



## I Stopped Yo-Yo Dieting, Lost Weight, and Got Off Blood Pressure and ADD Meds with a WFPB Diet

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Over the past 30 years, my weight has cycled up and down from the 140s to the 180s. I would exercise off and on, and I tried Weight Watchers, the TOPS diet, and Nutrisystem. For the past 15 years, I had been taking Lisinopril for high blood pressure and Adderall for ADD.

In March of 2017, my blood work indicated that my cholesterol was 278! I told my doctor that I really wanted to take care of this with diet and not add any more medications to my list. All I could think of was that my mother had experienced her first heart attack while visiting me in New Jersey when she was about my age.

At the same time, we were doing the Engine 2 Rescue Challenge at the school where I work. I watched the *Forks Over Knives* documentary and made the switch. The weight literally began to fall off, and my cholesterol fell from 278 to 196 in just a few weeks. I joined an exercise class which I attend for an hour five days a week. I noticed I had more and more energy, and my skin and hair improved. My gums stopped bleeding. I was even feeling more focused at work. I felt great! I lost 45 pounds within the first six months.

Fast forward one year: I'm 58 years old and go in for a doctor appointment. The results? Hypertension: resolved! ADD: resolved! Cholesterol level: 167! No more meds needed!

It took some patience in the beginning, so I kept it very simple. I was never one to spend time in the kitchen, so my biggest challenge was meal prep, but I felt empowered after watching YouTube videos of Rip Esselstyn cleaning out the kitchen, grocery shopping, and even preparing family meals—where was Rip 20 years ago? Looking back, I feel guilty about the meals I used to feed my family.

These days I always have a week's worth of whole food ingredients available to grab and throw together quick meals, like fresh and frozen fruits and veggies, and a few baked or microwaved sweet potatoes to add to spinach or kale salad. When going out to dinner I bring a small Tupperware of homemade, oil-free dressing and a

baggie of nuts, seeds, and raisins to add to my salad—along with my favorite herbal tea.

We have a group at school and share recipes and a Facebook page that we all post on. To stay focused, I watch all the documentaries that are out there, read articles, and buy cookbooks. I also follow the FOK Facebook page and love reading all the amazing success stories. I find it easy to stay motivated because I feel so great!

The most difficult part of this journey is watching others suffer unnecessarily. Many people have been open to trying this and others not so much. However, there is no denying the results.

Personally, I needed to lose the weight, but my main goal from the beginning was to get off my meds and avoid that heart attack that I knew was just waiting to happen. Win-win!