



# **Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease: The Revolutionary, Scientifically Proven, Nutrition-Based Cure**

*Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr.*

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**The New York Times** bestselling guide to the lifesaving diet that can both prevent and help reverse the effects of heart disease Based on the groundbreaking results of his twenty-year nutritional study, *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* by Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn illustrates that a plant-based, oil-free diet can not only prevent the progression of heart disease but can also reverse its effects. Dr. Esselstyn is an internationally known surgeon, researcher and former clinician at the Cleveland Clinic and a featured expert in the acclaimed documentary *Forks Over Knives*. *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* has helped thousands across the country, and is the book behind Bill Clinton's life-changing vegan diet.

The proof lies in the incredible outcomes for patients who have followed Dr. Esselstyn's program, including a number of patients in his original study who had been told by their cardiologists that they had less than a year to live. Within months of starting the program, all Dr. Esselstyn's patients began to improve dramatically, and twenty years later, they remain free of symptoms.

Complete with more than 150 delicious recipes perfect for a plant-based diet, the national bestseller *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* explains the science behind the simple plan that has drastically changed the lives of heart disease patients forever. It will empower readers and give them the tools to take control of their heart health.

## Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease: The Revolutionary, Scientifically Proven, Nutrition-Based Cure Details

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# From Reader Review Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease: The Revolutionary, Scientifically Proven, Nutrition-Based Cure for online ebook

## Connie Faull says

I purchased this book after watching Dr. Sanjay Gupta's special on CNN entitled "The Last Heart Attack." Dr. Esselstyn, although not a cardiologist, has been doing research regarding plant based diets and the prevention, arrestment, and in some cases reversal of heart disease. He has stories of some of his patients who had had heart attacks, and either were not candidates for surgical intervention or chose to try his diet instead. All of his patients, after only a few weeks on his plant based diet, saw their symptoms of angina/chest pain stop usually with a week or two. They also went back for follow-up stress tests which came back normal, and most saw a shrinkage if not total reversal of the blockages in their arteries. In this book he quotes Dr. Dean Ornish who wrote "The China Syndrome" as saying: "I don't understand why asking people to eat a well-balanced vegetarian diet is considered drastic, while it is medically conservative to cut people open."

This book gives me a lot to think about. I've been flirting with the idea of veganism, but I'm not sure I can stick with it, but the results seen by Dr. Esselstyn are an extraordinary push in that direction.

If you have ever thought about the effects of diet on your health, if you have heart disease or any other ailment, I recommend you read this book and make your own decision about it.

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## Jessica says

This book has the right amount of science for everyone. Anymore and I might not have made it through. I think because of that it will appeal to a larger audience. After reading the book I wanted to send a copy to every member in my family. I felt like I knew a very important secret that could save their lives. Let's hope they read it!

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## Roxanne says

I give it only three stars just because I would have preferred more meat [*\*ahem\**] about the research. *The China Study* really presents more of the background, and Esselstyn takes vegan a step further by eliminating added oil from his patients' diets.

The sample set is small, but his results are intriguing and have held up over time. His initial study was made up of cardiac patients who were literally at the end of the line. Surgical intervention had failed, and their own cardiologists had told them to get their affairs in order. Esselstyn required absolute obedience of his dietary restrictions - no animal products of any kind, no oil, no nuts, no avocados or coconuts - and produced rather astounding long-term results.

Read *The China Study* first. This makes a good follow-up. If you like recipes, they take up more than half the print space of this book.

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## **Maria says**

An absolutely wonderful book. Very well written, extremely engaging and extremely motivating. It focuses on heart disease, but the lessons are applicable to many areas of chronic disease, and indeed to various cancers and dementia (and erectile dysfunction). Dr. Esselstyn's approach is that a complete shift is needed - that there is no such thing as just a little being ok. This will make it challenging for many (including myself) without the "motivation" of an extreme health event. However the description of the science and the results of his research are extremely compelling and have made me begin to incorporate recipes without added oils (already on the whole food, plant based path) and to be more conscious of fat intake generally, particularly added oils. It starts with awareness and then changing behaviors. The recipes in the book (written by his wife Ann) are fantastic, tasty, easy to prepare and makes the approach very accessible. It is a complete shift from the average westernized diet, but a very compelling message. This book will help raise awareness and change behaviors. The Esselstyns themselves are an amazing testament to what following this way of eating does for your health and vitality. The message needs to continue to get out into the broader public consciousness.

