



# I Went Plant-Based, Said Goodbye to 100 Pounds, Prediabetes, and My CPAP Machine

By Rick Thompson  
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Prior to starting my plant-based diet journey, I didn't think that a meal was truly a meal unless it contained meat. It would not have been unheard of for me to sit down and eat a pound of bacon in one sitting. In July 2020 I found myself sitting at 265 pounds. My clothes did not fit. I had been diagnosed with [prediabetes](#). I needed to wear a CPAP machine to treat my sleep apnea. My body hurt, and I was generally depressed about how far I had let myself go. As much as possible, I avoided catching a glimpse of myself in mirrors or being photographed. I knew I had to lose weight, and a lot of it, but the thought just overwhelmed me.

## Giving Plant-Based a Try

One day while looking for something to watch on TV, I came across the [Forks Over Knives film](#). I thought that I might as well give that a try, since nothing else had worked. I'm an all-or-nothing type of person, so I dove head first into the transition. I immediately stopped eating meat, seafood, dairy, oil, and highly processed foods.

Within a few weeks, I started experiencing pretty consistent weight loss. But what surprised me the most was how my body felt: I had lost weight in the past, but I always felt bad during the process. This was the first time that I actually felt better. Within the first week of transitioning I noticed that my knees no longer hurt when I climbed the stairs. The swelling in my ankles went away. I had a much greater range of motion in my shoulders. It was at this point that I realized this would be how I lived my life from now on.

## A Brighter Future

When I first started eating this way, I set a goal of losing 100 pounds, but I didn't set any deadline for myself. I decided that, as long as I was making progress, it didn't really matter when I hit my target weight. Almost two years after I started eating a plant-based diet, I hit my goal the day before my son's wedding, when I weighed in at 165 pounds!

Eating a plant-based diet has most definitely changed my life. I can now see a future, where before I really didn't. I have developed a real love of cooking and began gardening and growing some of my own food, which is just wonderful. I no longer need to wear a CPAP machine at night, because I am no longer being treated for sleep apnea. I feel better about the imprint I am making on [our planet](#) by not eating animals. And I have much more energy now.

When I started eating this way, I began to walk and found real joy in my time on the various trails. I am now making plans to walk the 500-mile pilgrimage known as the Camino de Santiago in Spain. That has been on my bucket list for many years; there would have been no way I could have done this at my old weight.

When people see me now after having not seen me for a few years, they are amazed at the physical transformation. When I tell them how I did it I often hear things like, "Oh, I could never do that," or "I couldn't give up cheese." I tell them that I thought the same things and that if I could do without then I was positive they could as well. The thing that really helped me was to reframe how I look at things. Instead of dwelling on things that I had to give up, I concentrated on things that I was gaining: better health; delicious recipes; new clothes; and longevity. Transitioning to a plant-based diet has been one of the best gifts I could have ever given myself!

*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](#).*