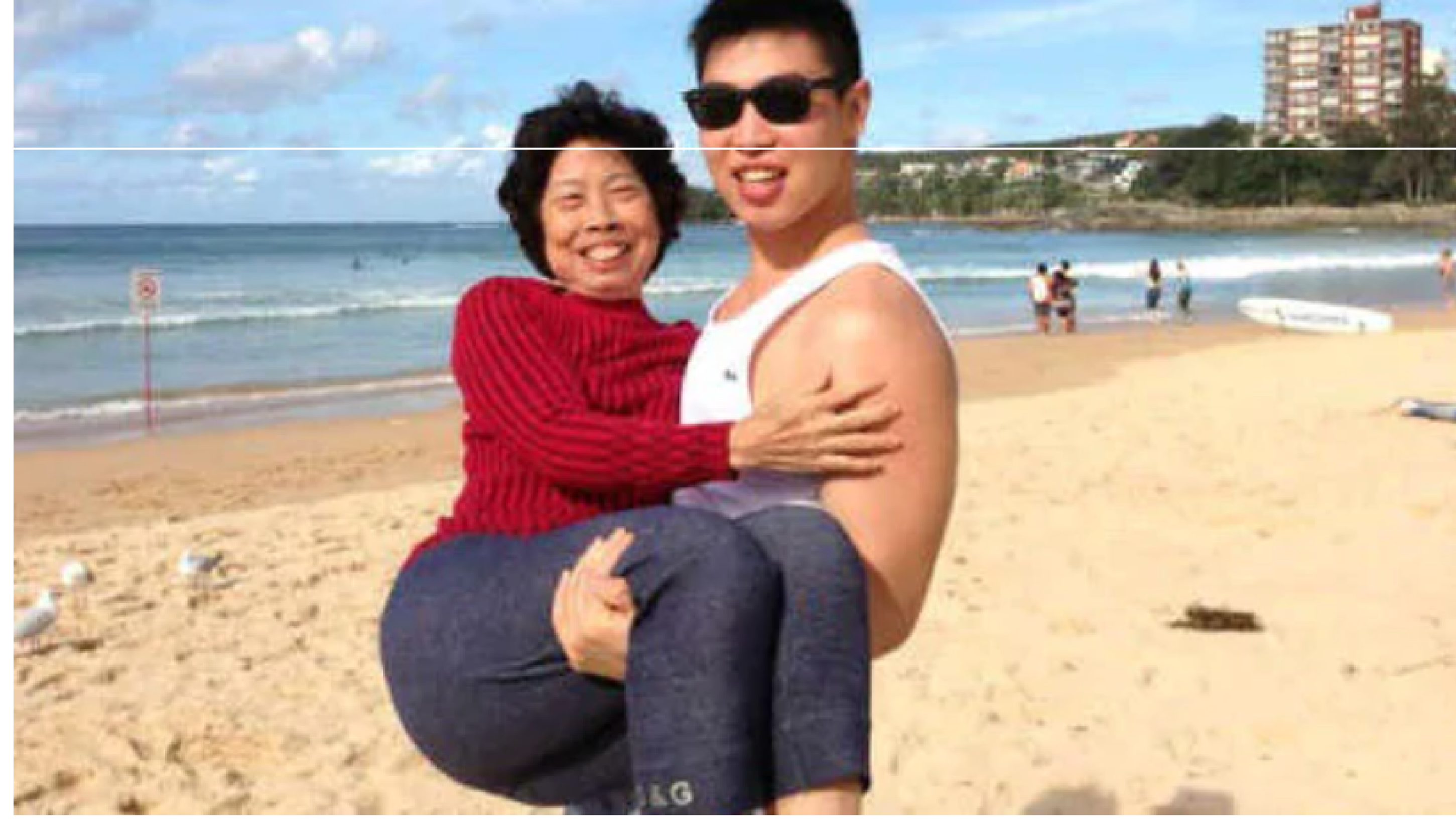
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Phenolics are a compound believed to have anti-oxidative and anti-inflammatory benefits.

"The reason why I got so passionate about this research was because in 2012 when I invented the technology, my grandmother was suffering really advanced rheumatoid arthritis on her knees," he told news.com.au.

"I wanted to help and I had just discovered this compound – it hadn't been proven yet and I didn't know what it would do, but I knew it was safe to be taken ... it took three months, but she got better.



Dr Vincent and his grandma Rianita. Source:Supplied

"It was such a big thing for me – it felt like one of the biggest achievements of my life. How many people can say that what they do for work has a direct, significant impact on the people they love?"

Dr Vincent had always dreamt of being a scientist, but after witnessing first-hand how his discovery could change lives, he realised he needed to use it to help others.

Thankfully, the university allowed him to maintain control of the intellectual property, and in 2016 he launched his immune-boosting supplements company **Renovatio**, which means "new life" in Latin.

However, the now 30-year-old said it was a "struggle" at first to wrap his head around the transition from the academic to the commercial world, although his inexperience ended up being a strength.

"Maybe it is a good thing I'm so naive when it comes to the business world because I have that enthusiasm and I'm not jaded enough to think we cant do it so don't even bother trying," he said.

The products were initially sold on the company's website and in various pharmacies and health-food stores, but last May Dr Vincent began a conversation with Woolworths.

