

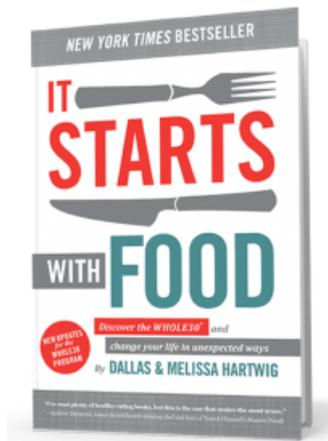
Whole30

A 30-day Journey

Why Whole30? Why Now?

I've had a problem with [metatarsalgia](#) (or dropped metatarsal) in my left foot for most of 2016. That injury has kept me from not only running, but also walking or standing for long periods. Sometime in the Fall, I began seeing a podiatrist who recommended shock therapy treatment. I did that for a few times (not really painful) and didn't see much difference, but remembered to tell her that when I did a cleanse a few months before, the swelling went away completely and I ran 5 miles after three days. Her eyes grew wide and she said, "Hmmm. I want you to check out the [Whole30 program](#). Just do some reading on it and see if it is for you. The program takes out all things out of your diet that could be causing inflammation — dairy, sweeteners, artificial sweeteners, legumes and all grains." She continued, "I suspect, you have chronic inflammation."

I couldn't get the Whole30 book from the library; too many holds on it. However, I did find the other book *It All Starts with Food* from Half Price Books, so started there.



I'd read about three chapters before a trip to Atlanta, so wasn't fully comprehending everything before I decided to start on <GASP> – November 19 — a few days before Thanksgiving. I called some people at work that had finished the program and gotten the run down on what I could and couldn't eat; I was semi-informed and was ready to start when I got back. OF COURSE, I would start my period the night before I got back, (yes, I still have one of those every month...<sigh>). I also got sick as soon as I got back. <double sigh> Felt like crap and didn't work out for the first two weeks.

As I read on through the book, I realized the gems hidden inside. The book talked about nutrition clearing up your skin — I had a terrible rash on my neck that appeared sometime before September and the last thing I wanted to do was go see another specialist for that. The book talked about being able to focus your mind better when you feed your body the best nutrition. Sure needed that, because I'd noticed my mind wandering all over the place and I constantly had to talk to myself to keep my mind on tasks. The book talked about the right nutrition curing joint pain — my right thumb had been aching terribly (probably the first signs of arthritis) and it became a chronic thing. I

really wanted to see if Whole30 would cure that. Finally, getting the weight off was paramount because with every pound lost, that meant less pressure on my aching foot and the sooner I could be back to running.

First Week

I had flown back from Atlanta the night before I began the program, arriving sometime after midnight. Not the perfect time to start, but I was ready. I took photos of my foot, my neck and body, then took measurements. If that doesn't put you in a sour mood, I don't know what will.

Three days after I started the program, I prepared a Thanksgiving meal with a turkey, green beans (nothing added), and sweet potatoes, (just baked with nothing on them either). I also served fruit for dessert. When I got up from the table, I realized it was the first time that I EVER remembered not being stuffed after a Thanksgiving meal. I felt fine and got a lot done that day. By Day 6, I woke up to feeling thinner. I know I wasn't supposed to measure myself or weigh after the first day, but I thought I'd take a peek at the tape and discovered I'd dropped 2 ½ " off my waist. Guess I WAS holding on to water! At the end of the week, all my cravings for everything were gone. I could make cookies or even a braided bread loaf from scratch and never touch it.

Week Two

By day nine, I finally checked the weight scale, I was down 9 pounds. Clothes that were one size down were now fitting again, or at least able to be buttoned! By day 11, I'd lost another pound. This was working and it gave me an idea – I'd go put that ring I found at a jewelry store on lay-a-way and take it out after 30 days as a celebration and reminder of my journey. Couldn't think of another reason to buy myself a ring, so that sounded good to me.



By Day 12, the doc said she saw improvement in the swelling and was impressed by the picture and changes I had in the skin rash. That night, I went out for the first time with Don to Luby's. I found some foods that worked for me and felt proud that I'd stuck with everything. By Day 13, I was taking video conference calls and already looked thinner in the face. On Day 14, I finally started exercising and did a swim of just 13 laps in the pool.

Week Three

Day 15 – I think everyone in the neighborhood heard me scream when I jumped on the scales and I'd lost 11.2 pounds. I began to notice here that I had consistent energy all

day. Swam 13 laps. During this week, my weight went up and down, so this is why the book says not to weigh yourself until after 30 days. I'm so used to it that I know what my body does, so it doesn't bother me to see the occasional rises in weight. By Day 18, I noticed that I started wearing rings, earrings, necklaces and belts. Before, I'd not felt good wearing anything, so I never did much since I work from home. During Whole30, I felt like I wanted to dress up. On Day 19, I went to my first party and brought fruits and vegetables. Had some Christmas ham, ate my veggies with some hummus and watched everyone eat all the desserts. Was happy that I wasn't dragging them home with me on my butt. Sometime this week, I agreed to let a film crew come videotape an interview with me on the story about bank bonuses.

