



Going Plant-Based Gave Me Back My Energy and Reversed My Mom's Diabetes

By Valarie Wyatt
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Plagued by a sleep disorder, Valarie Wyatt had been steadily gaining weight and losing energy for years—then she went plant-based, and the results were nearly instantaneous.

Three years ago, I was surrounded by family members with serious health issues and had a closet full of clothes that didn't fit. My father had a triple bypass in 2015, after living with heart disease and severe atherosclerosis. In addition, both he and my mom had been living with type 2 diabetes for more than 20 years, and my sister had just been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes as well. As for me, since 2006, I'd been experiencing a subtle but steady weight gain, accompanied by insomnia and fatigue, with occasional feelings of being overwhelmed.

Then one day I read a Forks Over Knives success story written by my co-worker [David de Hilster](#). I found the *Forks Over Knives* documentary and watched it immediately. Things finally made sense! I committed to a whole-food, plant-based diet that day and never looked back.

Near-Immediate Results on a Plant-Based Diet

My friends (one of whom is a dietitian) and family initially thought I had gone crazy: "How will you get your protein?" "What?! No oil?" But within a few days I could already see my old self returning. I had more energy and mental clarity, and I began sleeping well. After a couple of weeks, I woke up feeling as though I could run. I hadn't run in two years but decided to give it a shot. I hit the streets and felt so good I was shocked. After over an hour of running I decided to head home. I checked my pedometer: I had gone 8.3 miles and had beaten the speed that I had in my 20s!

I called my mom and urged her to seriously consider a whole-food, plant-based diet. She'd tried a vegan diet before, but she'd never tried cutting out oil. To paraphrase Dr. Esselstyn, it's in attention to detail that we succeed where others fail. I didn't hear anything from my mom for a couple of days, but then she texted to let

me know she ended up trying whole-food, plant-based—and her blood sugar levels had dropped 50 percent.

Three months later, her physician released her from diabetes care and marked her chart "Resolved" with no follow-up scheduled. During this same timeframe, I dropped more than 25 pounds.

A Bright Future

Now when I stare into my closet, I see clothes that fit. My mom and I have a sense of joy and well-being that we didn't have before. And my 8-year-old daughter, Abigail, has also benefited from our first year of plant-based eating. At her annual checkup, the pediatrician was thrilled to see she had grown 2 inches and lost 4 pounds, moving her out of the borderline "unhealthy" weight range and into the healthy range.

Thank you, Forks Over Knives and David de Hilster! You've changed our lives!

Ready to get started? Check out our [Plant-Based Primer](#) to learn more about adopting a whole-food, plant-based diet.