

HOW TO DITCH THE QUICK FIXES AND
FINALLY PRODUCE **RESULTS THAT LAST!**



THE WINNER'S MANUAL

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE

BOBBY LYNCH

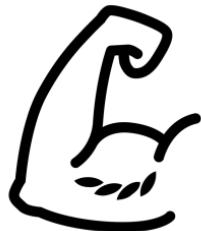
Part 2

Plant-Based Eating



2.1

The Root of All Evil



I find it amazing that as a country we spend the most money on healthcare in the entire world, but we have the sickest people. **In 2017, Americans spent \$3.5 trillion on healthcare alone.** ^[18] The **GDP (Gross Domestic Product) for the United Kingdom in 2018 was only \$2.62 trillion.** ^[19]

In simple terms, GDP represents the sum of all revenue made by every industry in a country. **This means that the United States' healthcare system by itself makes more money than all the money made from every industry in the fifth richest country in the world.** Let that sink in.

On top of that, **we eat the most meat (aside from Iceland); yet we have some of the highest rates of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity, and close to the lowest longevity of any developed nation.** ^[20] The average American consumes some sort of meat or animal product three times per day, and it's usually the centerpiece of the meal.

The average American also suffers from cancer or some sort of chronic disease. In fact, **one in every three American women and one in**

every two American men will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in his or her life, ^[20] and together, one in every four will die from their diagnosis. ^[4]

And the saddest part about this is that most people think this is normal. Even doctors. To the majority of the population, the belief is that “*disease just happens.*”

“Cancer isn’t the result of a systematic disequilibrium—it’s an invasive monster. Heart disease isn’t the logical outcome of excess fat and chronic inflammation—it’s genetic bad luck. Diabetes isn’t the product of a diet that consistently raises your blood sugars—it’s just what happens to some people.” ^[20]

As if humans are frail creatures destined to die slow and horrible deaths from equally horrific diseases. But the fact of the matter is, ***we’re not! Our health is a direct result of what we put in (and on) our bodies every day.***

No one wants to believe that though. No one wants to accept that the cause of most (if not all) of their health issues is the result of all the cheeseburgers, sausages, and steak dinners they’ve been consuming their whole life. No one wants to be told when going to the doctor that *they* are actually the cause to their own problems. They’d rather just take a pill or have surgery and continue with their poor habits because cancer and disease are “*inevitable.*”

They’re “*here for a good time, not a long time*” is something I’ve been told by far too many people. But how can you have a “*good*” time if

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you're not in good health? If you're always sick, lethargic, and overweight; how can your life be enjoyable? Because at least you get to eat your bacon? Come on now.

I never wanted to believe all of this, too. I grew up eating meat, drinking milk, and eating eggs. My family (mom, dad, brother, and I) would go through two dozen eggs and seven gallons of milk a week; not to mention the pounds of meat.

Just a few years ago, a typical day of eating for me looked like the following:

- Five eggs and a cup of egg whites scrambled with some veggies and cheese for breakfast
- Yogurt and granola for a mid-morning snack
- Grilled chicken wrap with a salad for lunch
- Beef jerky or a protein bar for an afternoon snack
- Two scoops of whey protein in a shake after my workout
- More chicken, or steak, pork, or fish with potatoes or rice and veggies for dinner
- Ice cream or cookies for dessert (when desired)

I'd always make sure to have vegetables with each of my three main meals; *but, holy cow, was that a lot of animal protein!* Pun fully intended (lol). It's no wonder my cholesterol was almost 200! I was eating upwards of 250-300 grams of protein a day, pretty much all of it being animal protein, which also comes packed with tons of saturated fat and cholesterol.

And it's not like I was out-of-shape at the time either. That sample meal plan above was an average day of eating for me while playing football in college when I weighed an average of 170-180 pounds at 10-15% body fat depending on the time of year.

Now that I'm vegan, my weight nor body-fat percentage hasn't changed much, and neither has my activity level. However, the last time I had my cholesterol checked, it was only 137—*a huge difference!*

But still, to most people, this is “*healthy*” eating. “*The more animal protein, the better!*” Right? Or so we’re always told. That’s all you hear nowadays. Protein this. Protein that. It’s the first thing everyone asks me when I tell them I’m vegan: “*Where do you get your protein?*”

Little do they realize (as I once didn’t either) that virtually all plant foods have protein and contrary to popular belief, *almost every one of them contains all essential amino acids.*

But, somehow, we’ve been led to believe that the only way to build muscle and avoid protein deficiency is by eating pounds of meat and eggs and drinking whey protein shakes—*which couldn’t be further from the truth!* Let me ask you, do I look protein deficient? I didn’t think so.

Then why is this necessity for animal protein all that we hear about? Because that’s how they want it; “*they*” referring to the colossally rich, immensely powerful animal agriculture industry worth hundreds of billions of dollars that dominates our market and controls our country.



It's crazy (and scary) how much control they have over us. Don't believe me?

The dairy industry spends at least \$50 million each year, promoting its products in public schools. The meat and dairy industries together spend upwards of \$140 million each year lobbying Congress. They also spend over \$550 million promoting animal products through federal USDA commodity checkoff programs ^[4]—catchy advertisements such as the “*Beef, It’s What’s for Dinner®*” television commercials and the “*Got Milk?®*” slogan, to name a few. ^[36] And that’s not even the half of it.

The American Heart Association is partnered with the Texas Beef Council. Tyson Foods is partnered with both the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society, and Dannon and Bumble Bee Seafoods are both sponsors of the American Diabetes Association. ^[4]

On top of that, **all of these organizations accept millions of dollars in donations from pharmaceutical companies; and the pharmaceutical industry just so happens to sell 80% of all antibiotics made in the United States to animal agriculture because there are at least 450 drugs known to be administered to these animals.** ^[4]

Starting to see the connections? We live in a money-hungry society dominated by a healthcare system that supposedly has our “*best*” interests in mind; yet never seems to fix the problem, just treat the symptoms. **But if we actually attacked the root cause of these**

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diseases and, instead, worked on *preventing* them before they ever happened; there wouldn't be a need for doctors to prescribe all the pills, medicines, stomach stapling, heart transplants, scraping of plaque from arteries, or excruciatingly painful treatments of chemoradiation.

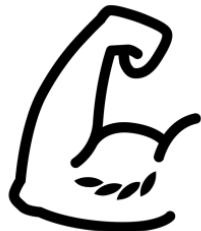
People would instead be healthy and thriving. The fact of the matter is though, people can't be healthy. We need to be sick because, without the demand for these overtly expensive commodities, billions of dollars in revenue would be lost; and that's just unacceptable.

So, even though animal protein has been shown time and again to promote cancer, diabetes, and heart disease; and the World Health Organization has actually *classified bacon and sausage as carcinogenic to humans*—meaning *they're known to cause cancer*; these organizations still promote the consumption of meat and animal products as “*healthy*.” In fact, *the American Cancer Society even recommends eating processed turkey and canned meats!* ^[4]

Have you ever heard of the saying, “*money is the root of all evil*”? It very much applies.

2.2

Health Effects of Animal Protein



It's time to shift gears and dig deeper into the effects of animal protein on the body, and we're going to start with the big one.

