



## How I Got Rid of Extra Weight, Prediabetes, and Depression ... and Inspired My Patients to Do the Same

By Kerry Graff, MD  
2015-09-24 17:16:41



### The Day I Started Questioning My Medical Training

I must confess that when I watched the *Forks Over Knives* (FOK) documentary a few years ago, I desperately wanted the doctors in the movie to be complete veggie-loving quacks. Why? Because if what they said was true, then the entire way I (and just about every doctor I knew) had been practicing medicine for nearly 18 years was just flat-out wrong. Could it be that all the pills and procedures I had prescribed were nearly worthless compared to all the good that a whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) diet could do?

I might have continued to practice medicine as I had always done if the following question hadn't stuck in my mind: "Am I harming my patients by encouraging them to eat low-fat dairy foods?" I had to know.

I set out on a mission to learn everything I could about the lifestyle and came to the conclusion that these FOK docs were legitimate. They were highly respected, well-educated physicians and researchers with a mountain of evidence to back their claim that the standard American diet was the overriding cause of most of America's degenerative diseases and that a WFPB diet was the way to prevent, treat, and even reverse them.

Then I got really mad: Why had I not been told this before? Why had I been trained to practice medicine in a way that neglected the cause of disease? What about the most powerful intervention for prevention and treatment available—our food!

I adopted the diet myself, and any lingering doubt quickly disappeared ... along with my prediabetes, acid reflux, chronic constipation, hypothyroidism, and depression. To top it off, I lost an extra 25 pounds I had been carrying and had more energy than I had, well, ever! When my patients came in for their appointments, many saw how much healthier I looked and asked me what I was doing.

### Good For Me, Good For My Patients

One of the first patients I introduced to this diet was a morbidly obese 64-year-old insulin-dependent type 2 diabetic with lousy sugar control, despite following the American Diabetes Association diet. In the first month of eating a WFPB diet, she was off half her insulin and had dropped her blood pressure so much we had to reduce her anti-hypertensive medication—twice!

I started to loan out copies of the FOK documentary to my patients. They would come back in saying, "Wow. I get it. What I eat is making me sick." They knew they needed to get rid of the animal-based and processed foods, but they had no idea what they could eat. After all, the average American gets less than 10% of his or her calories from whole plants and was brought up planning meals around meat.

### Following My Passion

In addition to working individually with patients, I'm now also the chief medical officer of [4Leaf Global](#), for whom I run a six-week plant-based nutrition class and help to develop new tools for patients. I view the plant-based doctors in *Forks Over Knives* not as quacks, but rather as brave pioneers. And though most of my medical colleagues are less than thrilled to see me challenging everything we have been trained to do, I do it anyway. My greatest desire is to live my life—and practice my profession—in a way that inspires my friends, patients, and other professionals to join me on this exciting journey!