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## **D Scroggy says**

In November I travelled to Georgia to visit my daughter. While there we had dinner with one of Morgan's friends and her mom. During dinner this lovely, lean woman described the "diet" she had been following for the past 6 months. She described it as "the Bill Clinton diet" and said she had learned about it from a book written by a doctor named Esselstyn. She described the plan, in a nutshell, as no meat (nothing with a face, nothing with a mother), no dairy, and no oil – not even "healthy" oils. That all sounded pretty drastic to me – and definitely way out of the mainstream. I should admit here that I've probably read nearly every diet book known to mankind and followed most of them with short-term good results, and long-term zero (and that's putting it charitably) results.

I asked this woman what had motivated her to take on such an unappealing eating regime. She described her health concerns – scary racing heartbeat episodes that came on with no warning and lasted for minutes, her husband's early stages of angina. In short, she had been worried she was facing heart disease and did not want to go down the drug route – and she was scared.

Her results in 6 months? No more racing heartbeat episodes. She thought she might lose 15 pounds, but actually lost about 25. Looking at her at the start, you would not have seen the 15 pounds she thought she could lose. Her husband also lost weight and his angina pain went away. She said if she is ever tempted to veer from the routine, she remembers how she felt when her heart took flight.

I began thinking about how my heart seems to occasionally flutter in my chest. How a couple weeks before last Christmas (2010) I woke with pain in my chest and asked my husband to take me to the hospital – it turned out to be a false alarm and I told no one about it – not my mom, not my kids, not my friends. But I continue to notice those fluttering episodes. I thought about struggling with the same 30 pounds of extra weight continually, never ceasingly. I thought about the heart disease in my family. Then, waiting in the

airport, I downloaded Esselstyn's book onto my kindle and read it all on the cross-country flight home.

Low-carb eating programs have been my diet of choice over the past several years. I usually lose a good amount of weight during the first week, and fall off them during the second week. By then, the thought of another egg for breakfast usually makes me nauseous. As I read *Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* on that airplane ride home an almost sick feeling in my stomach began. The eating plan proscribed by Esselstyn is diametrically opposed to how I have been eating my whole life, and especially in the last decades. What's good: starch, whole grains and lots of them, vegetables, fruits (but not high fat ones, and not high protein ones); what's bad: all animal protein, all dairy, all added oils, excess protein of any kind, excess fat of any kind.

Why would one choose to eat like this? Esselstyn's study – as fully explained in his book – shows the reversal of heart disease so advanced that patients were sent home to die; there was nothing more traditional medicine could do for them. Simply through a change in diet, even this lethal level of heart disease was reversed. His is the longest running study of its kind, ever. His findings are based on scientific, peer-reviewed study. It is not anecdotal.

I decided to get my cholesterol tested. Esselstyn says that with total cholesterol below 150, you will NOT have or get heart disease. I found an on-line process for obtaining a cholesterol test and within the week had my results: 257. I couldn't believe it was that high; I just couldn't believe it. Had that number come back close to 150, I probably would have written this vegan, no-oil thing off as extreme and unnecessary, but that was not to be. I'll be recording my journey via my blog – category "Vegan and Oil-free" at "theeconomom dot com."

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## **Wandoo Ityavyar says**

*Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease* is written by Cadwell B. Esselstyn, Jr, who believes that coronary artery disease need not exist and if it does it need not progress. Caldwell Esselstyn comes from a long line of doctors. His father was a doctor as well as his father in law. However, this didn't give either of them immunity against the diseases of nutritional extravagance. Cadwell Esselstyn, Sr died of a heart disease in 1975 and before he passed, he left his son Esselstyn Jr with a charge if you will saying "Someday, we're just going to have to get smarter about showing people how to live healthier lives."