Cancer

Cancer is something that sits very close to me, as my dad passed in August 2015 from it. He was only 55 at the time. His cancer was a rare form called GIST (Gastrointestinal Stromal Tumors), and the strain he had was very aggressive. It made him so weak that during the last month of his life, he was unable to walk on his own. I had to either wheel him in a wheelchair or carry him chest-to-chest with his arms draped over my shoulders to help him get from room-to-room around the house.

Ultimately the disease took over his body and consumed him. It changed his appearance so much that we had him cremated after he passed because he wouldn't have been recognizable to people who hadn't seen him in a while.

Now you may be wondering how my dad got this disease in the first place, and to be honest, so am I. He lived a very active and healthy life. He loved running, and he'd run five to six miles a day, on top of

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lifting weights three to four days each week. He'd have two pieces of fruit every day with lunch and a salad almost every night with dinner. He never ate fast food or drank soda, and always drank plenty of water. His alcohol consumption was very moderate and consisted of a glass of red wine when we went out on the weekends for dinner, and a light beer here or there during the week. He never used drugs, and he and my mom had quit smoking long before I was born.

But again, as a family, we ate a lot of meat and drank a lot of milk. The typical rotation of our family dinners was:

- Baked or grilled chicken
- Pork chops
- Burgers and hot dogs
- Steak
- Spaghetti with meatballs and sausage
- Mac and cheese
- Take out
- Dinner at a restaurant—which usually included a variation of one of the above

One of my dad's favorite restaurant meals was a sirloin steak cooked medium-rare.

Unfortunately, however, data from the EPIC (European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition) study in which hundreds of Europe's top scientists followed 521,000 people from ten European countries, concluded that **the more red and processed meat one eats, the higher their chance of developing stomach and colon**

cancer. [20] That was exactly the type of cancer my dad had, and we ate red meat on average two to three times a week.

Not only did the EPIC study conclude this, but an Australian study following 37,000 people for nine years also showed that **as the consumption of red and processed meat went up, so did the rates of rectal cancer.** [20]

The NIH-AARP (National Institutes of Health and the American Association of Retired Persons) study, which looked at 500,000 men and women between the ages of 50 and 71 for ten years, had similar findings, as well, as it showed that **high red and processed meat consumption was significantly associated with cancers of the colon, esophagus, and liver.** [20] And it doesn't stop there.

These studies, among many others following hundreds of thousands of people over many years—like **the Multiethnic Cohort Study of Hawaii, the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, the Nurses' Health Study, and meta-analyses of multiple studies—all show associations between meat and other types of cancer: breast, lung, pancreatic, and renal-cell alike.** [20]

Why is this? Research isn't yet entirely conclusive. However, many things point to highly likely causes. Like **heme-iron and IGF-1** (Insulin-Like Growth Factor 1), for example.

Heme-iron is a form of iron only found in animal products. Although still theory, it's thought to produce unstable N-nitroso compounds (NOC) in the body, which have been linked to high risks of

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gastrointestinal cancer by one of the EPIC studies. The study found that **the more heme-iron one consumes, the more NOC found in their stool and the higher their risk for rectal cancer.** [20]

IGF-1 is a human growth hormone that our bodies produce naturally, but whose circulation increases with the consumption of animal protein. Now, you're probably wondering, why would high levels of a growth hormone, one that our bodies produce naturally, be a bad thing? That's because **IGF-1 promotes the growth of cells and inhibits their death.**

As babies and children, we have higher levels of IGF-1 because we need it to grow. But once we've reached adulthood and have finished growing, **if we already have cancer cells forming within our body (it takes years for cancer to grow large enough to be detectable), then increasing levels of our circulating IGF-1 will only accelerate the cancerous cell growth, while also preventing its death.** [20]

And what significantly increases your levels of IGF-1? Animal protein. This doesn't mean just meat. It means eggs and dairy too.

“Most female cows are routinely injected with growth hormone to get them to produce milk as fast as possible. This IGF-1 seeps into their milk, which is then absorbed into our bodies when we drink it (even when pasteurized).” [20]

Then we must drink hormone-free organic milk, right?

Nope. This milk also contains high levels of IGF-1, as dairy milk was designed to transform a 400-pound baby calf into a 2,000-pound mammal in as little time possible. ^[20]

Another probable cause is the chemicals that form in meat and animal products when cooked at high temperatures known as **HCAs** (Heterocyclic Amines) that are already involved in many cancers. ^[20]

On top of that, **you also have all the chemicals pumped into the animals during their raising and slaughter**, which come from the hormones and antibiotics used to make them rapidly grow and keep them “*healthy*”; and from the pesticides in the food they ingest. Once the animals are killed, those chemicals don’t just magically disappear; they’re locked into the meat. So, **when you consume that meat, you also consume all of those chemicals with it.** ^[20]

On the opposite end of the spectrum, **diets heavy in meat and animal products (Atkins, keto, and paleo, for example) also reduce the number of protective bacteria (phytochemicals) found in the body because the people following them consume relatively low amounts of fruit and vegetables compared to vegans and vegetarians.**

Phytochemicals are *biologically active compounds found only in plants, such as carotenoids, fiber, flavonoids, specific vitamins, and many other minerals; which have been shown to significantly decrease the risk of cancer when consumed in high amounts.*

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But it's not just high amounts of phytonutrients that significantly decrease cancer risk, it's that combined with *an avoidance of the toxins found in meat, dairy, and eggs.*

The Health Professionals Follow-Up Study of 48,000 men showed exactly this by holding not only fruit and vegetable consumption equal; but also saturated fat, total fat, and animal fat. This means that the only variance was found in the amount of dietary animal protein that was eaten. The conclusion? **The more animal protein one consumed, the higher the risk for colon cancer.** ^[20]

In fact, the EPIC-Oxford study found that, overall, **vegetarians have an 11% lower risk for cancer than meat-eaters, and vegans have an even lower risk at 19%.** ^[31]

So, just eating your fruit and veggies isn't enough. **If you want to reduce your risk for cancer, then you must also reduce (preferably eliminate) your consumption of animal protein, too.** This makes sense because, although my dad ate plenty of fruit and vegetables daily, he still died of cancer.

What's to say though that my dad's cancer was caused only by the animal protein he ate? If that was the case, then why wouldn't everyone his age, who consumes the same amount of meat and animal products (or more) throughout their lifetime, be dying of the same cancer? That's a great question. Again, the evidence isn't 100% conclusive that *all* animal protein causes cancer, and it's easy to say correlation doesn't equal causation. But:

“There are many great long-term studies that draw attention to the link between animal protein and cancer...[and] if there is a correlation in multiple studies from multiple parts of the world, and these correlations have been put through rigorous analysis, then you better believe there is something to the correlation.” [20]

And remember, it’s already been proven that *canned and processed meats do cause cancer.*

To bring attention back to my dad though, it’s still unknown as to what caused his disease. Being informed, after the fact, that the government office building he had worked in for years was found to be ridden with asbestos; and that there had already been several people from that building who died of cancer; it’s likely that was the trigger to start his cancerous cell growth. But even if it was, his regular consumption of meat and animal products surely didn’t do any good with deterring further growth; and it’s highly likely that it only made things worse.

