



I Have So Much More Energy After Going from Vegan to Whole-Food-Plant-Based

By Ruzielle Ganuelas
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Three years ago, my fiancé and I went vegan after watching *The Game Changers*. The advantages of a plant-based diet were indisputable, and I was inspired by the athletes they featured. They fueled themselves with nothing but plants and had the bodies and strength of gods. If Arnold Schwarzenegger could become an herbivore, why not me?

I'm naturally skinny, so weight issues were never a concern for me. However, headaches, arthritis, hunger pangs, mood swings, debilitating periods, lethargy, and [depression](#) were omnipresent in my life. I drank coffee all day to function. On my worst pain days, I took as many as four Advils a day, and my primary care physician warned me that this would eventually lead to liver problems. I knew I had to change and fast. Most people that I knew in their 20s and 30s were already dealing with health problems, and I wanted to buck the trend.

Lessons on a Vegan Diet

I didn't realize how unwell I was until I became vegan. In four days, all my aches and pains disappeared. My energy levels soared, to the point that I was able to quit drinking coffee—something I never thought I could do. With my newfound energy, I joined a gym and fully embraced a healthy lifestyle. I felt like I was given a brand-new body in my mid-30s.

Earlier this year, I began to lean heavily on [highly processed](#) vegan foods for convenience. I had a demanding career and didn't feel like I had the time to prep and cook whole plant foods. Plus, I told myself that I was supporting the larger plant-based cause by buying the ultra-processed vegan products showing up in the market.

But I noticed that the flood of energy I'd experienced since going vegan three years earlier was waning. I found myself reaching for more tea to stay energized. I started to skip the gym.

Feeling Like a Kid Again

We've all heard of that saying, "Let food be thy medicine." I wanted to see for myself if going whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) could help me get in the best shape of my life before I turn 38. Hefty goals, but I had nothing to lose, so I launched myself into WFPB research. I rewatched *What the Health*, *Forks Over Knives*, and *The Game Changers*. I listened to Rip Esselstyn's podcasts. I read *Fiber Fueled* by [Dr. Will Bulsiewicz](#), *Natural Diet for Folks Who Eat* by Dick Gregory, *The Proof is in The Plants* by Simon Hill, *Superlife* by Darin Olien, *Finding Ultra* by Rich Roll and *Eat and Run* by Scott Jurek. Most importantly, I threw away all the highly processed foods in my fridge and pantry and loaded up on organic produce.

The effects of going WFPB were immediate and astounding. On Day Two, after a long workday, I found myself brimming with energy. I hadn't been on a bike in 22 years, but suddenly, I wanted nothing more than to cycle for hours. So I went indoor-cycling. I did the same thing the next day, and the day after that. I ended up cycling after work for 13 consecutive days. When I finally skipped a day, it was because a scheduling conflict got in the way, not because I was tired or sore. I felt like a kid again. I was bursting with so much vitality that I made it a goal to log 100 cycling miles for the month. On Day 30 of eating WFPB, I logged 153 miles on the bike.

I'll be 38 soon, and I'm in the best shape of my life. I now get up by 5 a.m. to work out for up to two hours (cardio, strength-training, and/or yoga), and then work for about 10 hours each day. My strength has increased. After eight or 10 miles on the bike, I do battle ropes, kettlebells, and TRX suspension, just to keep up with myself. On top of that, our weekly grocery bill went down by around \$40.

Today some of my favorite meals and snacks are BBQ lentil "caviar," gochugaru-spiced coleslaw, Filipino mushroom tofu sisig,

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cauliflower wings, Korean bulgogi tempeh tacos with butter lettuce, to name just a few! I love to eat.

Food truly is medicine. I healed myself and turned back my biological clock on nothing but plants.

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](#).