Esselstyn Jr took this to heart and started investigating the correlation between nutrition and heart disease, when finally a few years later he was at a surgical conference with his wife- Anne in New Haven. The day was rather dreary as the rain outside was relentless among other factors. When Esselstyn finally had time for lunch and got to a restaurant, his steak came a little too rare and bloody. He was put off animal products there after.

Esselstyn describes the medical approach to heart disease as akin to waiting till someone has jumped off a cliff before trying to rescue them- often times its already too late. In the United states, more than half a million die of coronary heart disease every year and 3 million have silent heart attacks. Silent heart attacks happen without the individual noticing it and the symptoms are usually minimal. Heart disease is like having a burning house and when it comes to coronary disease, dietary moderation just does not cut it. Eating foods that are bad for you even in moderate amounts is like spraying gasoline on a fire.

Esselstyn gives an example of the toxic effect a single meal can have on the endothelium(which is the lining of the blood vessels and the heart). In a study conducted by Dr. Robert Vogel, of the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, Dr Vogel used ultrasound to measure the brachial arteries of a group of

students. Then inflated blood pressure cuffs on their arms stopping blood flow which stopped the blood flow to their arms for 5mins. After that he used ultrasound to ascertain how fast the arteries sprang back to normal.

One group of students ate a fast-food breakfast that contained 900 calories and 50 grams of fat. The other half ate a 900 calorie breakfast without fat. After they ate Dr Vogel constricted their brachial arteries for five minutes and watched to see the result. Those who consumed no fat had no problem. Their arteries bounced back to normal. The other students who consumed the fat laden fast food breakfast took a long time to respond. It took nearly six hours for endothelial function to spring back to normal in the fast food group. This is because fat inhibits the endothelium's ability to produce nitric oxide. Nitric oxide is what facilitates the preservation of a healthy tone of blood vessels. Nitric oxide is a vasodilator. It causes the blood vessels to dilate or enlarge. When there is sufficient nitric oxide in our blood, it keeps blood flowing fluidly and helps eliminate the stickiness of blood vessels which is caused by high lipid levels. If the blood does not eliminate all the slim, which leads to plaque formation. If plaque formation is left unchecked, it will eventually cause the arteries to rupture and leach fatty deposits into the bloodstream. The body responds by sending clots, which shuts down that entire area, hence depriving that area of the heart of blood supply.

If an individual survives that type of heart attack, there are usually some residue scars left over. If multiple heart attacks, several procedures(such as bypass/angioplasty have been performed over a long period of time. Widespread scarring will weaken the heart). Further to heart attacks, there have been strong evidence suggesting the correlation between erectile dysfunction and heart disease.

In December 2005, researchers reported on a study which followed 3,816 men with erectile dysfunction and 4,247 men without for seven years. They found that of the 3,816 and 4,247 who had erectile dysfunction/were impotent prior to the experiment or those who developed these conditions during the 7 year period, these men were 45% more likely to have a cardiovascular event than the rest of their counterparts. Simply put, erectile complications are often a precursor to heart disease. As Esselsytn suggests, 'plant based nutrition offers the optimal opportunity to avoid disease- and to restore erectile capacity.' It would be most beneficial to us as a society and the world at large to abandon high- fat habits in favour of a plant based diet that fills our plates and ourselves with a great selection of nutritious foods to prevent us from developing diseases and enhancing injury-healing.

Esselsytn scientific prove lies not only in studies done by others. He himself followed a variety of people with coronary heart complications who were at the end of their rope. He took them into his program and supervised them with military precision, but always ensured that they knew he was being strict for their benefit. He adopted this mantra for working with his patients when a renowned doctor who specializes in cancer research told him that cancer patients are not afraid of dying, they are afraid of being left alone. He then decided that he would never let his patients feel like they had to travel the journey alone. The rules of Esselsytn's program are:

- 1 No animal products of any kind. Do not eat anything with a face.
- 2 For his coronary heart patients he advises to abstain from Avocados, nuts and coconut
- 3 Eat an unlimited amount of grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables(except Avocado). Also avoid refined flours like wheat and semolina. Seek out whole grain flours that have a "molasses" look.
- 4 Abstain from free oils including olive oil.