Diabetes

Second, we have diabetes. More specifically, I’m talking type 2 diabetes (when the body overproduces insulin), also commonly known as adult-onset diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as of 2015, **close to 10% of the U.S. population suffers from type 2 diabetes, and close to 30% is pre-diabetic; meaning, they’re insulin-resistant and on the way to becoming full-blown**

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diabetic. ^[17] And if you were to ask almost everyone in the U.S. (diabetics, pre-diabetics, and non-diabetics alike) what the cause of diabetes is, my guess is nearly 99% would blame carbs and sugar.

However, the reality is that **carbs and sugar are *not* the cause of diabetes.** *They're an aftereffect*—a symptom of becoming insulin-resistant, which is greatly exacerbated by refined carbs (like table sugar) that cause large spikes in your insulin.

The real cause of diabetes is intramyocellular fat: *the fat stored within the muscle tissue in your body that blocks the muscle's ability to uptake glucose, which then causes insulin resistance.* Let me explain.

As humans, our primary source of fuel is sugar (glucose). Every cell in our body utilizes it for energy. **The average adult brain, alone, needs 130 grams per day to function correctly.** This is why when carbs are digested, no matter the source (whether brown rice, sweet potato, or table sugar), almost all are broken down into the simple sugar, glucose. Fruit will break down into the other simple sugar, fructose.

Once dietary carbs are digested and the sugar enters your bloodstream, your pancreas secretes **insulin:** *a storage hormone used to shuttle nutrients to your cells.* If not used immediately for energy, the extra sugar will be stored in your muscles and liver as glycogen. Glucose will primarily store in the muscles, while fructose in the liver.

A healthy adult can store between 300-600 grams of glycogen in their muscle tissue and another 80-100 grams in their liver—a

total of 380-700 grams (or 1,520-2,800 calories) worth of carb storage at once.

How well your muscles uptake this sugar depends on your cells' ability to develop new insulin receptors. When someone suffers from diabetes or insulin resistance, it means their development of new insulin receptors is poor. What inhibits this ability? *Intramyocellular fat.* ^[20]

When someone eats meat, they're consuming protein and fat. **Contrary to popular belief, not only carbs but protein and fat also raise insulin levels too, as insulin is used to shuttle *all* nutrients to your cells.** In fact, according to the Insulin Index of Foods, *beef actually raises insulin more than pasta* with an insulin score of 51% compared to only 40%, respectively. ^[26]

The difference between meat and carbs, however, is that the meat itself, as well as the saturated fat that comes with it, causes inflammation in the body, which damages muscle cells and results in fat accumulation in the muscle tissue. ^[20]

The cause of this inflammation is due to several factors, one of which is known as acidosis. When your body's pH is acidic, calcium is leached from your bones and muscles to neutralize this acidity. However, when calcium is taken from your muscle cells to buffer the acid, it causes muscle wasting and leads to fat deposition within. ^[20]

Meat also causes inflammation from the endotoxins in it that are produced by harmful bacteria, like salmonella. Although

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these bacteria are killed when cooked at high enough temperatures, the endotoxins stay planted inside. Thus, when the meat is consumed, the saturated fat causes the endotoxins to be absorbed into the body, and your immune system responds through inflammation. ^[20]

Therefore, when overeating and consuming excess calories in the form of meat and saturated fat, you gain weight through a build-up of fat, much of which will be stored in your muscle tissue from inflammation. This intramyocellular fat then inhibits the muscle's ability to properly uptake glucose in the cell (*aka, insulin resistance*), making the pancreas think it didn't produce enough insulin to get the job done and signaling it to produce more.

The more intramyocellular fat you have, the more insulin resistant you become, and the more insulin your pancreas needs to produce. Perpetuate this cycle of excess body fat and insulin resistance for years, and sooner or later, you end up with diabetes. Once you have diabetes or are pre-diabetic, high intakes of simple carbs then result in even higher levels of insulin, worsened insulin sensitivity, and more body fat stored if you're continuously overeating.

So again, **carbs and sugar are *not* the cause of diabetes.** They're a symptom. The **real culprit** is large quantities of fat stored within the muscle tissue (intramyocellular fat) caused by overeating and exacerbated by inflammation from high consumption of meat and saturated fat. ^[20] The exact reason for why you never see

someone of a healthy weight with type 2 diabetes. Only those who are severely overweight have it.

In terms of studies, unfortunately, there hasn't been any large randomized control trials yet that specifically compare a plant-based diet devoid of animal protein to a high-protein animal product diet, like Atkins or Paleo, with regards to diabetes.

However, when you look at population studies around the world (the EPIC Study, Adventist Health Study, Nurses' Health Study, Health Professionals Follow-Up Study, Women's Health Initiative), the prevailing trend is that **the more animal protein and the less fruit and vegetables consumed, the more incidence of diabetes. Whereas populations who consume the majority of their calories in the form of fruit, veggies, and starches all experience much lower diabetic rates.** ^[20]

In fact, the EPIC study found that **“glucose and fructose consumption was actually correlated with less diabetes... [and by replacing] just 5% of the saturated fats in your diet with fructose, you reduce your risk of developing diabetes by a whopping 30%.”** ^[20]

I actually consulted with a lady for coaching once who had severe type 2 diabetes. She was 80 years old, stood 5'1" tall, and weighed over 240 pounds. Her doctor's prescribed diet plan to help “*manage*” her diabetes, which I've copied and pasted directly from my consultation notes below, was:

- **Breakfast:** Three small sausages, scrambled eggs, and toast

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- **Lunch:** Tuna fish sandwich on two slices of whole wheat bread with chips and tea
- **Dinner:** Four ounces of fish or hamburger with baked potato, green beans, and asparagus
- **Snacks:** Ice cream and peanut butter crackers

After going through her long list of medications, she tells me her doctor (the same one who prescribed the diet plan above) said “*she'll be on those medications for life and will never get off them.*”

However, she also then proceeded to tell me that her church pastor used to also have type 2 diabetes too, but he now no longer does; nor does he take any more medication. When I asked her how he cured himself, she told me he said, and I quote, “*I stopped eating meat and went fully vegan.*” Need I say more?

Heart Disease

Next up, we have the number one single cause of death in America. Can anyone guess it? That's right: *heart disease*.

Research from the American Heart Association's AHA 2018 Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics report estimates that **one million Americans will have a heart attack or die from coronary heart disease this year alone, and currently, 16.5 million U.S. adults (age 20 or older) are living with this deadly disease.** And those numbers are barely a fraction of the amount that suffers from **hypertension (high blood pressure).** Current estimates are that over

100 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure, which is 46% of the U.S. adult population. ^[3]

Yes, you read that right. ***More than 100 million Americans suffer from a direct cause of our number one killer, heart disease, as well as stroke and kidney disease.*** And these numbers are just for the U.S. It's estimated that ***over one billion people suffer from hypertension worldwide.*** ^[20]

For those of you unfamiliar with blood pressure and what yours should be, normal blood pressure is lower than 120/80 mmHg (millimeters of Mercury).

