

My Health Journey

Since I was a young girl, I struggled with serious digestion issues. I went years trying to avoid the things I knew would make me sick, and I had no idea why it was happening. For example, I figured out that I could not eat apples from the supermarket, but I could eat them straight off the tree. I could eat raw spinach, onions, peppers, and mushrooms but never cooked. **Every time food was placed in front of me, I was worried about what would happen if I ate it.**

My thoughts were:

- Where is the nearest bathroom?
- How will I hide my illness from the people around me?
- Is this food worth feeling the horrible stabbing pain that will occur if it doesn't agree with me?

When I decided to save the animals and become a vegetarian at the age of 15, I had an amazing breakthrough - I wasn't getting sick anymore! I could eat everything - except for meat. My mom did a great job experimenting with tofu, but I learned that being a vegetarian was hard! I pretty much lived off of salads until the age of 19 when a friend talked me into trying a piece of meat... it was delicious! I'd say up until age 25, I suffered from digestion issues visiting many natural and conventional practitioners over the years. When the conventional doctors suggested I have a colonoscopy, I ran for the hills! I knew how to fix this myself. I didn't need a colonoscopy. I just needed to be a vegetarian! My cousin told me that many of the women on my dad's side of the family have the same problem as me. I tried to convince her that I knew how to fix the problem and if she would just become a vegetarian, it would solve all her issues, but she claimed that our *problem* was how she stayed thin. Yup, it sure does keep you thin and malnourished!

I ate meat during my second pregnancy at age 27 but went right back to being a vegetarian and thought this is how I have to live... While trying for a third child, I decided not to eat meat and read many books about pregnancy and vegetarianism. We tried for 2 years up to the age of 35 with no luck. Here and there, I tried a little meat as suggested by my chiropractor and acupuncturist. Still, I swear I could feel the pain starting, and my anxiety over possibly having an issue was terrible! Looking back now, my anxiety and stress around food probably had a great deal to do with my illness!

Fast forward to age 39, to a seminar with two naturopathic doctors. They talked about their experience of being vegan and how they eat meat today. How they only eat grass-fed, pasture-raised, organic meat and all the reasons why you would not want to eat meat from factory farms (I knew those reasons from the book I read 24 years ago! Remember, I was trying to save the animals!!). I thought I'd give meat another try but only the good stuff in small quantities, the humanely raised stuff, and the hormone and antibiotic-free stuff. I felt good about supporting our local farmers. I felt good about only eating humanely raised meat. I felt good!

After decades of experimenting...

By learning my triggers, reducing stress, eating real food, and most recently running diagnostic labs, I am excited to say that my daily (after every meal), painful (severe stomach cramps), embarrassing (hours spent in the bathroom and knowing where every public restroom was located) problem is history! I can't even remember the last time I had what I called a bad belly.