

The LeafSide Insider

To Your Health & Wowness! 🍌



LEAFSIDER SPOTLIGHT

A HEALTHIER LIFE, ONE MILE AT A TIME



Before Going Plant-Based

After Going Plant-Based
Lost 100 pounds!

If you've ever wondered what it's like to thrive on a whole food, **plant-based lifestyle while driving across America for a living...** meet Monte! 🚚

For 40+ years, the highway 🛣️ has been his office — endless miles, fast-food exits everywhere, long stretches of sitting, and a schedule that would scare even the most determined meal-planner.

But three and a half years ago, Monte decided to do something extraordinary: he chose WFPB eating for his health and his heart ❤️, and everything changed.

Before switching his diet, Monte struggled with high blood pressure and depended on three blood pressure medications 🍌 plus a diuretic. **Today? He's off all those drugs!**

He says he's healthier now than he was decades ago: **"I feel great. I have much more energy now than I did eating the Standard American Diet."**

Even with the challenges of trucking life, Monte takes **vigorous walks** 🚶 during breaks, relies on **LeafSide meals for consistency and convenience** ✅, and has even developed his own **creative hacks** on the road — turning Smoothies into overnight oats with soy milk 🥛, pouring Savory-Bowls over sweet potatoes 🍠, and using oil-free tortillas to make hearty wraps. 🥪

"Being an over-the-road trucker, it's very easy to fall into the fast-food Standard American Diet default. Instead, **LeafSide meals are a staple for me.**"

He wishes he had learned about whole-food, plant-based 🌱 eating sooner, but he's **grateful he made the switch** when he did, "My health is what motivates me!"

If Monte can **thrive on the road** through 48 states with only a small fridge and the will to live better — we all can. His story is proof that no matter where life takes you, **your next mile can be your healthiest yet.** Thanks Monte, for wowning us! 🍌



Plants. Power. Possibility.

Let's ring in the New Year! Here's your monthly dose of health & wowness, with stories & science for your **best self**. We're all about **helping you live healthier, be stronger, and thrive longer.**

- Nutrition made easy 🍎
- Fitness & movement tips 💪
- Sleep & mindfulness 🛏️
- Connection & purpose 🤝
- Inspiring stories ❤️

WHAT EXACTLY IS WFPB?

Whole food plant-based means fruits, veggies, nuts & seeds, beans, whole grains, mushrooms, and herbs.

LEAFSIDER WINS!

"I am loving LeafSide meals! **I am finally down to a weight that I haven't seen since my late 20s** and before having 2 children!"
— Carla W.

"**My weight remains stable for the first time in my life** thanks to these meals and a WFPB Lifestyle! I'm sincerely grateful that LeafSide does all the work."
— Tara Z.

"I am so grateful for being introduced to LeafSide. I've been eating it for less than a week and **I've already taken off 3 pounds and I'm not hungry.**"
— Mitch C.

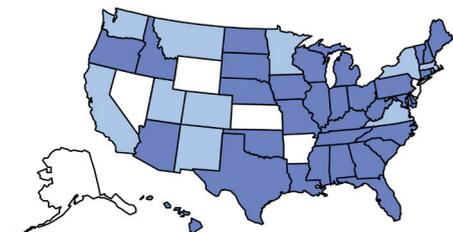
★ **MOST PEOPLE TALK ABOUT GETTING HEALTHY. YOU DID IT.**

Share your success and inspire others — be the next LeafSide Star! Visit goleafside.com/spotlight

U.S. OBESITY RATES SOAR SINCE THE 90'S

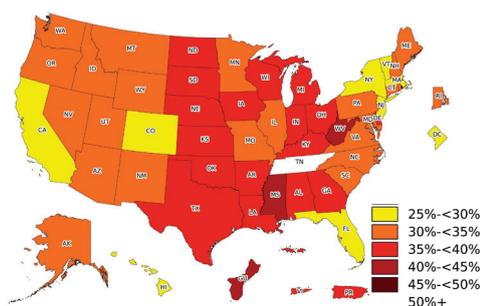
Source: cdc.gov

1990



In 1990's America, **NO states** had more than 14% obesity (BMI>30).

2024



In 2024, **EVERY state** has at least a **25% obesity rate**, with some states **45% or higher**.



YOU CAN'T OUTRUN BAD EATING

A brisk walk burns about **5 calories per minute**, and even if you start sprinting or jumping rope you're only upping your burn to about 12 cals/minute. But **eating processed junk like soda easily brings in 70 calories per minute!** That's more than a 10-fold difference over walking of calories out, vs calories in! Exercise is still vital for health, and can accelerate weight loss if done more than 1 hour per day – but what we eat matters far more for long-term healthy weight.

THE SECRET TO KEEPING NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!

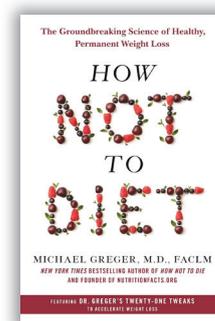
As we enter 2026, **eating healthier, exercising more, and losing weight** are reliably in our nation's top five New Year's resolutions. But almost half of all resolutions are abandoned by late January 🙄, and only 9-10% of resolution-makers report long-term success.

