



I Went Plant-Based for Glaucoma. Losing 110 Pounds Was a Surprise Bonus

By Sandra Krebs
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I've had a complicated relationship with food my whole life. I grew up in a Sicilian family. One of the few ways the women in my family knew how to express affection was by feeding people, and they were good at it! So it wasn't that surprising when I grew up to become a chef. With lots of practice, I eventually achieved success and received awards for my work.

I had a real love-hate relationship with my career. Being a chef is very demanding: It involves long hours, nights, weekends, and holidays. But I was good at it! So, my career added new layers of complication to my relationship with food. In addition to being a way to express love and affection, it was my way to make a living, it was art, and it was a great source of pride.

Treating Glaucoma with Diet

In 2017, I had two scary episodes in which my vision blacked out. I was diagnosed with glaucoma. In an attempt to naturally control the inflammation in my body—and to avoid taking expensive medication every day—I decided to embrace a plant-based diet, which I'd heard could help with inflammation.

Within months of going plant-based, my glaucoma receded. Today it is completely under control without any medication. I've been asymptomatic for about two years.

The decision for me to go WFPB was all about preserving my vision, but I also lost 110 pounds in the process—a pretty big bonus.

Although being a chef complicated my relationship with food over the years, it also has given me a huge advantage in transitioning to a WFPB diet. I don't mind cooking something for just me, and I don't struggle to come up with [recipe ideas](#), which seem to be two of the biggest barriers to going WFPB for many people. I love being able to share recipes and ideas with people who are struggling to get started or who are looking for new recipes to add to their repertoire.

The Bigger Picture

For decades, before I stopped eating all animal products, I tried to support what I believed were sustainable farming methods, and I subscribed to the "one bad day" theory of raising animals for food (i.e., that you could raise animals humanely and help them lead natural lives so that they had just "one bad day," at the very end). I guess when I was still participating in the system it was hard for me to allow myself to acknowledge the part I was playing in the suffering.

But after giving up animal products for health reasons, I found that I allowed myself to take in the enormity of the suffering of farmed animals and the negative impact it has on the [environment](#).

My relationship with food is still complicated, and I'm not going to lie, I still miss artisan cheese. But I am finding a whole new way to love myself and all other sentient beings with the way I cook, eat, and live. I'd like to give a big shout-out to the folks on the [Forks Over Knives Official Plant-Based Group](#). The people who participate and share recipes and their experiences are sweet and encouraging, and they have been a big help throughout my journey.

Ready to get started? Check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path. To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#).