



We've Lost 195 Pounds Combined Since Going Plant-Based

By Stephen Steinbach
October 07 2020

I grew up in an unhealthy vegetarian household. My mom, dad, and I were all overweight. We ate a lot of highly processed foods, such as soy burgers and dogs. I decided to start eating meat in my teens. As a young adult, I tried a [no-carb diet](#), lost a few pounds, and thought I'd found the answer.

I quickly bought into the myth that the key to weight loss was eating lots of animal protein and very few carbohydrates. I turned into a full-on ravenous carnivore, eating nothing but meat and dairy, and slowly yo-yoing upward—losing weight, only to gain more back—to a whopping 340 pounds. I felt increasingly frustrated, guilty, and angry, even contemplating suicide on several occasions because of hopelessness I felt. I conceded that if the anti-carb science was solid, then I was doomed genetically.

Sonia had also adopted a low-carb diet and restricted herself to mouse-size portions. During that time, she gained 50 pounds. She also developed severe rashes on her face, suffered weeks-long bouts of constipation, and was tired all the time due to a lack of nourishment. But like me, she'd resigned herself to believing that this was her genetic disposition. She concluded that we needed to love ourselves the way we were, because we believed our fate was a predetermined outcome.

A Whole New Outlook

Then, in 2018, we watched [Forks Over Knives](#) and realized we'd been approaching it all wrong. We were both so moved by what we learned about [whole-food, plant-based](#) eating that we changed our way of life practically overnight. It was an easy decision to make, because we recognized that up until then we'd both been suppressing what we knew to be right and true. WFPB living aligned with our ethical and moral convictions regarding animals and the planet, convictions we'd ignored until that point.

Still, I figured we'd have to eat tasteless and bland food as a trade-off for being healthy. What surprised us (I mean really surprised us) was how easy, satisfying, and fun it was to be on this side of the fence: It really is greener over here! The momentary cravings for foods we'd previously indulged in were easily offset by how great we felt, how clear our heads were, and how awesome our food actually tasted. Once we'd eliminated added salt, sugar, oil, and highly processed ingredients from our diets, we couldn't believe we'd ever eaten that garbage or that our lives had revolved around those tastes before. We realized how delicious whole plant foods can be on their own.

After just a few days of transitioning, migraines, which I'd gotten weekly before, vanished. Within a month, Sonia's face cleared up completely.

Effortless Weight Loss

Since we went plant-based, I've dropped 150 pounds, while Sonia's lost 45 pounds—and we're not even trying.

This transformation has impacted our lives in so many ways. We're more active than ever before, planning trips with an emphasis on hiking, biking, or exploring, instead of trying out the latest and greatest restaurants featured on TV. We're running 10Ks in under an hour and I can't remember ever feeling so good, looking so thin, or enjoying life with such awareness. We're both prescription-free.

The change has been so profound and noticeable that Sonia and I have inspired members of our family to go WFPB, and they now have similar success stories of their own. Today we coach others in our town on adopting this lifestyle. To top it all off, I've gone back to school to get my degree in plant-based nutrition from Cornell University, because I want to share this knowledge with everyone I can.

(continued)

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Our Tips for Going Plant-Based as a Couple

- 1) Keep your home temptation-free. It's important that our house is a pure zone. It keeps you on track even when you're not feeling motivated. Everything in our kitchen is no added sugar, no oil, no animal products.
- 2) Cook together. If you involve your partner in planning and making meals, they'll be a lot more excited to do this. Together, we feel more excited about trying new foods and flavors.
- 3) Encourage, but don't nag. You can't make them want it. Give compliments and positive reinforcement. But at the end of the day, you just have to lead by example.
- 4) Know your partner's weaknesses and help plan for it. I was eating tubs of peanuts every night at first, which are whole plant foods but very high in fat. Sonia got me peanuts in the shell instead, and it took me all night to eat what I normally would have eaten in five minutes.

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](#).