



# For My Family's Sake, I Lost 200 Pounds by Eating Plants

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*At 420 pounds Josh had high blood pressure, prediabetes, and a serious junk food habit. When he went plant-based for the sake of the health of his family, he experienced significant weight loss.*

When my first daughter, Lili, was born in 2009, I weighed more than 420 pounds. My wife, Nikki, and I continued eating junk, but we agreed that when Lili was old enough to start eating the foods that we were eating, we would clean up our diets.

Our meals often came from fast-food restaurants, and when we cooked at home, meat and cheese made up two-thirds of our plates. I developed prediabetes and high blood pressure; my wife's dairy consumption contributed to her developing gallstones and eventually having her gallbladder removed. Before adopting an active, plant-based lifestyle, we tried numerous "diets," including keto, that left us feeling sluggish and terrible.

## All In

I began to research plant-based eating to make sure it would be healthy not only for us but also for our young daughter. I learned that a whole-food, plant-based diet provides excellent nutrition for growing kids, and we stopped eating animal-based products overnight.

For us, the transition was easy. We were motivated by our desire to model healthy practices and attitudes toward food for our daughter. *Forks Over Knives* was the first plant-based lifestyle documentary that we watched

as we made the decision to adopt this way of eating.

Like the people featured in the movie, my wife and I lost body fat, and I came off of my blood pressure medication. I've lost more than 200 pounds and started running and strength training. I rarely go a day without doing one or the other.

Our second daughter, Ivy, was born in 2015, and both of our daughters are thriving on plant-based diets. Some of our favorite foods are avocado toast, large salads with guacamole and beans, and pizzas made with Engine 2 pizza crust.

## Spreading the Message

I just started my third year of graduate school, studying child development at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I work with children from predominantly low-income families. My three-year goal is to devise a plant-based dietary intervention that promotes health at an early age to improve the developmental trajectories of at-risk children. If we want to change the system that enables fast-food companies and Big Pharma to keep us under a thumb, we have to address the problem on multigenerational levels.

*Ready to get started? Check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.*