

# 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 wowing 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.

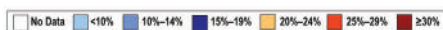
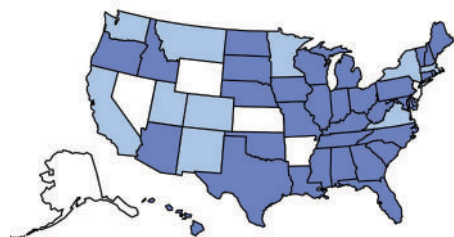
★ **MOST PEOPLE TALK ABOUT GETTING HEALTHY. YOU DID IT.**

Share your success and inspire others — be the next LeafSide Star! Visit [goleafside.com/spotlight](https://goleafside.com/spotlight)

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

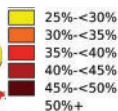
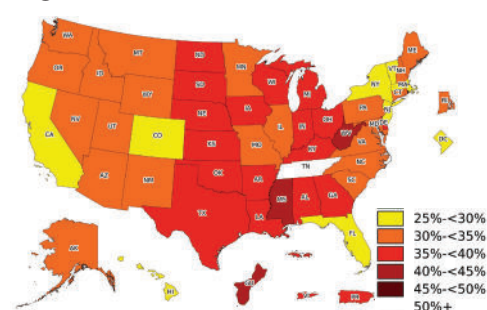
Source: cdc.gov

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 cal/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!

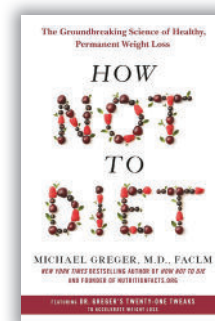
As we enter 2026, **eating healthier, exercising more, and losing weight** are reliably in our nation's top five New Year's resolutions. But almost half of all resolutions are abandoned by late January 🧑‍🦲, and only 9-10% of resolution-makers report long-term success.

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](https://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.

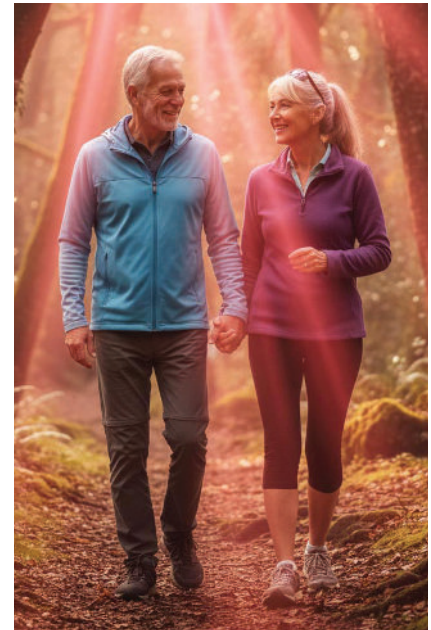


## THEORY INTO PRACTICE: EASY, EFFICIENT, & EFFECTIVE HEALTH HABITS

### 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:

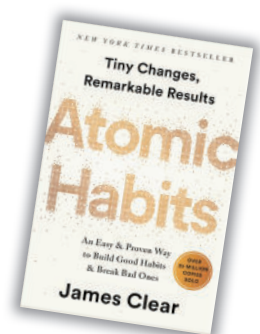
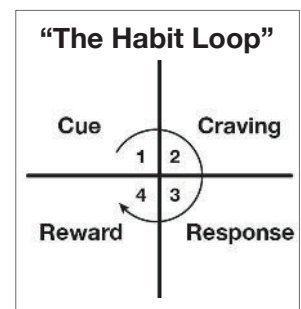
**Law #1 Cue** (Make It Obvious): Set **your environment for success**, cut decision-friction. Toss out **ALL** processed/junk food, because **out-of-house, out-of-mouth**. Put your LeafSide meals on the counter, with bowl, measuring cup, kettle, water glass. **In sight, ready to bite.** 😊

**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!

