



After a Lifetime of Poor Health, I Lost 120 Pounds and Regained My Life

By Angela Montanez
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As a child, I was diagnosed with a chronic autoimmune liver disease. Doctors told me that I would probably not live past the age of 10, and would certainly not live longer than 20 years. They told my parents to begin preparing for my funeral. I was so sick that I was even gifted a wish from the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

I somehow survived through my childhood and early adulthood. In my early thirties, my autoimmune liver disease progressed to cirrhosis. Besides this new diagnosis and disease, the harsh steroids I had to take and my poor eating habits had left me battling my weight for a good portion of my adult life. At this point, I weighed 245 pounds and couldn't walk half a block without having a severe asthma attack. I became desperate and driven to save my life.

My father watched *Forks Over Knives* one afternoon and urged me to watch it too. I watched the documentary and absorbed the message. I jumped into learning the science behind food and health, and started reading, researching, and watching other documentaries and wellness videos on YouTube.

I found a naturopathic doctor to help me, and after switching to a [plant-based diet](#), I lost about 120 pounds over the course of two years. My main priority had been to lower inflammation in my liver and the rest of my body, and I succeeded! I lowered my inflammation markers to nearly normal levels. The weight loss was a very happy side effect, and it was great to feel full of energy and good health.

I used to regularly overeat and indulged especially in dairy products like ice cream and cheesecake, which meant I also frequently felt tired and sick. Now that I've kicked those habits, I've never felt better. I am mindful of what I do and eat, and take care to enjoy the food that gives me good health. I especially love soups now, especially in winter, since they're so hearty, warm, and comforting.

I was featured in *People* magazine's annual "Half Their Size" issue for 2016, and I'm so honored and happy that my story might help other people. I would not be standing here today, alive, if it weren't for the knowledge and insight that was shared through Forks Over Knives.

Thank you!

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via *People*.[/caption]