Besides staying disease free, one of the greatest benefits of eating a whole plant diet is that you never have to count calories to maintain a healthy weight.

For Caldwell's coronary heart patients, in addition to the dietary instructions he had them on a multivitamin, omega 3 fatty acids(like flaxseed not fish oil) and cholesterol lowering medication. In less than 4 weeks most people with an unhealthy cholesterol of say 250 mg/ DL were able to bring their vitals down to below 150 mg/DL.

Following all this important information, Caldwell dedicates a whole section to simple strategies on how to thrive on this lifestyle. Which include

- 1 You are craving fat.

Hang in there, your cravings will eventually dissipate and you will no longer crave artery- clogging fat because all taste is acquired.

2 You are invited out to eat at someone's home.

Tell them your dietary accommodations ahead of time and even suggest to eat before arriving. You can also have whole grain bread, baked potatoes and vegetables if they are available.

3 If you must eat out in a restaurant

Call ahead. Also one of Caldwell's patient's(Anthony Yen) who travels a lot had a card made in various languages that reads "plant based foods that contain no oil." You can also make a request for hot water from the kitchen and wash off the dish if it comes out of the kitchen with too much oil.

4 You are travelling, either at home or abroad.

Call the airline ahead of time. Also familiarize yourself with restaurants who carry more of the type of food you can eat. Also restaurants love it when give them the opportunity to accommodate you. They often go above and beyond, because you are certain to spread the good news of their wonderful service.

In the final chapter, there are some wonderful recipes which Anne(Esslstyn's wife), his other patients and Caldwell himself have composed over the years like the no tahini hummus, Hummus- orange Juice dressing, Eggplant- Tomato melt, Better than grilled cheese, Polenta pizza, Lentil loaf and Oatmeal- Maple cookies among other scintillating recipes.

In conclusion, there's always stories about people who lived up to 90 years and beyond who ate a diet of predominantly animal products. Caldwell gives an analogy of crossing a busy street. If a few people are crossing a busy four way street at a red light, naturally some people will survive unscathed. It is the luck of the draw. However most people will end up as road kill. Do not bank on your genes to give you a disease free life just because your grandpa lived till he was 200. It is quite likely that you didn't inherit your granddad's exact genetical make up. Why not just maintain a cholesterol of below 150 mg/ DL and and LDL under 80 mg/ DL, that way you are certain of a disease free life instead of wishing on a star. As seen in the people of the Papua Highlands of New Guinea, although they have a culture of smoking heavily. Their diet consists of about 19 varieties of sweet potatoes and minimal animal products, ergo they live very long lives in spite of all the tobacco they consume. Your doctor isn't responsible for your health, you are! Choose life style modifications over subjecting yourself to radical medical procedures. Don't be another statistic.

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## **Jennifer Welch says**

Eyes opened when I watched various nutrition documentaries on Netflix, including Forks Over Knives, which in-turn opened my eyes to this book. Knowledge is power, a must read for those brainwashed/held captive/doomed by the western diet.

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## **Aubrey says**

First off, I'm not sure why I didn't read this book sooner. Second off, there is no questioning why Clinton was impacted by this book. Third off, read this book (though I would start with The China Study) even if you don't know a single person with heart disease or affected by it (which is highly unlikely) because it will impact you.

Like Campbell, Esselstyn has a way of writing scientifically but putting it in layman's terms. He even makes it fun. I couldn't put it down and finished it in hours (and I don't consider myself a fast reader, at least not compared to my mom ;) ).

If you want to be free of disease, be in control of your body, you can! Campbell and Esselstyn give many examples how this diet does just that. Esselstyn starts out the book with a group of people who are basically on their death bed because of heart disease and the one woman in the group was even told to get a rocker and rock away the end of her life. She said no and joined his study. The results of his study are amazing. I already knew a bit about this book and about Esselstyn from research, from his son's book *The Engine 2 Diet: The Texas Firefighter's 28-Day Save-Your-Life Plan that Lowers Cholesterol and Burns Away the Pounds* and from the movie *Forks Over Knives* (watch it). Esselstyn was a surgeon, clinician and researcher. He has more than the credentials and his results speak for themselves. Consider reading it! Also, he prepares you by providing many recipes! Got to love it!

