



At 28 Years Old, I Was on Nearly 10 Medications. Then I Changed My Diet

By Sawani Soman
2026-01-22 12:02:00



My relationship with food was established long before I understood health. I grew up eating fried foods, refined carbohydrates, dairy, sugary treats, and frequent takeout and fast food. In my early 20s, that pattern only deepened: Eating out was normal, convenience came first, and vegetables were more of an afterthought than a meaningful part of my meals.

By my late 20s, I was living with the consequences. When I was just 28, my doctors placed me on medications for hypertension and severe [GERD](#) and digestive issues. I was also diagnosed with [prediabetes](#) and clinical depression—struggling physically, mentally, and emotionally. My symptoms continued to escalate. I developed a gastric ulcer; my doctors became concerned that it was worsening and warned that, over time, it could potentially become cancerous if left untreated. They started to discuss surgery, which only increased my fear and anxiety.

Around the same time, I was diagnosed with [sleep apnea](#). I struggled to breathe properly, especially at night, and woke up exhausted despite hours in bed. I was prescribed a CPAP machine to help at night, but my breathing often felt labored even during the day. There were moments when I genuinely worried I might be having a heart attack. I lived in constant fear.

At my lowest point, I was taking nearly 10 different medications to manage all my conditions. Instead of feeling better, I felt overwhelmed and disconnected from my body. I knew I couldn't accept a future defined by

escalating prescriptions and procedures. I wanted to truly heal, not just manage my symptoms.

A Seed of Hope

While desperately searching for answers, I came across Dr. Dean Ornish's book *Reversing Heart Disease*. I wasn't diagnosed with heart disease, but I had shortness of breath every day and feared that something was wrong with my heart. Reading that book gave me something I hadn't felt in a long time: hope that my health trajectory could change.

I began reading everything I could about whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) living, and that's how I found Forks Over Knives. At first, the notion of a [WFPB lifestyle](#) felt too challenging. Meat and dairy had been a major part of my life for years. But I knew two things for certain: I didn't want surgery, and I didn't want my health to keep declining. I felt like I had no other option but to try something radically different.

I watched the *Forks Over Knives* documentary and began using the Forks Over Knives recipe app. The app became a daily companion, helping me find approachable recipes I could cook at home. My mom supported me throughout this transition, and together we began preparing nourishing plant-based meals.

I didn't make the switch overnight. Moving from a diet centered on meat, dairy, and fried foods to a fully WFPB lifestyle was a massive change physically, emotionally, and culturally. I focused on consistency rather than perfection, trusting the process even when progress felt slow.

Within a few months, my body and my mind began responding in ways I never expected.

Results Beyond the Scale

Around three months into this lifestyle, my health markers started improving significantly. My blood pressure dropped, my blood sugar stabilized, and my mood began lifting as my energy returned. Although my

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January 22 2026

doctors were initially skeptical that I would be able to reduce or eliminate any medications, especially since I was obese at the time, they agreed to closely monitor my progress. As I lost weight and my labs continued improving, they reduced my medications one by one. Over the span of roughly five months, I was able to safely discontinue nearly all of them.

I went on to lose over 100 pounds. Even more meaningful: The conditions that once controlled my life began to resolve. My blood sugar normalized, and I no longer have prediabetes. My blood pressure returned to a healthy range. My inflammation decreased, and my mental health improved. My sleep and breathing improved until I no longer needed a CPAP machine. GERD took the longest, but within about six months, those symptoms finally resolved too.

5 Years Later

Today, I've been free of these diagnoses—and off all medications—for more than five years.

This lifestyle didn't just help me lose weight. It gave me my breath back. It cleared the mental fog. It helped me trust my body again. Now I move daily, eat with joy instead of fear, and feel grounded in my choices.

To deepen my understanding, I completed the [Forks Over Knives Cooking Course](#), which strengthened my confidence in the kitchen and reinforced the “why” behind this way of eating. I'm still learning, growing, and refining my lifestyle every day.

The day I went off my last medication, I made a promise to myself: If this lifestyle could help me reclaim my health, I wouldn't keep it to myself. Now I support and guide people who are seeking natural healing through a WFPB lifestyle. I'm deeply grateful to share my story so others know that healing is possible.