The secret to beating the odds? **Systems over willpower. Truths over fads.** As many LeafSiders know and live by, lasting health and optimal weight don't come from diets – which by definition are short-term & willpower-dependent – but from the virtuous cycle of healthy habits & lifestyle.

Healthy lifestyle's ❤️ evidence-backed pillars are: whole plants nutrition; exercise; sleep; stress management & mindfulness; social connection; avoiding harmful substances. **Winning on nutrition health ensures winning your other resolutions!** 🌱

THE MOST-EVIDENCED WEIGHT-LOSS BOOK, EVER

Diet, deprivation, defeat? Dr. Michael Greger's 600-page masterpiece *How Not to Diet* (HNTDiet) explains in depth (almost 5,000 references) that **your healthy-weight battle isn't against personal weakness, but an abnormal food environment.**



The odds are stacked against us because **Big Tobacco** 🚬 became **Big Food**. The “modern” **environment of overabundant CRAP** 🗑️ – Calorie-Rich And Processed foods – tricks our bodies into gorging on products with near-zero nutrition, nor lasting satiety. We're constantly being ambushed by a food system that weaponizes advertising, packaging, addictive formulations, and cheap subsidized ingredients (refined sugar & flour, salt, oils) to hijack our biology for max profit. To **see how abnormal our modern food environment is**, is your first big step to reclaiming your health.

So how do you beat the CRAP food system? HNTDiet lists 21 dietary factors mostly covered by **these 3 foundations** of an effective eating pattern that works with your body, not against it:

- 1. Master Calorie Density:** Eat more real whole plant foods 🌱, to weigh less. Focus on foods packed with water and fiber (i.e. veggies, fruits, legumes, whole grains) to fill your stomach and trigger true fullness (real GLP-1) & nutrient signals.
- 2. Get Your 2nd-Meal-Effect:** Eat fiber-rich foods (i.e. whole plants) to feed your gut friends. In return, they release many benefits to you, like hormones that suppress appetite for hours – even overnight and into tomorrow's meal.
- 3. Wall Off Your Calories:** The cell structure of whole plant foods acts as a natural barrier. Even calorie-rich plant foods like nuts and whole-grains keep nutrients inside fiber walls, forcing a **slow, steady release of energy** and avoiding total digestion in your stomach, passing nutrients on to your microbiome friends. 😊

Continued →

PRACTICAL THEORY, FOR YOUR HEALTH & WOWNESS

HNTDiet's 21 dietary ingredients and success factors help you readily **compare what really works to reach and keep optimal body weight**. Mountains of evidence and decades of studies support **lifestyle medicine's top truth**: whole food, plant based nutrition is the clear winner over all other dietary patterns:

Key Factors for Healthy Weight	Standard American Diet	Keto / Low-Carb	Vegan, with processed foods	WFPB
Anti-Inflammatory	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Clean (Low Obesogens)	🚫	🚫	✅	✅
Fiber-Rich	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Water-Rich	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Low Glycemic-Index	🚫	✅	?	✅
Low Addictive Foods	🚫	?	?	✅
Low Added Fat	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Low Added Sugar	🚫	✅	?	✅
Low Calorie-Density	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Low Meat	🚫	🚫	✅	✅
Low Refined Grains	🚫	✅	?	✅
Low Salt	🚫	?	?	✅
Low Insulin Index	🚫	✅	?	✅
Gut-Friendly	🚫	🚫	?	✅
High Fruits & Veggies	🚫	?	?	✅
High Beans & Legumes	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Sustainable / Practical	🚫	🚫	?	✅
Safe	🚫	?	✅	✅
Nutritionally Complete	🚫	🚫	?	?
Life-Extending	🚫	🚫	?	✅

Yes ✅ No 🚫 Maybe ?

The whole food plant-based (WFPB) way of eating wins across the board with the fewest caveats – just be sure to get variety & B12.

Once you have WFPB dialed-in, HNTDiet's 21 Tweaks can help you shed even more fat, faster (visit goleafside.com/jan26 to see all 21). The most powerful tweaks include:

At each meal:

- Preload with 1-2c water 💧
- Add 2 tsp of vinegar (any varieties you like)
- Eat undistracted for at least 20 minutes
- Chew 20-30 times to maximize satiety signals

Every day:

- Big breakfasts, medium lunches, small dinners
- Don't eat after 7pm 🕒
- Walk after meals
- Weigh yourself morning & evening; modern scales will track your trend

In sum, the best dietary pattern for preventing disease and promoting longevity, is also the most effective for our long-term optimal weight. And you can even enjoy your sugar-free dark chocolate 🍫 (80% cacao) and creamy avocados 🥑 with it! The downsides? WFPB takes time & skills; but that's where **LeafSide is your helper!** ✅🌱

THE WFPB HALL OF FAME!

