



My Wife and I Shed a Combined 100 Pounds After Going Plant-Based

By Siddharth Bansal
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Together since high school, Siddharth and Nidhi grew up eating rich foods. But by the time Siddharth was 25, he weighed 375 pounds and had dangerously high cholesterol. Together, they decided to try a plant-based diet for weight loss.

My wife, Nidhi, and I met in high school, dated through college, and got married in 2001. We have both always been “foodies,” and I have always been heavy. Shortly after we got married, I was at my heaviest—375 pounds—and had an incident with acid reflux. My doctor told me that my [cholesterol levels](#) were dangerously high and, at 25, I was a “walking time bomb.”

I started following a [low-carb diet](#). On that diet, I couldn’t eat a lot of the starchy foods I loved, such as potatoes. Instead, I had to load up on protein, and I also had to work out a lot. Nidhi, always my biggest supporter, joined me in the diet. I did manage to drop 100 pounds on the low-carb diet, but I ended up gaining it back.

I went through this cycle multiple times, losing weight on low-carb diets but then gaining it again. After years of this, our physician introduced us to Forks Over Knives and the recipes on the website. In 2017, we watched the documentary. Our eyes opened. We decided not to treat this as a diet but to make it our lifestyle.

Adapting to Plant-Based Living

It was a fairly quick transition, though not without its challenges. There is a myth in Indian culture that food cannot taste good without oil, ghee, and heavy cream, and that food contains no nutrients without these things. We had to adapt old recipes to our new way of eating. After some trial and error, Nidhi mastered the art of cooking Indian food while adhering to the principles of a whole-food, plant-based diet.

Since January 2018, I have lost about 70 pounds and my cholesterol has dropped to within a healthy range. Nidhi has lost 25 pounds. We feel thrilled about our journey. Our friends and family are shocked by our transformations and admire our commitment.

We are eating more and still enjoying the cuisines we love. My wife is working on sharing our passion of cooking Indian food this way, and hoping that our story inspires other Indians (and Indian-food lovers) to try out this alternative.

We exercise regularly and have invested in equipment for our home and also have joined a gym to help with toning. It takes time for your body to recover from decades of being overweight, and I want to do it the right way and not rush into it.

Nidhi and I are nearing the second anniversary of going whole-food, plant-based and no longer have cravings for heavily processed and animal-based foods. We feel amazing and plan to continue this lifestyle indefinitely.