WALK OFF THE WEIGHT FAST
Melt off pounds!

12 GO-TO SUPPERS FOR BUSY WEEKNIGHTS

Psst... The secrets to saving $1,000s on your groceries

Get ready for Halloween!
'We eat too much meat!'

Introducing the All You Diet Coach series, in which one family shares its food struggles and tries creative new solutions.

Jordan, 14
Gags on anything green

Dianna, 44
Tries to sneak in more veggies

Bradley, 51
Has a weakness for a good steak

Megan, 11
Loves animals; reluctant to eat them

Noah, 7
Wants beef tacos every night

Like many American families, the Zabinskis have long been in the habit of eating meat at nearly every meal. But after they watched the 2011 documentary Forks over Knives, which linked the consumption of animal products to an array of ailments, they vowed to change. Cutting back on meat also has money-saving appeal. So Dianna Zabinski, a stay-at-home mom in Clarkston, Mich., put inspiration into action—with mixed results. "I tried to change all at once by trying a vegetarian recipe every day," she recalls. "I soon found myself overwhelmed, and my kids were very resistant, so I slipped back into making my tried-and-true meat-heavy meals." Dianna asked All You to help introduce her family to veggies more successfully. Enter our diet coach, Dawn Jackson Blatner, RD. In the course of one month, she taught the Zabinskis how to adopt a flexitarian* way of eating, making plant-based meals the family would enjoy.

*TERM TO KNOW: Flexitarian: a person who, for the most part, follows a vegetarian diet but eats meat occasionally. Flexitarianism was named among the top five health trends of last year by trend-tracking website balancedhealthy.com.
Get the whole family involved

To keep kids’ dinnertime strikes to a minimum, Blatner advised the Zabinskis to give everyone a voice by letting each family member choose a particular meal—and the day to have it. They collaborated on a weekly meal chart and posted it on the fridge. That meant there was no question about what was for dinner. Everyone was in the loop. (It also was a handy way to organize grocery shopping.)

"At first, I thought it would be crazy-hard trying to follow a meal plan, but it actually made me feel more relaxed knowing what was for dinner each night," Dianna says. "The kids were so interested in this chart. They kept walking past the fridge reading the meal plan and talking about which day was ‘their’ day."

Last year 19 percent of Americans took part in Meatless Monday, a movement that involves forgoing meat one day a week and replacing it with vegetarian fare. Established in 2003, Meatless Monday has since spread to 24 countries.

Tweak a favorite recipe

There’s no need to reinvent the meal wheel. One easy way to make vegetarian fare more palatable is to replace some or all of the animal protein in a family recipe with a vegetarian alternative. Blatner recommended that the Zabinskis try one swap per week.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHICKEN BREAST</th>
<th>TOFU CUTLET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAMBURGER</td>
<td>VEGGIE BURGER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH MEAT SANDWICH</td>
<td>LENTIL SALAD IN PITA POCKET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAT SAUCE ON PASTA</td>
<td>MARINARA &amp; WHITE BEANS ON PASTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHICKEN STIR-FRY</td>
<td>EDAMAME STIR-FRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEAK BURRITO</td>
<td>BLACK BEAN BURRITO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKEY CHILI</td>
<td>VEGETARIAN CHILI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUND BEEF TACOS</td>
<td>LENTIL TACOS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VEGETABLE QUESADILLAS

Prep: 15 min  Cook: 6 min per quesadilla  Cost per serving: $1.56  Serves: 6

- 1 15-oz. can low-fat refried beans
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar
- 1 large zucchini, shredded (about 2 cups)
- 12 8-inch whole-wheat tortillas
- 6 Tbsp. salsa

Divide beans, cheese and zucchini among 6 tortillas. Top each with another tortilla. Heat a cast-iron or nonstick pan to medium, then add quesadillas one at a time and cook until golden, 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Serve with salsa.

PER SERVING (1 QUESADILLA): 350 Cal., 11g Fat (4g Sat.), 20mg Chol., 7g Fiber, 14g Pro., 50g Carb., 570mg Sod.
Try one new vegetarian recipe each week

Eliminating meat was too drastic, for the Zabinskis to stomach for long, so Blatner advised they start with two simple moves: Prepare one new vegetarian recipe every week and swap in veggies for meat in one other favorite family meal, for a total of two meatless meals weekly. That might not seem like it would have much impact, but consider that if every week (or even every other week) you tried one new vegetarian recipe, in a year you would have 25 to 50 new recipes, tried and family-tested.

Black-bean burgers: The meaty taste was a hit!

3 TRICKS TO "BEEF UP" VEGETARIAN FLAVORS

These techniques can put pizzazz in your plant-based cooking.