- The top number represents **your systolic blood pressure:** *the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart beats.*
- The bottom number represents your **diastolic blood pressure:** *the pressure in your blood vessels between beats.*

Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

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Old guidelines used to say that a blood pressure reading of 140/90 mmHg or above was classified as hypertension. However, the AHA's new guidelines as of November 2017 classify that **anything 130/80 mmHg or above is considered high blood pressure.**

With a number like 100 million, you'd think that medical efforts would be full force into lowering blood pressure; and indeed, they are. But of course, through the use of pharmaceuticals that only manage the symptoms, *not fix the problem*—which just so happens to be the American diet high in meat and saturated fat.

Unlike with cancer and diabetes where the research isn't yet entirely conclusive (although very much points to animal protein being the culprit); **there have been numerous studies of various sample sizes conducted in many different countries over short and long timespans alike that all clearly show diets high in meat and saturated fat cause both hypertension and heart disease.** ^[20] Two of which I previously discussed (the Adventist Health Study and the EPIC study) that have both followed thousands to hundreds of thousands of people for many years.

In the Adventist Health Study, researchers compared “*healthy*” meat eaters to vegetarians and vegans (whose diet was devoid of animal protein), and they found that **the more animal protein consumed, the higher one's overall blood pressure and the greater their risk for developing heart disease.** ^[20]

In the EPIC study, specifically the Oxford branch, researchers also compared a population of “*healthier than average*” meat eaters (whose

meat consumption was much lower than the average intake) to an “*unhealthy*” group of vegetarians (due to their low fiber intake and calcium and vitamin B₁₂ deficiencies). Their findings?

“Despite this seemingly unfair comparison, **the unhealthy vegetarians still had significantly lower rates of hypertension than the healthy meat-eaters... [and a] statistically significant 30% reduction in the risk of developing heart disease by eliminating animal protein from the diet.**” [20]

The INTER-MAP study (the INTERnational Study of Macronutrients and Micronutrients and Blood Pressure), one of the best-regarded hypertension studies, followed over 4,600 people while looking at the relationship between diet and blood pressure and found that **“vegetable protein had a significant blood-pressure-lowering effect.”** [20]

But it’s not just population studies that show this. Many other randomized control studies, which have tested the effects of only increasing fruit, to only soy, to eliminating meat completely, have all shown that **adopting a vegan or vegetarian diet lowers blood pressure and the risk for heart disease.** In fact, “a meta-analysis of randomized trials looking at replacing animal protein with soy protein... [showed] **soy protein significantly reduces LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, two known risk factors for heart disease.**” [20] Why is this?

It could be due to several reasons, the first of which is inflammation—a leading cause in the formation of heart disease. And

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as we just discussed, diets high in animal protein and saturated fat heavily inflame the body.

Second, we have the cholesterol that comes packed with animal protein, which tightens blood vessels and restricts blood flow to vital organs. Restricted blood flow then leads to high blood pressure and over time, heart disease.

Third, is heme-iron (only found in animal protein), which causes oxidation and is directly associated with the development of heart disease.

Finally, we have the abundance of protective phytonutrients (found only in plants) that you obtain through a diet high in fruit and vegetables (antioxidants, fiber, flavonoids, vitamins, minerals) that combined with zero animal protein intake, decrease inflammation, cholesterol, and blood pressure and thereby reduce the risk of heart disease. ^[20]

So, in short, **if you want to lower your blood pressure and decrease your chance of developing heart disease, then skip the meat and eat more fruit and veggies!**

Obesity

Lastly, we have the effect of animal protein on obesity—a condition that as of 2015 affects 40% of American adults (over 93 million to be exact), and is a precursor to many diseases: cancer, diabetes, and heart disease to name a few. ^[16]

Obesity is classified as having a **Body-Mass Index (BMI)** of 30, or higher and is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms (kg) by your height in meters squared. For example, at 67 inches and 170 pounds, my BMI is 26.6.

BMI Calculation

- 1 in. = 0.025 m
- 67 in. = 1.702 m
- 1 lb. = 0.454 kg
- 170 lbs. \times 0.454 kg = 77.111 kg
- **BMI:** $77.111 \div 1.702^2 = 26.6193$

Technically, this BMI classifies me as “*overweight*,” as a BMI of 25-29.9 is considered to be. But, clearly, I’m not overweight. At 170 pounds, I’m roughly 12% body fat with a 31-inch waist. Why is my BMI considered “*overweight*” then?

BMI Chart

Classification	BMI
Underweight	< 18.5
Normal Weight	18.5-24.9
Overweight	25-29.9
Obese	30-34.9
Clinically Obese	35-39.9
Morbidly Obese	> 40



IT'S You VS You (AF)

PLEASE

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When the BMI measure was created in the 1830s by Lambert Adolphe Jacques Quetelet, a Belgian astronomer, mathematician, statistician, and sociologist,^[32] it was designed to measure people with a relatively average **lean body mass**: *everything that comprises your weight (bone, muscles, organs, water, etc.) minus your fat.* ^[11]

Thus, athletes, bodybuilders, and other people who have higher than average amounts of muscle will have a greater than average lean body mass and a higher weight overall. This will then skew classifications as to what you actually are (underweight, healthy weight, overweight, obese) because BMI is only a measure of your total weight divided by your height. It doesn't account for muscle mass or body-fat percentage.

Nonetheless, for the average person in America, obesity is a big problem (no pun intended); and our diet heavy in meat and animal products is only making things worse.

In simple terms, **what causes weight gain is overeating.** A major theme this book revolves around (which you'll see starting next section) is **calories in versus calories burned.** All food is comprised of energy (calories). Thus:

- If you're taking in less energy (calories) than you're burning, then you'll lose weight.
- If you're taking in the same, then you'll maintain your weight.
- If you're taking in more than you're burning, then you'll gain weight.

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So, technically, **you could eat only McDonald's every day and lose weight as long as you're eating fewer calories than you're burning.** Mark Haub, a professor of Nutrition at Kansas State, proved this concept by losing 27 pounds on his junk-food diet.¹ [20]

The opposite is also true in that you can gain weight by only eating plain tofu and rice if you're consistently eating more than you're burning. However, in both cases, it'll be tough to accomplish the respective goal due to the caloric density of the foods.

Meat and animal products, especially processed ones from fast food restaurants like McDonald's, are calorically dense. Compared to their plant-food counterparts, the number of calories per weight is very high. For example, 100 grams of cooked beef sirloin, the "*healthiest*" beef for you (and I use "*healthiest*" very loosely), yields over 210 calories. Your standard McDonald's cheeseburger yields over 260. One hundred grams of cooked broccoli, however, contains only 35. [1]

One hundred grams is less than four ounces. According to predictions from the USDA, the average meat eater consumed 10 ounces of red meat and poultry each day in 2018. [20] Ten ounces of beef sirloin has over 600 calories, and sirloin is the leanest cut of beef.

Being generous and assuming the average person consumes 85/15 (%) (lean/fat) ground beef (when in reality it's likely 70/30 because 70/30 is cheaper), 10 ounces of cooked ground beef has over 700 calories! Ten ounces of cooked broccoli has less than 100, and also no

¹ See "Fad Diets," page 151.

cholesterol, no saturated fat, and far more micronutrients and phytochemicals.

