



## Once Bedridden with Chronic Inflammation, Now I'm Rock Climbing and Running 5Ks

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I spent the majority of the summer of 2017 in bed. I had debilitating chronic inflammation, joint pain, and heartburn. I'd been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation two years prior, and my episodes were getting worse. My digestive system constantly felt off; I was either nauseated or had a burning sensation in my stomach.

My primary doctor said it was probably just acid reflux and kept giving me different prescriptions and telling me to stay away from acidic foods. Nothing worked. I saw an allergist and a cardiologist, who ran numerous tests. No one could tell me why I felt so terrible. I was scared. I felt as though I was dying.

I began to think that I would never be healed from the chronic inflammation and pain. I felt awful that my daughter didn't have her mother present, and my husband, who is very active, was mourning the lifestyle he thought we would share together.

### Discovering the Whole-Food, Plant-Based Lifestyle

Then, one day, while browsing Netflix, I came across *Forks Over Knives*. As I watched the documentary, Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn really caught my attention. I have a strong family history of heart disease and have always been worried about my heart. I was immediately sold on the whole-food, plant-based, no-oil lifestyle.

I went to the library and checked out Dr. Esselstyn's *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* book and several WFPB cookbooks. I spent hours in the kitchen relearning how to cook. (I remember when I first started out, I saw a recipe for a carrot hot dog. I cracked up and asked, "How long do you have to be a vegan before a carrot tastes like a hot dog?" But they're actually really good!) For the first time in a long time, I felt hope.

### Dramatic Results

Within a year, my health improved dramatically. I lost 40 pounds in the first four months, without exercise.

(And I never count calories; I eat all the time, as my husband will tell you.) I hardly ever get heartburn, and my atrial fibrillation episodes are so rare that I've halved my medication. The way I feel now, I will never go back to a standard American diet.

My husband and I just shake our heads in disbelief thinking about how, not long ago, I was bedridden and now I'm rock climbing and running 5Ks. I would never go back. I am so blessed and grateful.