



# A Diabetes Diagnosis Shocked Me Into Changing My Diet. The Results Have Been Incredible

By Miranda Haes  
January 12 2021

From childhood through my 20s, I was thin and could eat whatever I wanted without gaining weight. When I did start to gain weight in my 30s, I thought that was just a normal part of getting older. All in all, I ate a fairly typical Western diet, with some type of animal protein at every meal. On an average day, I'd have [eggs](#) at breakfast, chicken or a burger at lunch, and steak for dinner. I ate cheese multiple times a day, and drank soda or sweet tea regularly. I occasionally ate small amounts of fruit, but I rarely ate vegetables.

In 2010, I was diagnosed with [high blood pressure](#). Then, in 2012, I was diagnosed with fatty liver disease. The diagnoses just kept coming over the next few years: sleep apnea, eczema, and kidney stones. But at my twice-yearly physicals, my doctor always told the same thing—that I looked fine and had nothing to worry about. He said to just watch what I ate and to keep taking my prescribed medications and all would be well. Well, it wasn't, and I wasn't getting any better.

So in July 2019 I decided to see a new doctor. At my preliminary appointment, I had blood work done. During my 50-minute drive home, I received an email that my results were available. I pulled over and opened my email. There was a message attached to the first blood sample result, my A1C. It was at 6.6—the early stages of [type 2 diabetes](#). I was devastated. I never thought this would happen to me.

Due to my other conditions, the doctor said that it was imperative that I immediately start taking metformin once a day. I was determined to find other solutions that wouldn't require my being on medication forever.

## Studying Up on Nutrition

My journey toward better health began immediately after my diabetes diagnosis, when I adopted a Mediterranean diet. I cut out red meat and focused on eating more whole foods. A couple months later, I came across the documentary *What the Health*. The film piqued the interest of my inner student. I wanted to know more about food and how it impacts our bodies. Then I watched *Forks Over Knives*. This solidified it for me.

In August 2019 I transitioned to the whole-food, plant-based way of eating. [Cheese](#) was a hard habit to break, because it had been such a big part of my diet before. And it was a challenge finding whole-food, plant-based options when going out to eat with friends or traveling for work. I learned early on that I needed to make sure I packed a small cooler with necessities, in case I found myself in a situation where the food options didn't fit my new lifestyle.

I ate a lot of whole grains, nuts, seeds, and fruit. (I was so surprised that I could [eat as much fruit as I wanted](#) and still lose weight!) I learned to cook and use spices strategically, opening up a world of food choices that are fulfilling and delicious.

## Health Gains and Weight Loss

Within three months of going plant-based, I'd lost 20 pounds. By June 2020, I'd lost 40 pounds, and my doctor took me off the metformin.

Now, a year and a half after making the switch, I have reversed all of the diseases and conditions that I'd been living with, from type 2 diabetes to eczema to sleep apnea. I was able to discontinue all prescription medications over six months ago. I've been able to maintain my 45-pound weight loss.

My husband has been the most amazing supporter throughout this entire journey, and he's now adopted this way of eating, too.

(continued)

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Recently, I enrolled in the Plant-based Nutrition Certification program through eCornell to gain a deeper understanding of the science behind whole-food, plant-based nutrition. This has truly become a permanent lifestyle change. My only regret is that it didn't happen sooner.

*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](#).*