Beef vs. Broccoli Calorie & Macro Comparison

Food	Calories	Fat	Sat. Fat	Cholesterol	Fiber	Protein
Broccoli	100	1	9	9	10.5	7
Beef Sirloin	600	28	10.5	250.5	0	83
Ground Beef (85/15)	710	44	16.5	255	0	73.5
McDonald's Cheeseburger	745	34	12.5	99	3	37
Ground Beef (70/30)	775	52	21	232.5	0	72

*Nutritional info represents “cooked” data from acaloriecounter.com.
Serving Size = 10 oz.*

Now a meat eater’s counterargument to this would be, “Well look at all the protein in beef. That’s why there are so many calories. Plus, protein is good for you. The more, the better!”

I actually laughed out loud while writing this because I used to say that exact same thing when I used to eat meat. Yes, a lot of the calories in beef come from protein. But other than beef sirloin, the majority of the calories in all other cuts of beef come from fat. And more protein beyond what you need doesn’t equate to better, either. Especially if it’s animal protein.

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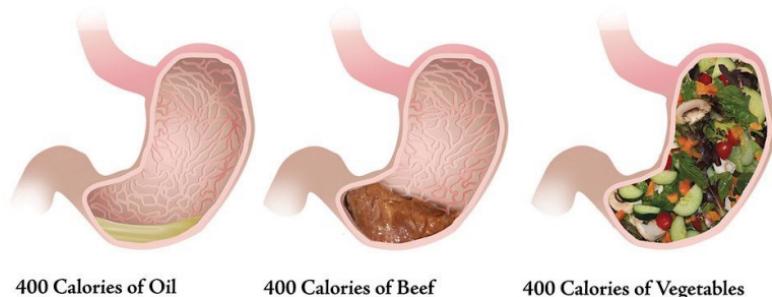
Protein provides only four calories per gram, whereas fat provides nine. Thus, over 55% of the calories in 85/15 ground beef *actually come from fat*, and 60% for 70/30 beef—and a lot of this fat is saturated fat.

The RDA recommends that men have no more than 30 grams of saturated fat per day, and women no more than 20 grams. **If you're a woman and consume just 10 ounces of 70/30 ground beef, then you've already surpassed your saturated fat limit for the day, and that's just from your beef consumption alone.**

Add in the cheese, eggs, milk, and other meat you've also likely consumed during the day, and you could easily be over double your daily limit by day's end; not to mention your caloric maintenance requirement. And that's not even accounting for all the fat and calories from the oil you've likely cooked with, as well.

People already have a problem with overeating and pushing past fullness. Now factor in that a lot of what they're overeating is high in calories, low in volume, and devoid of fiber and tons of other essential nutrients, it's no wonder so many people in America are sick and overweight. **All we hear is “protein, protein, protein,” and “more, more, more!” Yet the more we consume, the sicker and more obese we seem to become.**

The picture on the next page is an excellent illustration of caloric density and everything I just talked about and is the precise reason for why it's so easy to overeat on an animal protein-heavy diet, but nearly impossible to do so on a plant-based one.



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Illustration by Sherri Nesterowich • www.sherrinest.wix.com/art

Furthermore, the second Adventist Health Study conducted between 2002-2006 that looked at the prevalence of diet on body weight and type 2 diabetes, which comprised of over 22,000 men and 38,000 women, showed that **the mean BMI of vegans was only 23.6, whereas for meat eaters it was 28.8. This makes the average meat eater overweight and nearly obese.** It also showed that **less than 3% of vegans suffered from type 2 diabetes, but the incidences in meat eaters were almost 8%.** ^[14]

On top of that, if you look at the diets of the people from the longest-lived cultures in the world (the one's author and National Geographic explorer, Dan Buettner, calls the "*Blue Zones*"), meat and fish consumption averages less than 5% of the diet; dairy less than 9%; and egg consumption a whopping 1%. This means that 85% or more of their food intake is fruit, grains, legumes, and vegetables. ^[15]

The five Blue Zones include:

- Ikaria, Greece

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- Okinawa, Japan
- Sardinia, Italy
- Loma Linda, California
- Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica

In terms of macronutrients, 60-80% of their diets are comprised of carbs. **For example, the diet of the Okinawans of Japan (who have the most centennial women—the most women to have lived into their 100s), consists of 80% carbs, 10% fat, and 10% protein. Their staple food source is the Japanese sweet potato. And meat is consumed *at most* once to twice a month on special occasions and in servings of *only* three to four ounces at a time.** ^[13]

Circling back to my statement that more protein beyond what's necessary isn't better for you; the current U.S. government RDA (recommended daily allowance) for protein is 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight (BW). Again, that's **0.8 grams per kilogram of BW, not per pound.**

I emphasize this because when you ask almost anybody in the fitness industry what the recommendation for protein intake per day is (including the proclaimed "*fitness pros*"), most everyone will say one gram per pound of BW (something I also used to recommend before I knew better), which, for most people, is much more than they actually need. Some even go as far as recommending two to three grams per pound of bodyweight. Did somebody say, *kidney disease*!?

- The recommendation of 0.8 grams per kilogram is for the average sedentary adult.

- If you live a more active weekend-warrior type life, then upwards of one gram per kilogram will suffice.
- For athletes who train more regularly (like those in high school and college), up to 1.2 grams per kilogram is suitable.
- And at the very most, elite endurance or strength training athletes (bodybuilders, football players, marathoners, and powerlifters) will benefit from upwards of 1.8-2.3 grams per kilogram of BW in protein per day.
 - But again, this is the *absolute most* one will ever need to build and maintain the muscle necessary for their elite sport; and is in grams *per kilogram* of BW, not per pound.

[7]

Thus, as a 170-pound athlete, at the *very most* I need 178 grams of protein per day. And that's assuming I had a very active day and I'm eating in a deficit. If I stay between 77 grams and 178 grams of protein on average, I'll be perfectly fine. And again, clearly, I'm not protein deficient.²

- $1 \text{ kg} = 2.2 \text{ lbs.}$
- $170 \text{ lbs.} \div 2.2 \text{ kg} = 77.23 \text{ kg (1 g/kg)}$
- $77.23 \text{ kg} \times 2.3 \text{ g/kg} = 177.63 \text{ g}$

Consuming far more than my uppermost requirement is not only unnecessary, it's also unhealthy if done for a prolonged time.

² For more on calculating your protein needs, see "Calculating Your Macros," page 171.



First, unlike with carbohydrates and fat, where we have large storage capacities for them, we have limited storage for protein. Thus, **excess protein consumed beyond what you need is ultimately converted into glucose for use as energy or excreted as waste through your urine.**

Second, **consuming more protein than what's necessary puts extra stress on the kidneys to rid the body of the high levels of nitrogen waste produced through protein metabolism.** If this constant build-up of nitrogen waste is drawn out over long periods of time, it puts you at risk for the development of kidney disease and is extremely detrimental if you already have it. ^[20]

Lastly, the source of protein matters. Animal protein (meat, dairy, and eggs), as already shown, contributes to a host of deadly diseases: cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and many more. **If the majority of your protein intake already comes from meat and animal products, and on top of that you're consuming way more protein than you actually need, you're only increasing your chances for many health problems down the road.** ^[20]

So, in short, **what causes obesity isn't one particular macronutrient or food. Obesity is due to a lifetime of habitually overeating.**

However, **because meat and animal products are calorically dense, often high in saturated fat, and devoid of fiber, they easily contribute to overeating and weight gain, which leads to obesity over time.**

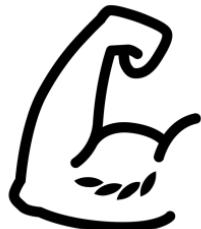
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Moreover, the adverse health effects of animal protein that usually take years to show themselves will ultimately show if the majority of your daily protein intake consistently comes from animal protein.