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## **Roger says**

Written by "a former surgeon, researcher and clinician at the Cleveland Clinic" this book is a must read for anyone who has a history of heart disease or who's family history puts them at risk of heart disease.

The first half of the book is what is important - it comprises the full discussion of the issue with a straightforward presentation of the evidence and what you need to do to avoid the onset of heart disease and for those with a history, to arrest it and in some cases reverse existing coronary diseases.

Is he right or wrong?

There is so much information and disinformation out there, the confusion it all generates - how do we know? Well - read what he has to say with an intellectually open mind and judge for yourself. But then if you want, don't stop there, keep looking and asking questions. The evidence that supports his claims is mounting all the time. At the same time, you will discover, if you haven't already, the fact that there are many interests out there that do not want us to change our dietary habits.

Dr. Esselstyn makes his case through reference to epidemiological evidence, clinical research, and his long term treatment methods applied to his patients - all of whom had histories of severe cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Esselstyn insists that heart disease can be eliminated and even reversed in some cases, and that it is possible to make ourselves heart disease proof by fully adopting his dietary approach.

Seems to simple on the one-hand, yet socially and emotionally insurmountable on the other.

Many will argue that his approach is unacceptable to most people, claiming it is too radical, requiring those with heart disease and those of us at high risk of developing heart disease to forever stop eating many of the foods and ingredients we love, while adopting and developing tastes for foods that we have never tried or may currently dislike. We have very strong social and emotional ties to the foods we grew up loving, that we share with family and friends, and celebrate through long standing traditions. Giving some of them up for good may be just too... well - radical. Right?

But, if you or a loved one has heart disease or a prevalent family history of heart disease, the question must



be asked: what is more radical? Repeatedly having surgeries that provide mechanical (i.e band aid like) fixes (bypasses, angioplasties) without addressing the root cause? Failure to address the root cause logically leads to more mechanical interventions in the future. And don't forget about the associated recovery periods, myriads of medications, loss of quality of life, putting ourselves and our loved ones through all the trauma, worry, pain and suffering, these surgeries and recoveries bring with them. By comparison to these considerations: is just changing what we eat, even if it does mean giving up some or many of the foods we love, to stay healthier longer, with better quality of life - really so radical?

And what about our children?

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) stats on their WEB site, "Obesity now affects 17% of all children and adolescents in the United States - triple the rate from just one generation ago.", "(or 12.5 million) of children and adolescents aged 2—19 years are obese."

Two years old!!!

Now that we know, that there is proof of the link between diet and heart disease, cancers, high blood pressure, strokes, and diabetes (just to name a few of the major health related killers), how can we continue to feed, or allow our children to be fed the same unhealthy diets that are making so many in our society. Isn't that something like a parent allowing (if not actively encouraging) their child to smoke cigarettes?

These ideas may seem harsh and hard to think about, let alone implement in our lives, but in the end, if we are intellectually honest and can put aside our emotions about food choices, there is no running away from the evidence presented and conclusions of this book.

So - unless you find something more compelling based on responsible science and facts - I say stop the whining and pass the vegetables!

The second half of the book are recipe ideas, some of which sound good but most, I have to say at least for myself, do not inspire. But this weakness in the book should not dissuade. There are more and more excellent restaurants and many cookbooks on the market that easily fill that gap.

So, if you have heart disease, high blood pressure, or diabetes, or are at risk of developing any of these - read this book - get healthy - eat smart!

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### **Kim Haritopoulos says**

He brings up many good points regarding diet - however there are other populations that ingest much in the way of "heart healthy" fats/oils ( Greeks, Italians - EVOO, Polynesians - coconut oil) and they have VERY little heart disease - so not sure we can attribute heart disease to ingestion of healthy fats - Also ? study size which was very low - would love to see larger group of persons in this type of study - however diet is extremely restrictive -

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### **Bluejaygirl says**

At 58 years of age, I had emergency stents inserted into a main artery leading to my heart. Shocked, because as a vegetarian we all thought I was healthy in spite of family history with heart issues.