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@paperkitties reviews our #ActivatedPhenolics: I felt my monthly migraine creeping up on me, the intensity was increasing by the minute, so I decided to pop one supplement and see how it goes. Miraculously, it went away within 30 minutes and now I'm sold!! Yup.. all that happened in a span of one week. I have never looked back since. These days, I start my day with a glass of Activated Phenolics. When my workload gets heavier or I feel a migraine coming, I pop "an apple a day" supplement to keep the pain at bay. #AnAppleADay #Migraine #PMS

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He had his first formal meeting with the supermarket giant in October – and at exactly 4.45pm on January 3 this year, he received an email confirming Woolies would stock his products.

The first shipment to Woolworths includes around 32,000 units with a retail value of around \$1.1 million, with the year's allocation representing \$5 million in value.

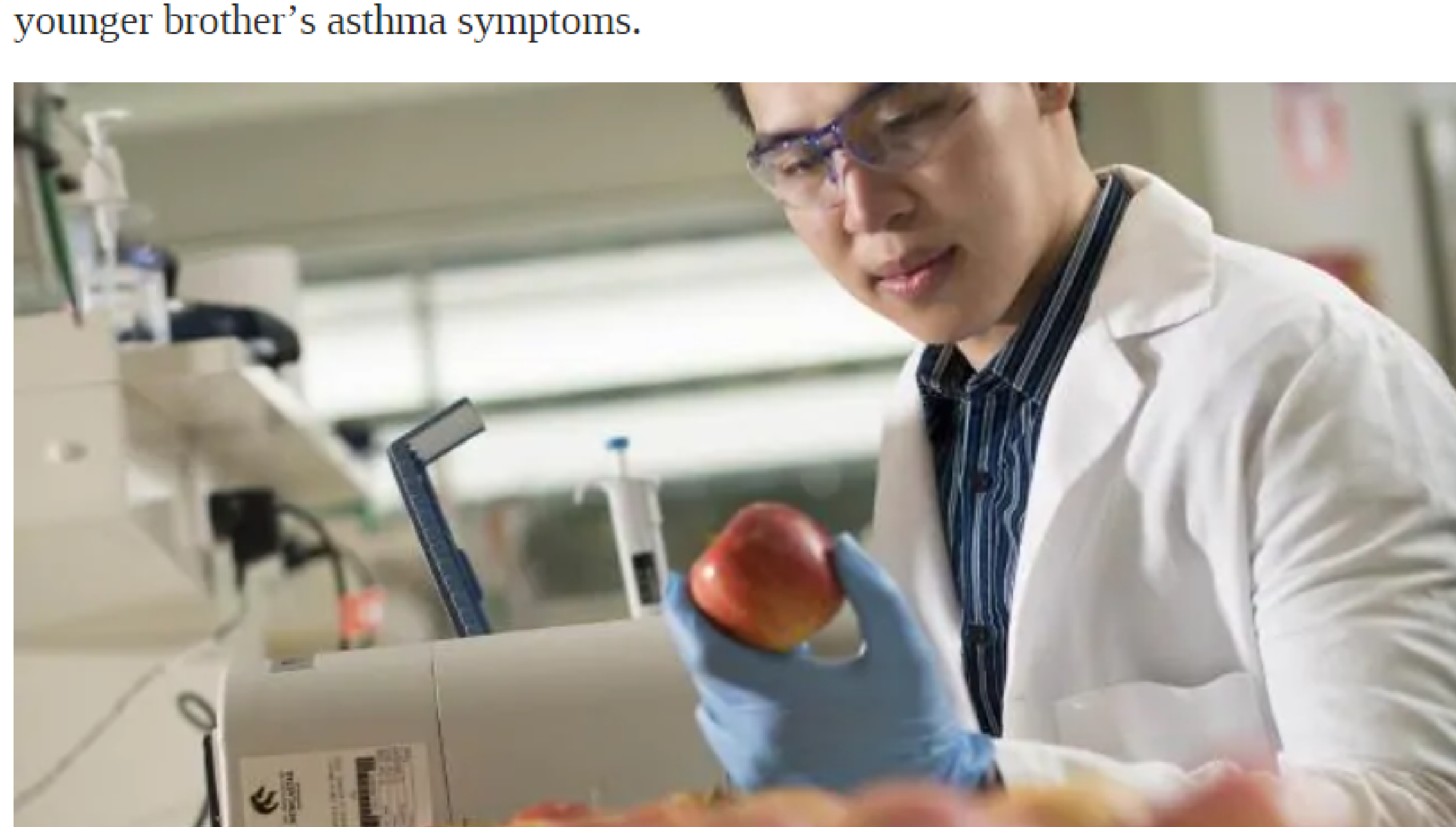
"It is game changing – it was such a big milestone on a personal level as well as on a company level, and I would describe it as surreal," he said.

"I still can't comprehend the reality that the next time I go to Woolies to buy milk and eggs I'll see my baby there when I pass the vitamin aisle."

He said the apples used in the supplements were sourced from regional NSW and every element of the products – right down to the packaging – were 100 per cent Australian made.

As for Dr Vincent's grandmother, she's still not had surgery – but her condition has improved so dramatically that last year she even took up line dancing.

The supplements have helped Dr Vincent's own rosacea as well as eased his younger brother's asthma symptoms.



Dr Vincent discovered the technology during his time at the University of Newcastle. Source:Supplied

A Woolworths spokeswoman told news.com.au the company was thrilled to stock Renovatio's potent antioxidant activated phenolics powder and potent antioxidant an apple a day supplement in stores nationally from May 1.

"At Woolworths we are continually reviewing and refining our offer in store to ensure we are stocking the items our customers want to see," the spokeswoman said.

"We know many of our customers are interested in specialised vitamin supplements, and we're excited to be able to add the Renovatio vitamin brand to our supplement range to meet this demand."

