

## A Rude Awakening

*An unexpected diagnosis spurred me into action.*

by Jay Cohen



I remember January 23, 2018, like it was yesterday. I had just switched doctors and was in for my first physical with a highly respected doctor from India. Not only was she a vegetarian, but she had the reputation to “tell it like it is.”

Now, I considered myself in pretty good shape—had been a vegetarian for over 5 years, used to run marathons, bike, etc. Well, I was in for a rude awakening. She stated that my LDL was borderline high, HDL low, blood pressure also a tad high, and I was carrying some extra weight. By the way, I was 65 years old, 5’9” tall, and 180 pounds.

She then brought out the damn plastic heart and started to explain about plaque buildup. I already knew that, and never in a million years would I have thought that a doctor

would be tell-

ing me that I had the beginning of cardiovascular disease if I didn’t change my ways. She would not let me leave the office without a prescription for a statin.

Needless to say, I was in shock. My first call was to Wanda Huberman. I had known Wanda for a couple of years and knew that she, along with her husband, Mark, were really dialed-in to healthy eating. They help lead the National Health Association and publish this magazine. I explained my visit and asked her for a book that would include an eating plan that I could follow. I was desperate.

Without hesitation, she recommended Dr. Fuhrman’s book, *The End to Heart Disease*. I ordered



Jay’s commitment to fitness shows!

the book and proceeded to watch every YouTube video I could. I quickly understood the principles of a Nutritarian lifestyle. Make GBOMBS your main meal, eat micronutrient-dense foods, and eliminate salt, oil, and sugar. Basically,

keep it simple, eat super-clean.

I immediately cleared out the noncompliant items from my pantry. I announced to my wife that this was the way I was going to eat, but that I would still cook whatever she wanted. Thankfully, we were eating about a 90% vegan diet already, but I was cooking with salt, oil, and sugar.

Once the book arrived, I read it cover to cover and realized how simple the Eat to Live (ETL) program was to follow. I replaced salt with spices, sugar with dates or bananas or raisins, and oil with water- or dry-sauté.

To attack the extra weight I had put on, I committed to at least 45 minutes a day of cardio and strength work. Once the weather warmed up, I got out my bike and started riding 15-20 miles 4-6 times per week. I found a great functional strength fitness coach that allowed me to get in

and get out of the gym with a very productive workout. I also teach yoga, which helped me develop a deeper meditation practice. That’s important for calming that “voice” in your head, which is always talking to you—and not always in a good way.

Four months later, I had a follow-up review. The doctor was reading my charts when she looked up and said, “You’ve lost 25 pounds [I’d achieved the weight goal recommended by Dr. Fuhrman], dropped your LDL to a very low number, brought up your HDL level, and your BP is well within normal range.” She asked, what did I do? “Well Doc, I followed the *Eat to Live* diet by Dr. Fuhrman to a T.” She was very familiar with a WFPB diet, but not the specifics of ETL. I briefly gave her an overview, which of course included the no SOS.

She smiled at me

*“Never in a million years would I have thought that a doctor would be telling me that I had the beginning of cardiovascular disease.”*



Jay enjoys riding his bicycle 15-20 miles 4-6 times per week.

and said “In all my years of practice, I have never seen anyone turn around their numbers as you have done. You are a model patient!” Since that visit, I see her at least once a year, and we have become good friends.

The highlight of 2018 was attending the National Health Association conference in Cleveland. Not only did I hear Dr. Fuhrman speak, but I also had the

honor of having lunch with him. The conference is not only a learning experience; it’s also a great motivator to stay on the path of radiant good health.

I’m forever grateful to Wanda Huberman, the Executive Director of the NHA, and of course to Dr. Fuhrman, whom I credit with saving and improving the quality of my life.



Jay and his wife, Toni, enjoyed the NHA Health Conference in 2019

## letters & notes

### Much Appreciated Letters to the Editor

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Hi Mark,

Loved this issue with the exception of Dr. Goldhamer’s comments on the flu vaccine. First, while your chance of getting the flu goes from 2% to 1%, he neglects to discuss the fact that if you get the flu after vaccination, it is far less severe. This is very important for the elderly and immunocompromised. Second, antivaxer rhetoric in this forum contributes to people viewing WFPB eating as crazy and extreme. We do not need to be lumped into that category. His view is antiscience on this.

**NOREEN ELLIS**  
ASHEVILLE, NC

Dear Mr. Huberman,

Thank you very much for posting *Health Science* to me here in the UK. I really love the magazine! I appreciate all the great content, know many of the people who appear in it, and have read every word. It’s very well-laid-out and presented. We don’t have anything similar here, not that I have found, anyway. I have kept all the copies since the first one that Cathy Fisher gave me at TrueNorth at the beginning of 2019. I do so wish it were possible to get back there for another visit. I’d have done it months ago if it weren’t for The Bug. Let’s hope we will soon be free to get our lives back to normal! All the best to you and yours, and thanks again.

**MARY GERARD**  
KENT, UNITED KINGDOM

Good morning, Mark,

Every time I read *Health Science*, my drive even becomes more enthusiastic. You are doing a masterful job with your efforts. I thank you for making this such a fine

publication and so look forward to each issue! You come across so “real” and are able to really pull out the finest information from each of these terrific guests you interview. The fasting interview with Dr. Alan Goldhamer was superb, and it so reinforces my teachings about the incredible life-saving benefits of fasting. I can still remember the short visit he and I had in the elevator at one of the first ANHS conventions I went to in South Florida, when Doug Graham and I went there after I became a Life Member.

All in all, God bless you for your honest efforts to “reveal the ideal” with the quality of your passion and purpose. I applaud you and your team greatly for giving back to so many folks and for masterfully designing something I can honestly look forward to each quarter! I wish both you and Wanda another enjoyable day in paradise (North America!) as you continue to strive to make a positive difference by letting the dignity of your example be proof of your efforts.

**DR. WAYNE “TMM” PICKERING**  
ORMOND BEACH, FL

Mark,

The Winter issue was fantastic—loved reading what Dr. Goldhamer had to say, and you did a great job with the questions. Thank you so much for the wonderful magazine full of very helpful and supportive information.

**BEV CORYELL**  
SHORTSVILLE, NY

Hi Mark,

Enjoying my Winter issue of *Health Science*. Your in-depth interviews are

always my favorite part of the magazine. Looking forward to the 2021 NHA conference!

**LINDA AYOTTE**  
REDWOOD VALLEY, CA

Hi Mark,

I loved the Winter 2021 issue and read it cover to cover. The articles are very well-written and very informative. Can’t wait for the next issue!

**CARA GHIDOTTI**  
DADE CITY, FL

Hi Mark,

In this age of corporatization, it was uplifting to have you ask what I thought of the last issue. I am grateful to be a member of your organization, and I am very appreciative of the role you have played over the decades to keep people informed about healthy living.

**LAURIE EVANS**  
KATONAH, NY

Thank you, Mark,

Each *Health Science* issue is a valuable part of the natural hygiene archive, and I save all of them. Hope that all is well with you.

**BRIAN MCINERNEY**  
FAIRFIELD, CT

### We’d love to hear from you, too!

Send your letter or email today!

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