I found this book when I saw an interview with Dr. Esselstyn and Bill Clinton. I quickly found out all I had been doing wrong. Reading this book, I realized I didn't have a death sentence. That was 3 years ago and I haven't even had a twinge of angina.

I highly recommend this book to anyone with family history of heart disease, for anyone as a preventative, and to anyone who has been told by their physician there is nothing else that can be done.

You will not regret it!

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### **Eric says**

This ball got rolling when I saw "The Last Heart Attack" on CNN. My dad had just had heart surgery, so I was looking for something to help him, and to help me to avoid the same outcome. When I watched the CNN special and saw the amazing things a plant-based diet was doing for President Clinton, and the others that were highlighted, I knew I had to do some more research. I looked up Dr. Esselstyn's book, and immediately downloaded it to my Kindle. The electronic pages blurred by as I read about the proven benefits of a plant-based diet. The information was so convincing, that I didn't even wait until I had finished the book to begin my new food adventure. I have now been following Dr. Esselstyn's dietary suggestions for nearly two weeks. I'm eating delicious plant-based meals, so I haven't even craved meat, and at last check (a few days ago) I have already lost 8 pounds. I wish everyone I love would read and carefully consider what Dr. Esselstyn has to say. Then, after all my loved ones are done, everyone else should join us.

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### **Patricia says**

Dr. Esselstyn gives a lot of information about his group of 23 cardiac patients who had no more hope with the surgical medical community who came to him for his nutrition program which advocates NO fat--not even the so-called "healthy fats"- olive or canola oils, NO animal products, and lots of vegetables, some fruits, and lots of whole grains on a daily basis. The book includes about 150 pages of recipes starting with breakfast and moving on through the day. The ones we have tried so far have sounded weird but ended up being quite tasty. One does have to get over a salt addiction, however!

Worth reading and trying to integrate. He advocates no more than 10 percent of daily calories coming from fats and no more. In short order patients lowered their total blood cholesterol to under 150 mg/dL and their LDL (lousy cholesterol) to under 80 mg/dL on his plan. We are trying it in our family and hoping for the best.

Dr. Esselstyn tells us that we need to be in control of our eating and thereby our health rather than mindlessly

turning it over to the medical and food industries. He also says that we have to get out of our minds and vocabularies the words: "Just this once!" or "Just a little bit won't hurt!" He says it does. Within two weeks of stopping all fats, oils, animal products he states that our craving for them will vanish. I have 'gone off' sugar a few times and find the same thing to be the case with sweet stuff. Bite the bullet and cut it totally out and pretty soon you have no more interest in it. Tell your friends you are doing this program and they will be kind enough not to offer you foods you choose not to eat.

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### **Christina Tunia says**

The typical western lifestyle and diet are a source of much illness in our society. Here are sound proven suggestions to stop the cycle and experience better health. I have gifted this book to many.

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### **Dan Hamrick says**

This book first caught my attention when Bill Clinton appeared on CNN and told how its strict, even severe, diet plan, helped him lose an extraordinary amount of weight. Like Clinton, I have had cardiovascular and ever greater weight problems, I think. Dr. Esselstyn, a former surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic and husband of the granddaughter of the founder of that institution, believes a plant-based diet could eliminate — I didn't remember him qualifying that — heart disease, diabetes and maybe even cancer.

But it is extremely strict — more strict even than the Pritikin Plan, the first one I ever attempted. The taboos include: all meat, fish, dairy, oils, sugars. Only alcohol and plant-based diets are spared.

I wrote a letter to Esselstyn, and to my surprise he called me. I told him I had figured out his diet: He just wants to starve the body of fat, and it has to lose weight, I said. No, he answered, that's not the key. Thinking about it, I realized there are fats in vegetables too. Example: Avocados. However, he suggested I call a telephone number, and they were selling a day-long seminar with lunch at the Cleveland Clinic Wellness Institute for close to \$1,000. No Thanks.

Once i needed to saute' things, I didn't like doing it in fat-free broth, so I gave in to one of my first of several temptations, Olive Oil. My cardiologist at the clinic said it would be a great diet for cardiovascular health if "you can stick to it." That's the problem. And I'm going back to fish too.

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