



## **PLANT-BASED PRIMER: THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO STARTING A PLANT-BASED DIET**

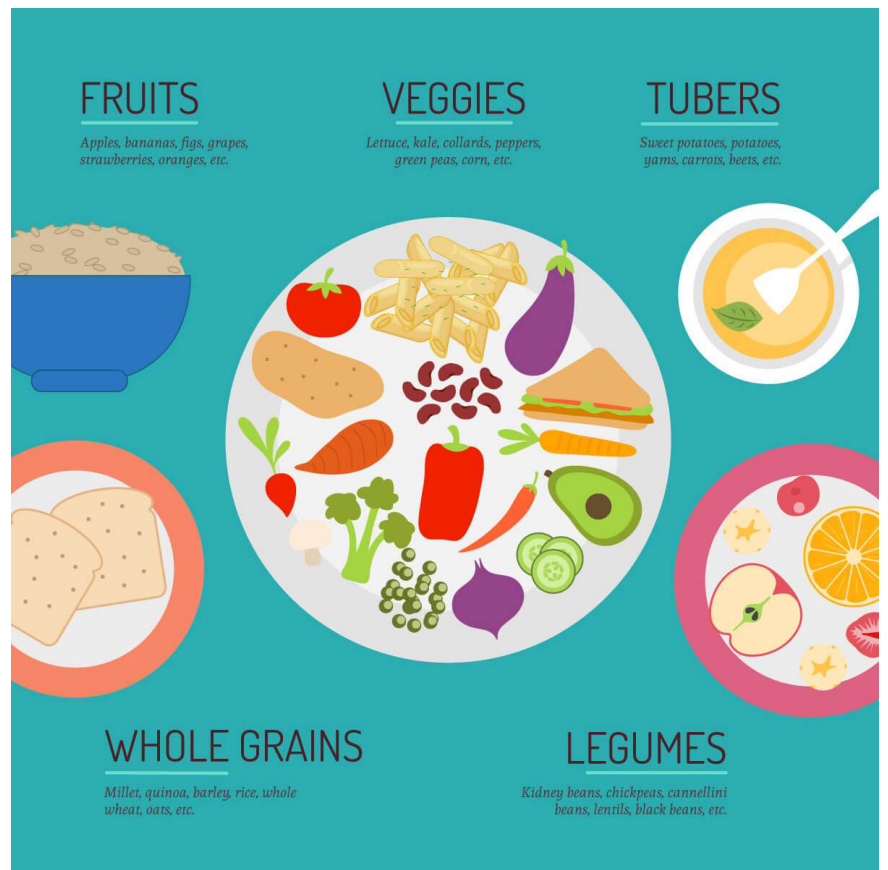
By Naomi Imatome-Yun

Have you seen *Forks Over Knives* and now want to eat to prevent chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes and heart disease (while helping the planet)? Or maybe you are suffering already from an autoimmune condition, obesity, or other health problems and want to get started on a plant-based diet to reverse or improve your condition. Regardless of the reason, congratulations on embarking on a plant-based diet. It's one of the best things you can do for your own health!

Here's a beginner's guide to getting started. First, don't think of this as a deprivation diet. The food is delicious, and you can enjoy plant-based versions of the foods you already love. **Focus on the positives!**

Once you get started, it'll be easier to keep going. As Dr. Craig McDougall says, "Once you have more energy, have lost some weight, or your stomach pain has disappeared, then it's easier to continue eating healthfully. One of the best motivators for people transitioning to plant-based eating comes from how great they feel and how much more than can do in their lives once they're feeling healthier."

### **What to Eat on a Whole-Food, Plant-Based Diet**



A whole-food, plant-based diet is centered on whole, unrefined, or minimally refined plants. It's a diet based on fruits, vegetables, tubers, whole grains, and legumes; and it excludes or minimizes meat (including chicken and fish), dairy products, and eggs, as well as highly refined foods like bleached flour, refined sugar, and oil. Read "[What is the Forks Over Knives Diet](#)" for a more detailed explanation by Dr. Alona Pulde and Dr. Matthew Lederman, co-authors of *The Forks Over Knives Plan*, and *Forks Over Knives Family*.

## Recipes to Make



## Most Popular Recipes of 2016

10 Snacks or Light Meals You Can Make in 5 Minutes

Soups and Stews

Pasta & Noodles

Wraps & Burgers

Amazing Grains

Baked & Stuffed

Experiment with revising your favorite recipes to make them plant-based. For example, replace the meat in your favorite chili with some extra beans, make veggie burgers instead of meat burgers, or make stir-fry with tofu instead of chicken.

Looking for a little guidance or instruction in learning to create delicious plant-based meals? Check out our [online Forks Meal Planner](#), [online cooking course](#), the [Forks Over Knives recipe app](#), or read *The Forks Over Knives Plan: A 4-Week Meal-by-Meal Makeover*.

## Other Helpful Resources

[5 Tips for Turning Healthy Behaviors Into Habits That Stick](#)

[Cooking for One: 5 Tips and 15 Recipes](#)

[Nutritionist's List: Stock up on These Healthy Low-Cost Staples](#)

[22 Healthy Foods to Stock Your Fridge](#)

## These Three Kitchen Tips Will Change the Way You Cook

### Not Ready to Jump in Cold Turkey?

For people who are not ready to dive 100 percent into plant-based eating right away, Dr. Craig McDougall has this useful recommendation: **"Add around 1,000 calories of legumes, whole grains, and starchy vegetables to your everyday routine.** These starchy foods keep you full and satisfied, so you'll naturally eat less of the animal products and processed foods that are making you sick." [Read more](#) of Dr. McDougall's tips.

Brian Wendel, founder of Forks Over Knives, encourages you not to "sweat the small stuff" and to look at the big picture instead: "Focus on the big changes like switching from meat, milk, and eggs to whole-plant foods. Such changes dramatically improve the nutritional composition of the foods you are eating, so this is where you will find the most noticeable and measurable improvements in your health."

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: It sounds expensive! I'm on a limited budget.**

Whole grains, potatoes, and beans are some of the most affordable bulk foods you can buy. Create meals around these staple items and you will spend less than you did on a meat-heavy diet.

#### Useful Reads:

[Nutritionist's List: Healthy Low-Cost Staples](#)  
[Strategies for Affordable Cooking and Eating](#)  
[How I Ate Well on \\$5 a Day](#)

**Q: What about eating at restaurants, traveling, or away from home?**

With a little planning, creativity, and flexibility, you won't have a hard time eating a plant-based diet while traveling or on the road. You can usually find fruit and dishes made with pasta, rice, and potatoes wherever you go.

#### Useful Reads:

Plant-Strong on the Road  
7 Tips for Succeeding on a Plant-Based Diet  
How to Eat Healthy in College

**Q: What about calcium, protein, or B12?**

Whole, plant-based foods contain *all* the essential nutrients (with the exception of **vitamin B12**) we need.

**Useful Reads:**

Why You Don't Need Dairy for Calcium  
Do Vegans and Vegetarians Get Enough Protein?  
7 Ways Milk and Dairy Products are Making You Sick

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