It's supposed to air nationwide on the Monday after the first of the year. If I hadn't started this program on the 19th of November, there is no way in hell that I'd have agreed to that, but by this time, I felt good enough about myself to agree. The crew was here for three hours on Saturday to do the filming. On Day 20, we had to take an unexpected, unplanned trip to Houston. I packed up my veggies, fruit, water and beef jerky and made the trek. Did okay again and Burger King, McDonalds, Whataburger, or Taco Cabana only whispered my name as we flew by.



Week Three

Day 22, I celebrated by going to the jewelry store, trying on the ring again and putting more money down on the balance. At this point I decide how I'm going to celebrate at the end of 30 days: I would get a massage, pick up my ring and then on Christmas Eve, I planned to share a bottle of wine with Don before heading off to Denver for a week. By Day 23, swims are now up to 15 laps. Big day on Day 24...I made turkey gumbo and didn't have one taste; sure smelled good though! At this point, I realized I'm probably eating too much fruit, but it feels so good to eat fresh foods that I'm enjoying it all. I plan to tweak this later. On day 26, I had another party in San Antonio to go to. Was a bit worried when I saw one salad arrive among the sea of carbs, but 30 minutes later, another salad had arrived, as well as an angel who brought salmon. I sat with that lady and another who ate just like me! By the end of week three, the redness to the rash on my neck was gone, foot felt better, joint pain in my thumb was gone and my focus on the computer improved immensely.

Week Four

The night before Day 27, I made a German Chocolate cake from scratch.



I'm not sure which I was more proud of — that it didn't fall and end up in a pile of crumbs or that I didn't lick one beater or spoon. On this day, I also got word that I'd been selected to speak at the Healthcare IT Marketing & PR Conference in Las Vegas.

Re: Congratulations! You've Been Selected as a Speaker at HITMC 2017 - john@healthitmarketingconferen @ Dec 22

If I had not gone on this program, I think at this point I'd have been sad thinking that I'd have to starve myself to feel comfortable in my own skin. Instead, I felt excited for the opportunity and vowed not to wait to the last minute to prepare. (That also causes stress and more eating!) Later in the day, my daughter and her boyfriend arrived from Georgia. We immediately skeedadled off to San Antonio for a free showing of *Rogue One*. Schwab put the event on and had free frozen Cokes, candy and popcorn. I had water and ate some of my beef jerky I'd brought along. Still have the two M&M boxes from the show and will make cookies some time soon with those for a party. Didn't bother me at all. (Okay, well, the frozen Coke is an all time favorite, but I managed to avoid it).

From there, the kids went downtown and Don and I left for the USAA Christmas Party. Was able to wear a dress I'd never worn before and that felt wonderful. For dinner, I had meat, veggies, salad and fruit for dessert. All of that went well. PHEWW! Over the next several days, I took the kids to eat Mexican Food, BBQ, pizza, make pancakes, and had breakfast at Buttermilk Café. I chose wisely and never felt deprived because I ate a balanced meal every time and always ate until I was full.

By Day 30, I'm on Cloud Nine. I celebrated by doing 35 laps in the pool for a total of a one-mile swim non-stop. (Yeah, I've gotten pretty good at those flip turns). What a feeling to finally reach that goal — not as good as finishing a marathon, but felt damned good. I dragged myself out of the pool and into the shower feeling exhausted but so proud.

RESULTS

On the final day I weighed myself, took pictures and measurements. Here are the results:

- Weight — down 12.8 pounds
- Waist — down 3 ½"
- Bust — down 1 ½"
- Hips — down 3"
- Left and Right thighs both down 1"
- Left and Right arms both down 1"

- My thumb joint no longer hurts
- I can wear high heels again because the swelling in my foot is gone. The pain occasionally remains in the top and bottom of the foot, but not nearly as often and I hope that seeing Dr. Blaich, super awesomely smart Applied Kinesiologist next week will cure that.

- **Before**



- **After**



- The spot on my neck is now a dark patch of brown that I hope will soon go away. No longer angry and red.

- **Before**



- **After**



- My mental focus is much more sharp.

What's Next?

I most missed eating cottage cheese and having something different to eat at breakfast, other than eggs. So, I got some of that and ate it after I finished the 30 days. Still plan to have a bottle of wine with Don on Christmas Eve. However, I think I'll go right back on the program for another 30 days to see if I can drop more weight to help my foot and hopefully, fingers crossed, prayers said – I'll be back to running at the end of 30 days.

I'll use the next 30 days to read the book I should have read in the first place – Whole30.

I'll continue to swim a mile once a week and see if I can pick that up at the end of 30 days to doing it once a day.

This next 30 days will give me time to focus more on the workouts and put some asphalt under my shoes and speed in my strokes.

Should you try it?

This program makes so much sense for those who want to heal their bodies. I never felt deprived in all the 30 days. I always felt full, but always prepared a bag with fruit, veggie protein and water whenever I went away from the house for more than an hour.

If you have skin problems, lack of focus, weight to lose or just a crazy relationship with food and cravings, this is the program to try. You don't have to weigh anything, add up points, eat certain things; it's the simplest thing I've ever done.

I had a goal of eating as healthy as my partner by the end of the year. I can honestly say, "I now eat as well as he does and in some respects, even better. I don't occasionally need to have brownies and apple pie!