1. ADD UMAMI. When people say they crave meaty flavor, they really are craving umami (which roughly means savory in Japanese). Sources of umami include soy sauce, mushrooms and cooked tomatoes.

2. DE-BITTER. To curb a vegetable's bitter edge, add a little healthy fat such as olive or canola oil (which will also help you feel fuller) and something sweet, like honey, sweet-potato cubes or barbecue or sweet and sour sauce.

3. BRIGHTEN. You could use salt to perk up the flat taste of beans and lentils, but a healthier way to finish and brighten up dishes is with a touch of acid from lemon, lime, vinegar, sour cream or yogurt.

Anatomy of a meatless meal

Follow this guide to create a balanced vegetarian dish. Portions are based on a 1,500-calorie diet—ideal for an average-size woman (166 pounds) who wants to achieve or maintain a healthy weight.

50 percent of the plate

1 to 2 cups of produce (fruit at breakfast, veggies at lunch and dinner)

100 calories of healthy fat such as avocado, olive oil, low-fat cheese, salad dressing, chopped nuts, peanut butter

25 percent of the plate

½ to ¾ cup (about 2 to 3 ounces) of plant protein such as cooked black, white or garbanzo beans; lentils; edamame; tofu; soy milk

25 percent of the plate

½ to ¾ cup of cooked whole grains such as brown rice, whole-grain pasta, oatmeal, whole-grain crackers

Why cutting back on meat matters

Reap the benefits of consuming fewer animal products.

• YOU’LL SLIM DOWN

Vegetarians weigh on average about 15 percent less than meat eaters, for a 166-pound woman, that could mean a 25-pound difference. One reason: Plant-based meals tend to be much lower in calories and fat. Piling your plate with plants also ups your fiber intake, which is good for weight loss because fiber helps you feel fuller longer. One study found that over 12 years, adding 12 grams of fiber daily resulted in 8 fewer pounds gained.

• YOU’LL SAVE CASH

Ground beef costs 97 cents more per pound than it did three years ago, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics—so it’s high time to switch to cheaper, plant-based options. Beans, for instance, cost 2½ times less than lean beef; on average you’ll pocket about $3.50 for each pound of meat you swap for vegetarian protein in meals. Do that once a week and you’ll save almost $200 a year.

• YOU’LL LIVE LONGER

Replacing one serving of red meat per day with healthier fare such as fish, poultry or legumes was associated with a 7 percent to 19 percent lower mortality risk among participants in a 2012 study by the Harvard School of Public Health. Researchers estimate that about 8 percent of the deaths could have been prevented if subjects had ingested less than half a serving of red meat per day.
## Our food diary

**MONDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Spaghetti with meat sauce.
  - “Sometimes I'll use jarred sauce, but I look for ones low in sugar. I'll make the sauce with ground beef or turkey. We'll have a side salad and fruit, like grapes, berries or applesauce.”

**TUESDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Mexican food.
  - “Either tacos made with ground beef, shredded cheese and lettuce, or chicken-and-cheese quesadillas. I'll serve it with chips and salsa.”

**WEDNESDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Meat loaf and mashed potatoes.
  - “This is a household staple that we'd hate to go without.”

**THURSDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Breakfast.
  - “We'll scramble eggs or make a frittata, plus pancakes or waffles and sausage or bacon.”

**FRIDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Burgers—either beef, turkey or buffalo.
  - “We sometimes will do veggie burgers, but my kids aren't too crazy about them.”

**SATURDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Barbecued chicken on the grill with baked potatoes or fries on the side.

**SUNDAY**
- **Typical dinner:** Chinese takeaway.
  - “The kids love pot stickers and crab rangoon, fried rice and chicken lo mein. Bradley and I will eat garlic chicken or broccoli chicken. I have started to get tofu instead of chicken.”

---

### So how did it go?

After putting Blatner’s advice into action for a month, the Zabinskis managed to stick with eating two totally vegetarian dinners every week. “The changes were small and realistic enough that I never felt overwhelmed,” Dianna says. The meals were even a hit with the kids!

**The food**
- “At first, with a lot of the recipes, I thought, There's no way my kids are going to eat this,” Dianna says. “But they often surprised me by saying they liked it.”

**The health benefits**
- It's too soon to tell whether the Zabinskis' health will improve, but Dianna says, “I have more energy.” Plus, it has affected other parts of their life. Dianna, Bradley and Megan have started training for 5K runs, and the entire family has cut back on fast food.

**Final verdict**
- “My family loves meat too much to ever go full-on vegetarian,” Dianna says, “but this was such a positive experience we are going to continue with two meatless dinners per week. And that in itself is a huge improvement.”

---

**The financial impact**
- The Zabinskis saved $10 to $15 on groceries each week.