If you want to live a long, happy, and healthy life, then skip the meat, drop the dairy, forgo the eggs, and start filling your body with plants! Trust me, *it'll be one of the best decisions you ever make!*

2.3

Ethical Effects of Animal Agriculture



“When I see cages crammed with chickens from battery farms thrown on trucks like bundles of trash, I see, with the eyes of my soul, the Umschlagplatz (where Jews were forced onto trains leaving for the death camps). When I go to a restaurant and see people devouring meat, I feel sick. I see a holocaust on their plates.”

– Georges Metanomski, a Holocaust survivor who fought in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

The biggest reason for why I went vegan was because of ethics. I've always been an animal lover, and really a lover of all life (insects included); I always escort spiders and other bugs out of my house and never kill them. I'm not a malicious person by any means and could never imagine intentionally killing another living being, especially to eat its dead body afterward.

Growing up, however, the connection between what I was eating and what it used to be was never there. Yes, I always knew that I was eating chicken, turkey, steak, and ham; and that meat came from a chicken, turkey, cow, or pig. But what was on my plate was just that:

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“chicken,” “turkey,” “steak,” or “ham.” It was food, and those were the names for it. As if it were any other food like broccoli, peanuts, potatoes, rice; you name it.

All I saw was the well-prepared, well-seasoned, and aromatic piece of meat—the final product, never the process. Which is why the connection to the fact that that meat actually came from sentient creatures who were once living, breathing, had families, felt fear, and had the desire to live like you and I was never entirely made because their slaughter was never witnessed, nor was the life of suffering that they lived. And that’s how the industry wants it.

If more people saw the truth behind what goes on during the production of meat and all animal products, and then took the time to fully empathize with these beautiful creatures, without a doubt many more people would be vegan; and the animal agriculture industry would lose billions of dollars. But of course, to maintain their power and profits, the industry spends hundreds of millions of dollars each year to keep their processes hidden from the public eye and to make it *seem* as if the animals are living “*happy*” lives.

- Ads with cows grazing in open fields of luscious green grass beneath vibrant blue skies.
- Slogans like “*cage-free*,” “*free-range*,” and “*grass-fed*” stamped on packages.
- People-like cartoon animals smiling and giving a thumbs up.
- Or merely the final product cooked and plated, and accompanied by a family laughing and enjoying themselves at their dinner table.

The reality of it, though, is that there is neither happiness nor enjoyment in the animal agriculture industry.

Unless raised on a small family farm, practically all meat, dairy, and eggs come from animals raised on factory farms or feedlots, where they're crammed into tiny cages, stalls, or boxes barely larger than their body and left sometimes standing knee-deep in their own feces. They never see the light of day, breathe fresh air, or move from that space during their lifetime until the day they're loaded onto trucks headed to the slaughterhouse.

All animals within the industry are ultimately killed. Dairy cows and egg hens too. Once their bodies are used past their limits and they can no longer produce their byproducts, they're rounded up and shipped to be killed for meat. And no, *they don't live happy lives either*, no matter how magnificent the deceitful slogans make it seem.

“Cage-free” simply means the chickens are raised without cages but doesn't refer to their living conditions. More often than not, cage-free chickens are housed by the thousands in large pens inside factory farms. Healthy, sick, and dead chickens alike all reside within the same area and are packed on top of one another with barely enough room to move.

“Free-range” is no better. This term is regulated by the USDA for use only with poultry produced for meat; but isn't for pigs, cattle, or egg-producing chickens, nor are the requirements strict at all. As long as the chickens have access to the outdoors each day for some time, even

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if it's just a few minutes, then eggs and poultry can be labeled as "*free-range*."

"**Grass-fed**" is probably the most misleading of them all, as most people confuse it with "**pasture-raised**" (something I used to confuse myself). Unlike "**pasture-raised**," which means that the cattle spent some time outdoors on pasture, feeding on grass or forage; "**grass-fed**" simply means that the animal's primary food source after it's weaned comes from grass or forage, not from grain or corn. It doesn't refer to their living conditions. This doesn't make "**pasture-raised**" better though, as there are no government standards for this label; and, like "*free-range*," the time spent outdoors is also unspecified.

Moreover, **none of these slogans mention the antibiotics used to keep the animals alive in their unsanitary conditions, or the hormones used to make them grow twice the size in half the time.** Unless clearly labeled as "*raised without antibiotics/hormones*" or "*no antibiotics/hormones administered*," then one or both were used during their lifetime. ^[23]

Furthermore, the cruelty in the treatment of the animals is unfathomable.

To keep the animals confined in the tight spaces they live in, they're mutilated without anesthesia or pain relief. Dairy cows, pigs, and sheep have their tails cut off. Chickens are debeaked. Male cattle are dehorned. Male cattle and pigs are castrated. ^[9]

Dairy cows are repeatedly artificially inseminated (i.e., *raped*) because they need to stay pregnant to produce milk. Once they give birth, their babies are immediately stripped from them and sent to the veal industry to be locked in a box and then killed only four months later. **Male chickens born into the egg industry are macerated at a day old.** And any animal that shows resistance of any kind is beaten, stabbed, or electrocuted.

Once ready to be killed, the animals are packed onto trucks open to the elements and transported miles through all weather extremes, typically without food or water. The ones who make it alive to the slaughterhouse are then gassed to death, shot in the head, have their throats slit, or thrown into scalding hot water. ^[53]

It's actually estimated that close to one million chickens each year are accidentally boiled or drowned alive. ^[8] Your worst nightmare is a real-life hell for billions of animals. If you don't believe me, check out the documentaries *Dominion* and *Earthlings*, and you'll see first-hand what these creatures suffer through.

Estimates are that over 55 billion land and sea animals are killed annually just for U.S. consumption. That's over 150 million animals per day! PER DAY! ^[8] And that doesn't even include the estimated 63 billion pounds of marine bycatch each year that are killed, as well. ^[12]

Bycatch is the catch of non-target fish and ocean wildlife (seals, sea lions, dolphins, sharks, coral reef, etc.) including what is brought to port

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and discarded at sea. Estimates are that 40% of all marine catch comes from bycatch. ^[12]

To help put this into perspective, it's estimated that over 60 million people were killed in combat during WWII on all sides. Factor in another eight million exterminated by the Nazi regime and we're upwards of 70 million deaths over six years.

