

Our Own China Study

Steve and Marsha Foy's Vegan Story

We were both born in the U.S. to first and second generation Chinese families, where we ate the traditional Chinese diet and Chinese was spoken at home. Because of that, we were never afraid of tofu, as so many others are when they begin to contemplate a plant-based diet! But that doesn't mean we didn't have a lot of changes to make when we made the switch to our healthy vegan diet, as we had taken on a lot of the unhealthy habits of the surrounding culture. Over time we took on heavy meals, filled with meats, seafood and dairy.

Steve: We're both in our mid-sixties now and have seen ourselves gaining weight and getting sicker over the years, which of course is so typical of people eating the American diet. I was on 3 different medications for high blood pressure and approaching the need for a 4th medication. I also had high blood sugar levels, but had chosen not to start on medications for it yet.

Marsha: I've thought about how we are the next generation of elders. I've wondered if we would be able to enjoy the longevity of some of our relatives in the previous generation. And if we did, what quality of life would we have? Would we need to experience some sort of traumatic event, like a terrible diagnosis, before making the changes we needed to make in our diet and lifestyle? We were looking toward retirement and we wanted to enjoy it, but we were concerned that our health was heading in the wrong direction.

My cholesterol was close to 300, medication was not an option for me and my blood sugar levels were also climbing. Both of us also needed to lose

weight. But I knew there was something we could do about it, other than taking pills, because I had gone on a vegan diet once before, many years ago, and got much healthier. But I didn't know then how to do it as well as I do now, so I gradually quit eating that way. So when I learned about Delisa's *Food for Life Class* last March from the priest at our church, Father Fred, I knew right away I wanted to take it. I wanted Steve to take it with me, so we could be in it together this time, to make the lifestyle change.

Steve: I wasn't as excited about it as Marsha was at first, but I reluctantly went along. After several weeks, I had learned enough to really get fully on board. Marsha now refers to me as a "raging vegan" because I'm so enthusiastic, I can't quit telling everyone about it!

It's hard not to be excited when you get the results we've gotten. We have both lost 20 pounds in 14 weeks and we feel just great! Marsha's cholesterol has dropped a lot, and my blood pressure has dropped enough so that my medications have been cut in half. I'm aiming to get off them entirely. A really great result is that we both have experienced a significant drop in our blood glucose levels. Our glucose levels are down into a normal range and we didn't need any pills to achieve that!

No one wants to get diabetes, or get sick with anything else, but we have a perspective that makes this even more "up close and personal" for us. I'm a rehab medicine specialist and we own a business where we fit people who have lost limbs with prosthetic devices.



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As you can imagine, a large percentage of our patients have diabetes. We've seen many suffer increasingly poor health over the years, and some of them have died. We realize now that for a number of my patients it wasn't necessary, perhaps, to suffer or die so young. If they had only known about eating a healthy, plant-based diet, they could have helped themselves prevent or reverse their condition(s)! Most of them, however, just have no hope. The best they can hope for is just keeping their disease at bay. So I tell as many as will listen that there is another option worth their time and efforts!

Marsha: This has been such a positive change in our lives. Besides losing weight and dropping cholesterol and blood sugar levels, I'm sleeping so much better than I used to. I'm able to handle stress better and feel more positive and filled with hope. We both have more energy than we had a year ago. I feel more peaceful and even

enjoy nature more than I did before.

One thing that surprised us both is how easy it has been for us to adopt a plant-based eating lifestyle! We love the food and we are doing all of it together. We enjoy the whole process -- the shopping, chopping, cooking, and eating. And we've saved TONS of money because we used to eat out all the time and now we do our own cooking and enjoy it more.

Now we just feel so blessed and thankful that we have learned how to incorporate this healthy, plant-based diet into our lives and reverse the problems we were having. We have already seen such huge, positive changes in such a short time.

Steve: And learning this has not only helped us, personally, but it has changed what I can offer my patients. Now I can give them hope that there is something they can do to help themselves. This has changed our lives in so many ways, and I'm so grateful for it.

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