



I'm Reversing Metabolic Syndrome on a Plant-Based Diet

By Kent Manning
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As a young schoolteacher in the 1980s and early 1990s, I completed several Olympic-distance triathlons. I stopped competing in these events when my wife and I had twins in 1995. At that time, I was reasonably trim and fit at 185 pounds.

Life was busy with school and raising the kids. Eating became a way of de-stressing. I loved eating prime-cut beef and chicken breasts in dishes such as chili, stew, and meatball soup. And there was always something to snack on in the teachers' lounge—especially on Fridays! I gradually gained weight over the years.

My family doctor, who had known me since I was a teenager, noticed my weight creeping up over the years. He would remind me, gently (at first): “If it doesn't grow from the ground, don't eat it.” I heard this time and time again during my visits and I just wouldn't take his advice.

The Wake-Up Call

That all changed shortly after the Super Bowl in February of 2014. On Super Bowl Sunday, I had eaten the typical game-day foods: chili, wings, and ribs. Later that week, I happened to have a doctor's appointment scheduled for my yearly checkup. I weighed in at 272 pounds. A few days later during my follow-up appointment, my doctor reviewed my bloodwork and diagnosed me with metabolic syndrome, a condition characterized by excess fat around the waist, high triglycerides, and high cholesterol. (Fortunately, my [blood pressure](#) was not elevated.)

This diagnosis was my wake-up call. I decided that week to start eliminating red meat, cutting down on dairy, and eating less overall to try and lose weight. One year later, I had lost 30 pounds. But I'd hit a plateau at 242 pounds. I stayed at that weight for the next three years, despite my efforts to lose more.

Then, in fall of 2018, I watched the [Forks Over Knives](#) documentary and read [The China Study](#), [Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease](#), and [The Starch Solution](#). The information I gleaned convinced me to begin a whole-food, plant-based, no-oil way of eating. I went all-in on

Oct. 18, 2018.

Endless Energy on a Plant-Based Diet

Immediately after going whole-food, plant-based, I felt even better than I had after my initial 30-pound weight loss a few years earlier. I found that I had more energy, fewer mood swings, and better sleep. And I could ride my bike forever!

Follow-up tests with my doctor showed that I was able to bring my biomarkers (triglycerides and cholesterol) down to a normal range. Over 18 months, I lost another 22 pounds and have now reached 220 pounds. WFPB was just the ticket.

It's also taught me how to prepare delicious meals for myself. My favorite breakfast is uncooked rolled oats and fruit such as papaya, mango, red grapes, blueberries, and strawberries.

One of my go-to lunches is a sandwich with whole grain bread, no-oil hummus, spinach or kale, tomato, onion, and pickle. I really like making my own tacos with homemade pico de gallo, colorful vegetables, tempeh, onions, brown rice, and pinto beans. I've been dabbling in making my own sauces, including a cilantro-lime sauce that adds to the great flavor of my tacos. My favorite dinner is Broccolini, mushrooms, carrots, red peppers, and sweet potatoes or white potatoes. Food is such a fun adventure now! It also helps having a partner who also eats WFPB. We cook together and have great fun preparing meals for our non-WFPB friends and relatives.

I will continue to eat this way for the rest of my life, as I feel just great. So if you're reading this and aren't on the WFPB diet, I encourage you to give it a try. I believe that you will notice the changes right away. In the words of Dean Ornish, MD: Eat well, exercise more, stress less, and love more.

Ready to get started? Check out our [Plant-Based Primer](#) to learn more about adopting a whole-food, plant-based diet.