In the next 24 hours, more than double that number of animals will be killed for food in the United States alone. And over 25% of those animals will die for nothing, as an estimated 26.2% of U.S. retail meat gets discarded by stores or consumers (21.7% by consumers)–**fourteen billion animals killed each year to, ultimately, be thrown away.** ^[8]

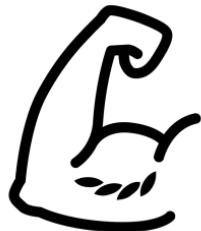
A great quote by 1978 Nobel Laureate, Isaac Bashevis Singer, goes as follows:

“Human beings see oppression vividly when they’re the victims. Otherwise they victimize blindly and without a thought.”

It's easy to sit back and pretend like this stuff doesn't happen, but the truth is that *it does*. We need to collectively start trying to see things through the eyes of the victims. **If you don't believe in the suffering and killing of innocent living beings, then don't give your money to an evil industry that does!**

2.4

Environmental Effects of Animal Agriculture



Not only is animal agriculture responsible for billions of deaths each year both directly and indirectly, but it's also causing the slow death of our planet.

One of the most significant and trending issues of today's time is climate change. The temperature of our planet is rising rapidly due to the rapid rise of greenhouse gases, which is slowly causing a host of adverse effects.

Before the start of the industrial revolution in the mid-1700s, atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) sat on average at 280 parts per million (ppm). By 1950, it had risen to 310 ppm. Today it sits at 410 ppm, meaning in the last 70 years alone, it's increased 100 ppm! ^[30]

Why is this a bad thing, you may be wondering? Naturally, the Earth's levels of CO₂ will rise and fall over time with the coming and going of ice ages. However, they'll never rise as quickly as they recently have on their own.

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Life of today has adapted to live with low levels of CO₂. Dramatically increasing atmospheric levels wreaks havoc in so many ways:

- Global warming
- Brutally hot summers
- Beyond freezing winters
- Ocean acidification
- Glacial melting
- Higher sea levels
- Species extinction

And more! ^[30]

When most people think of what's causing such high levels, they believe the leading cause is the burning of fossil fuels by factories, homes, and vehicles. **The real reason, however, is actually *animal agriculture*.**

In a comprehensive study by the Worldwatch Institute, they found that **livestock and their byproducts (farts and manure) are responsible for 51% of all worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.** ^[27] **At least 32 million tons of CO₂ is their annual contribution.** ^[5]

But that doesn't account for the additional **13% contributed through the transportation of the animals to their slaughter, and then their meat to supermarkets.** Nor does it factor the other **18% contributed during their raising by emissions from factories, the production of feed, and the deforestation of land.** ^[5] Add those up and we're looking at a **combined total of 82% of**

worldwide greenhouse gas emissions caused in some way by animal agriculture.

It doesn't stop there, though. **Animal agriculture is also responsible for:**

- **Up to 91% of the Amazon rainforest destruction.**
 - Over 110 million rainforest acres cleared so far.
 - 1-2 acres cleared every second.
 - The extinction of up to 137 animal/insect species per day.
- **55% of U.S. water consumption (34-76 trillion gallons used annually).**
- **20-33% of all freshwater consumed worldwide.**
 - 2,500 gallons per pound of beef.
 - 1,000 gallons per gallon of milk.
 - 900 gallons per pound of cheese.
 - 660 gallons per hamburger.
 - 500 gallons per pound of eggs.
- **The use of 45% of Earth's total land.**
 - 2-5 acres per cow.
 - 1.5 acres necessary to produce only 375 pounds of meat per year compared to 37,000 pounds of vegetables.
- **3.5 trillion pounds of excrement produced every year in the U.S. alone.**
 - 130 times more than human waste.
- **2.7 trillion animals pulled from the ocean each year.**
 - 1:5, fish:bycatch ratio. Meaning, for every pound of fish caught, up to five pounds of unintended marine species are caught and discarded as **bycatch**.

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- 650,000 whales, dolphins and seals are killed every year by fishing vessels, and 40-50 million sharks are killed in fishing lines and nets. ^[5]

And these are just some of the numbers. **With our current farming of the oceans, it's estimated that they'll be lifeless by as early as 2048.** ^[35]

Tyson, America's largest meat producer (*and don't forget, a partner of both the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society*), **dumps more toxic pollutants into our waterways than companies like ExxonMobil and Dow Chemical.**

“[In 2014], Tyson Foods, Inc. or its subsidiaries dumped more than 20 million pounds of pollution directly into our waterways... [and this] figure only includes pollutants reported to U.S. EPA’s Toxic Release Inventory and doesn’t include pollution from factory farms raising livestock for Tyson.” ^[39]

In terms of food and water consumption, humans drink 5.2 billion gallons of water and eat 21 billion pounds of food throughout the world each day. **Cows alone drink 45 billion gallons of water and eat 135 billion pounds of food each day.** ^[5]

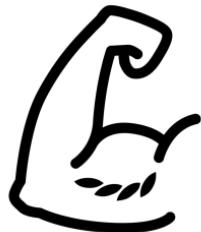
We currently grow enough food to feed 10 billion people, yet worldwide, over 800 million are classified as starving or malnourished. ^[2] In fact, 82% of starving children live in countries where food is fed to animals that are then eaten by western countries. ^[5] Does that even make sense?

We grow enough food to feed the world's entire population plus three billion more, but close to one billion still go hungry. If not for that fact alone, we shouldn't be animal farming, not to mention the destruction it causes the planet.

Animal agriculture is slowly destroying our home and the life within. If we don't start making drastic changes now, then our children and our children's children will greatly suffer from the effects of what we're doing.

2.5

The Benefits of a Vegan Diet



Now that we've looked at the host of adverse effects caused by animal protein and agriculture, let's look at the positive impact of a plant-based diet. We'll flow in the same order starting with our health.

Health

Not consuming animal protein means you're also not consuming heme-iron nor HCA's, which have both been linked to or shown to be a direct cause of cancer.

Neither will you have high levels of circulating IGF-1 that greatly accelerate cancerous cell growth and prevent its death.

You also won't be ingesting the antibiotics and hormones pumped into the animals during their raising that stay locked within their meat once killed, which are also highly probable cancer causes.

Moreover, consuming a plant-based diet means you'll be consuming high amounts phytonutrients found only in plants; which, combined with the avoidance of the toxins found in meat, dairy, and eggs, have been shown to decrease the risk of cancer significantly. **There have actually been many cases of people having cancer, going vegan**

or vegetarian, and then curing themselves as a result. Rob Mooberry is one of those people.

Rob had stage 4 colorectal cancer, and after chemotherapy, radiation, and invasive surgeries didn't work, doctors gave him only a few weeks to live. This didn't stop him, though. He was determined to do whatever it took to beat his cancer and stay alive, and that's when he switched his diet and went "*hardcore raw, vegan, superfoods.*"

After only a few months (and living passed his death prognosis of only a few weeks), when he returned to the hospital for a follow-up scan, it showed his cancer had "*shrunk in size by nearly 80%. Fast forward almost a year from that scan, and [his] scans showed almost no evidence of the disease.*"

Today, Rob is over six years cancer-free and has since started his own cancer charity, the **Mu Casa Moo Foundation**, that he uses to share his story of beating cancer with plants. ^[37]

The same thing goes with diabetes and heart disease. **A plant-based diet is the *only thing proven* through comprehensive medical research and real-world examples to *reverse the effects of and cure*, both type 2 diabetes and heart disease.** ^[20]

Furthermore, a plant-based diet also helps with Inflammatory Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and ulcerative colitis, as it can keep you in remission by lowering inflammation within the body, which then significantly reduces the need for harmful medications. Dr. Garth Davis (@drgarthdavis), the author of ***Proteinaholic*** (which I've referenced

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numerous times throughout this section), is an excellent example of this, as he used to have terrible IBS when he used to eat meat. But now that he's vegan, his IBS is completely gone! [20]

In total, a plant-based diet has been shown to reverse the effects of (or even cure):

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Hypertension
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Diverticulosis
- Gallstone Disease
- Gout
- Cataracts
- Mental Illness [20]

Not only that, **I can personally say that a plant-based diet makes you feel so much better!** Since going vegetarian myself in November 2017, and then fully vegan in August 2018, my energy levels have been through the roof!

