



I Struggled With Obesity My Whole Life—Until I Went Plant-Based

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I began struggling with [obesity](#) before the age of 10. Even though I ate moderate amounts of food, I couldn't seem to stop putting on weight. I spent decades stuck in a cycle of yo-yo dieting, losing and regaining hundreds of pounds. At my heaviest, I weighed 420 pounds. I had hypertension, [acid reflux](#), liver complications, respiratory issues, and prediabetes.

I was desperate to avoid going on prescription medications, because I'd seen my father go down that road, and he ended up needing medications his whole life. I even found ways to "cheat" on my A1C test by fasting extra long just to avoid having to go on medications. I knew something had to change, but I didn't know where to begin.

For 17 years I was a single mom; it was just my sons and me, and it was hard to find the time and resources to prepare us healthy meals. But in 2019 I met Justin, my now husband. With his support and encouragement, I was able to finally prioritize my health after giving birth to our son in 2021. I read *The Future of Nutrition* and *The China Study* by T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., and those books completely changed how I thought about food and health. I remember crying, not just because the books were eye-opening but because I realized I had to go plant-based, and I was scared of making such a huge change. Justin saw me struggling and said, "Let's do it as a family."

One Meal at a Time

The switch didn't happen overnight. We took it one meal at a time, and it took about 13 months to fully transition to a plant-based lifestyle. But as we gradually made the shift, I found myself easily losing weight—100 pounds in the first six months, even before I began exercising. I started with gentle movement through walking and [yoga](#), then added weightlifting, Pilates, and barre classes. I noticed that anytime I ate animal products before a workout, I'd have significantly less energy and sometimes I ended up feeling sick. With plant-based foods, it was the exact opposite: I felt more energized and recovered faster, and I wanted to eat before every workout. At that point it became obvious to me that I wanted to eat plant-based all the time.

4 Years in and Thriving

I've now been plant-based for four years. I like keeping meals and snacks simple and easy. I'm a huge fan of hummus. I love beans and rice, or a whole grain wrap with rice and veggies. I also returned to one of my childhood passions: baking. Now I make vegan versions of my favorite recipes, and my family loves them even more than the originals.

I now do several hours of movement a day and feel more alive than ever. I love being active. In total, I've lost more than 270 pounds naturally, without drugs, surgery, or supplements. My blood pressure, cholesterol, liver function, A1C are all in a healthy range. My acid reflux and respiratory issues are completely gone. I'm 44, and this is the healthiest I've ever been.

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](#).