The whole food plant-based (WFPB) dietary pattern got its name in the early 2000's with bestsellers like *The China Study* and the founding of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine in 2004. But WFPB has existed long before, e.g. vegans, vegetarians, or strict Buddhists were de-facto WFPB, until the recent boom of processed vegan options:



Highest sustained (6 and 12 months) weight-loss without portion-control nor exercise (2017 BROAD study)



Reversal of heart disease & clogged arteries (Ornish 1998, Esselstyn 2014)



Reversal of early-stage Alzheimer's disease in 5 months (Ornish 2024)



Reversal and remission of type 2 diabetes (Many studies, see ACLM 2025 Clinical Practice Guidelines)



The dietary pattern of all Blue Zones is 90-100% WFPB



Anti-aging: Increase of DNA telomeres in 8 weeks (Gardner TwiNS study 2024)

ARE GLP-1 DRUGS THE ANSWER? 📌

Not long-term; even ignoring the high cost, weight-loss plateaus after about a year, and most people stop injections after a few months. Side-effects can be serious (e.g. losing both fat and lean mass), and long-term outcomes are still TBD. Finally, stopping the drug causes weight to rapidly return. Scan the code below for links to Dr. Greger's videos on GLP-1 and weight loss.



THEORY INTO PRACTICE: EASY, EFFICIENT, & EFFECTIVE HEALTH HABITS

4 WAYS TO STACK UP YOUR WALKS!

If there's one habit that delivers easy and enjoyable benefits for nearly every aspect of your health, it's walking* — especially right after meals. Even a 10–15 minute stroll lowers blood sugar spikes 📉, improves digestion, and reduces inflammation. But walking isn't just movement — it's a **habit you can stack for maximum benefit**:

1. Get some sun! Walk during the first hour of sunrise or last hour before sunset and you'll soak in safe **infrared (IR) light** 🔆, which research shows can recharge mitochondria, and boost mood, immunity, & recovery.

2. Make it social! Add a friend or family member, and the walk becomes a **powerful social connector** 😊 — a top predictor of longevity in Blue Zones worldwide.

3. Pick up the pace with **interval walking** by alternating 3 minutes of brisk walking followed by 3 minutes of a relaxed pace; repeat 3-5 cycles. Studies show this lowers blood pressure, and strengthens leg muscles better than steady walking. Search for “interval timer” in your app store.

4. Try Forest Bathing! If you have a safe, wooded area near your home, use the science-backed practice of walking through wooded areas to breathe in phytoncides — natural plant compounds shown to lower stress hormones and boost immune cells.



Regular walks are good, but these simple stacks can turn a daily walk into **your longevity ritual**. 🌿

**Please consult with your healthcare professional before starting any new fitness program.*

USE THE HABIT LOOP TO GET HEALTHY IN 2026

James Clear's global bestseller *Atomic Habits* 📖 shared a concise method to establish new and positive behaviors. Called the **Habit Loop**, it's four simple laws you can use to help your New Year's resolutions stick. Here's how you could apply it to healthy eating:

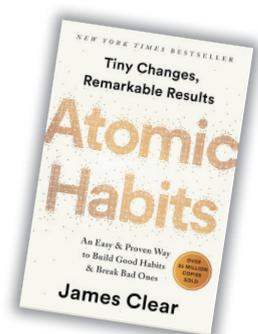
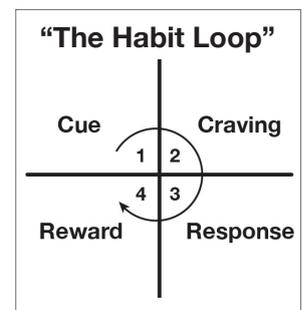
Law #1 Cue (Make It Obvious): Set **your environment for success**, cut decision-friction. Toss out **ALL** processed/junk food, because **out-of-house, out-of-mouth**. Put your LeafSide meals on the counter, with bowl, measuring cup, kettle, water glass. **In sight, ready to bite.** 😊

Law #2 Craving (Make It Attractive): Pair what you want to do with what needs doing, e.g. morning podcast device 📱 next to big healthy breakfast. Or join a group where the desired behavior is the default: Apes together strong! 🐒

Law #3 Response (Make It EASY): Per James Clear, this is **KEY to growing a new habit**. Cut work & time to the fewest & shortest steps. For DIY, meal-prep once/week, invest in tools 🛠️ like the Instant Pot, storage containers, etc. No time, will, or skill to cook? Easy, fast, and delicious superfood meals from **LeafSide ensures your success!**

Law #4 Reward (Make It Satisfying): For healthy eating, hack your biological desires for salt, sweets, and fats with **whole plant swaps**: nooch, dark chocolates (80%+ cocoa), dried/fresh fruits, avocado 🥑, nuts, tahini, seaweed, veggie & mushroom 🍄 crisps/snacks, etc. Then mark every day on the calendar where you had wins!

Systems over willpower. Progress over perfection. Just keep going, and let us know if we can help! Happy Healthy New Year! 🌿



GET MORE NOURISHING NERDINESS! 🧐

Scan the code for more about *How Not to Diet's* 21 dietary factors, 21 Tweaks, James Clear's *Atomic Habits*, and more!