My body always feels incredible! I recover so much faster after workouts (and I work out often and intensely). I never get sick; never feel run down or sluggish. I consume caffeine very minimally. And sometimes I only get four to five hours of sleep at night, yet I always feel so full of energy and life! I'm the healthiest I've ever been, and my numbers show.

- As of November 2018, my **total cholesterol** is only 137.

- My **HDL** level, **the healthy cholesterol**, which you want more of and not less (and, quoting my doctor, “*most people have a hard time getting theirs above 40*”), is **62**.
- My **triglycerides**, which should be under 150, are only **61**.
- And my **LDL** level, **the unhealthy cholesterol**, which should be under 100—is also only **61**.

Unfortunately, the only number I have to compare for reference from when I ate meat is my cholesterol, which was 178 in 2014. But seeing how low it is now, I can confidently say that it’s due to my change in diet (because that’s the only thing that’s changed since then), and I can only imagine how high my other numbers were back during my meat-eating time.

Ethical

This one is simple. By not consuming animal protein, you’re no longer contributing to the suffering and killing of billions of innocent sentient beings each year. **And morally and spiritually, that makes me feel even better than how my body does!**

Environmental

Each day, a person who eats a vegan diet saves:

- 1,110 gallons of water
- 45 pounds of grain
- 30 square feet of forest
- 20 pounds of CO₂ emission
- At least one animal’s life

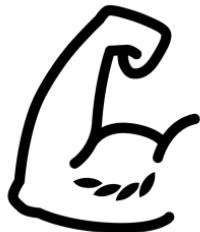
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Each year, a person who eats a vegan diet saves:

- 401,500 gallons of water
- 16,425 pounds of grain
- 10,950 square feet of forest
- 730 pounds of CO₂ emission
- At least 365 animal lives

In total, a person who follows a vegan diet produces 50% less CO₂ than a meat eater; and uses 1/11th less oil, 1/13th less water, and 1/18th less land. ^[5]

Choices



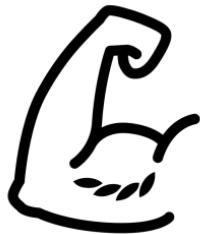
Going vegan isn't something you need to do overnight, as I didn't either. Nor is it something you need to do at all. At the end of the day, what you choose to do is your choice, and I'll never tell you what you can or cannot do.

What I will ask of you, though, is to **think about how your actions affect others**. If not thinking in terms of your own health, **at least think about how eating meat and animal products affects the health of our planet and all of its living beings**.

The beauty of being human is that we can think cognitively about our choices, empathize with others, and then choose to act accordingly by doing what we would want to be done if we were that other creature.

Animal agriculture causes so much harm in so many ways. **Our planet needs YOU. The animals need YOU. You CAN make a difference! You just need to think bigger than yourself, and then start matching your actions with your beliefs.**

My Story



I remember the last time I ate meat. It was Saturday night, November 11th, 2017. My mom, brother, and I were in Albany, NY to visit family and to see the last football game at Union College for the year.

That night, we went to The Cheesecake Factory for dinner and had a few different meat-based dishes. We shared buffalo chicken blasts for an appetizer, and spicy cashew chicken and chicken Bellagio pasta dishes for our main meal. And of course, we also had cheesecake for dessert. This type of heavy eating isn't uncommon for me when going to restaurants. I always eat relatively clean during the week and then occasionally on the weekends, I'll relax and have some larger not-so-healthy meals when I go out.

That summer, though, I had already been slowly cutting back my meat consumption, and then come the next morning following our meat-heavy dinner at Cheesecake, I woke up with my stomach feeling terrible.

My brother and I then proceeded to watch *What the Health* in the hotel room, and after seeing everything that went on in the documentary, I vowed never to eat meat again.

Fast forward to July 2018, the last time I knowingly ate any animal products also happened to be at The Cheesecake Factory on the 31st when my brother and I went to the one in Providence, RI for National Cheesecake Day—which is funny because all of my closest family and friends know just how much I love The Cheesecake Factory (lol).

The last thing to go for me was the baked goods and sweets made with butter, eggs, and milk, which was hard because I have a big sweet tooth and I was also dealing with a period of post-show binging at the time (more on this in the “Meditation” chapter, page 242).

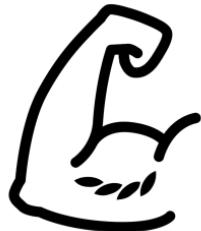
But my brother, who’s basically my twin (although we’re almost four years apart), made the transition to vegetarianism and then veganism with me. And during our time of being vegetarian, he’d always remind me of the evil of the egg and dairy industries.

“Yeah Bob, I know you like your cookies, but they’re made with dairy and eggs; and just because those things aren’t meat doesn’t make it okay. You don’t believe in the exploitation, suffering, or killing of animals; yet all animals of animal agriculture, including the chickens and cows of the egg and dairy industries, are exploited, suffer, and are ultimately killed for meat.”

And because of that constant reaffirmation from him, and me finally fully connecting with my “why,” I went vegan (and so did he), and we haven’t looked back since!

Thank you, bro.

Continued Education & Awareness



Some books, documentaries, and podcasts that have been very influential for me on my personal journey to and through veganism are listed below. I highly recommend reading, watching, and listening to them all, as they're very eye-opening and informative.

Books

- *Finding Ultra*, Rich Roll
- *How Not to Die*, Dr. Michael Greger
- *Proteinaholic*, Dr. Garth Davis
- *The Blue Zones Solution*, Dan Buettner
- *The Cheese Trap*, Dr. Neal Barnard
- *The China Study*, Colin Campbell
- *The Starch Solution*, Dr. John McDougall

Documentaries

- *What the Health*
- *Cowspiracy*
- *Dominion*
- *Earthlings*
- *Food Choices*
- *Food, Inc.*

- *Forks Over Knives*
- *Rotten*
- *The Game Changers*

Podcasts

- *Generation V*, Nimai Delgado
- *Rich Roll Podcast*, Rich Roll
- *That Vegan Couple Podcast*, Natasha & Luca Padalini
- *The Disclosure Podcast*, Earthling Ed
- *The Exam Room*, The Physicians Committee
- *Plant Strength Radio*, Bobby Lynch ;)
 - plantstrengthradio.com

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*This is the complete list of references for *The Winner's Manual: Take Control of Your Life*. Not all are used in the “Plant-Based Eating” section—only those noted in text.

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