



## Plant-Based Diet Made Me Healthier While I Saved Thousands on Insurance

By Bill Patterson  
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I have always been an athlete. From a young age, my mother would place my two brothers and me in any sports activity that was available. I grew up playing baseball, football, basketball, soccer, and running track. In high school, I was recruited to play football as a linebacker and told to gain weight. During this time, I worked part-time in an ice cream shop and would consume one milkshake every hour trying to pack on the pounds. I went from weighing 165 pounds to 215 pounds. My diet was filled with high fat, high sugar foods so I could maintain this weight.

I went on to play college football, where my weight reached 240 pounds. I was training with my team and felt I was in great shape. Following college, I started a business and a family. The weight was tough to get off. I tried every diet on the market losing weight at first, but gaining it right back when off the diet. I was always hungry and frustrated. I continued an exercise program, but it did little to control my weight.

Eventually, my health began to suffer. My joints ached, my feet burned, my cholesterol was too high, my blood work was off, and my heart and lungs showed signs of wear. I was still exercising at the gym and riding my bike, but I felt horrible. All the doctors would do is prescribe more medication. I finally hit my breaking point, when my wife retired and we lost our health coverage. Trying to find a health carrier, I was told I was uninsurable with an individual plan and would have to join a group to get group coverage. I ended up paying \$2,790 a month to cover three of us!

I had enough. I started looking into eating plans that I could sustain. A friend and fellow cyclist and I discovered Dr. Joel Fuhrman's *Eat to Live* program. I began a plant-based diet but wondered how long I could stay on task. I also began to research vegetarian and vegan lifestyles. I came across the documentary *Forks Over Knives* and my life changed. I made the commitment to follow a vegan diet and have never looked back. *Forks Over Knives* showed me *how* and *why* this eating plan worked. I loved the recipes provided and have now been on a plant-based diet for 11

months! In 6 months I lost 40 pounds. I feel better than I can ever remember. I am stronger and fitter than I was when competing in football. The response from friends and coworkers has been overwhelming. I can eat until satisfied and never find myself hungry, cranky, or fatigued.

The highlight of this lifestyle came when my doctor called with the results of my recent blood work. It was perfect! My former doctor had told me it would be impossible for me to alter my cholesterol levels without statin medication, but I proved him wrong! My monthly health insurance premiums are now \$809, saving me about \$2,000 a month. I am taking no prescription medications whatsoever. I can honestly say I owe my health to a plant-based diet!