



# Virta Vitals:

Taking America's Pulse  
on Nutrition and  
Weight Management

August 2024



## Key Findings

### 1 No-Zempic

Over two-thirds of those surveyed (69%) would rather lose weight on their own than with prescribed drugs. 84% of Americans have at least one concern about GLP-1 medications, including cost, side effects, and needing to be on the drug for life to sustain weight loss.

### 2 Body Positivity Beware

When it comes to weight loss, looking good may be less important than feeling good. Slightly more adults want to lose weight to increase their energy (66%) over improving their appearance (63%). Yet, nearly two-thirds (64%) believe that the focus on weight loss drugs is bad for body positivity.

### 3 Are They or Aren't They?

More than 2 in 10 Americans know someone who is currently on a GLP-1 weight loss drug (21%) and 13% suspect someone they know is taking a GLP-1 medication.

### 4 The Parents Are Not Alright

When compared to non-parents, American parents are nearly twice as likely to say lack of time is a top barrier to healthy eating (42% vs 22%) and to have considered a GLP-1 for weight loss (25% vs 15%).

Plus, almost 6 in 10 parents (58%) believe their weight prevents them from fully enjoying summer plans, much more than non-parents (38%).

### 5 Weight of the World

85% of Americans have some barrier to healthy eating. Almost half attribute their top obstacle to improving their health to the cost of healthy food (49%).

### 6 Nutrition Nonsense

A strong majority (77%) have been “tricked” by food packaging promoting health or nutritional benefits, only to find out later that the product was not as healthy as they initially believed.

## The Ozempic Era

GLP-1 medications for weight loss are everywhere lately. It's no surprise that a majority of Americans (57%) think GLP-1s are dominating weight loss and health conversations right now, more so than fitness programs and exercise (45%).

**39%**

Have either used a GLP-1, considered using one, or had a doctor recommend one.

**21%**

Are either currently using one, tried one and stopped, or had one recommended by their doctor but have not started it.

**18%**

Have considered using a GLP-1 but have not consulted a doctor.

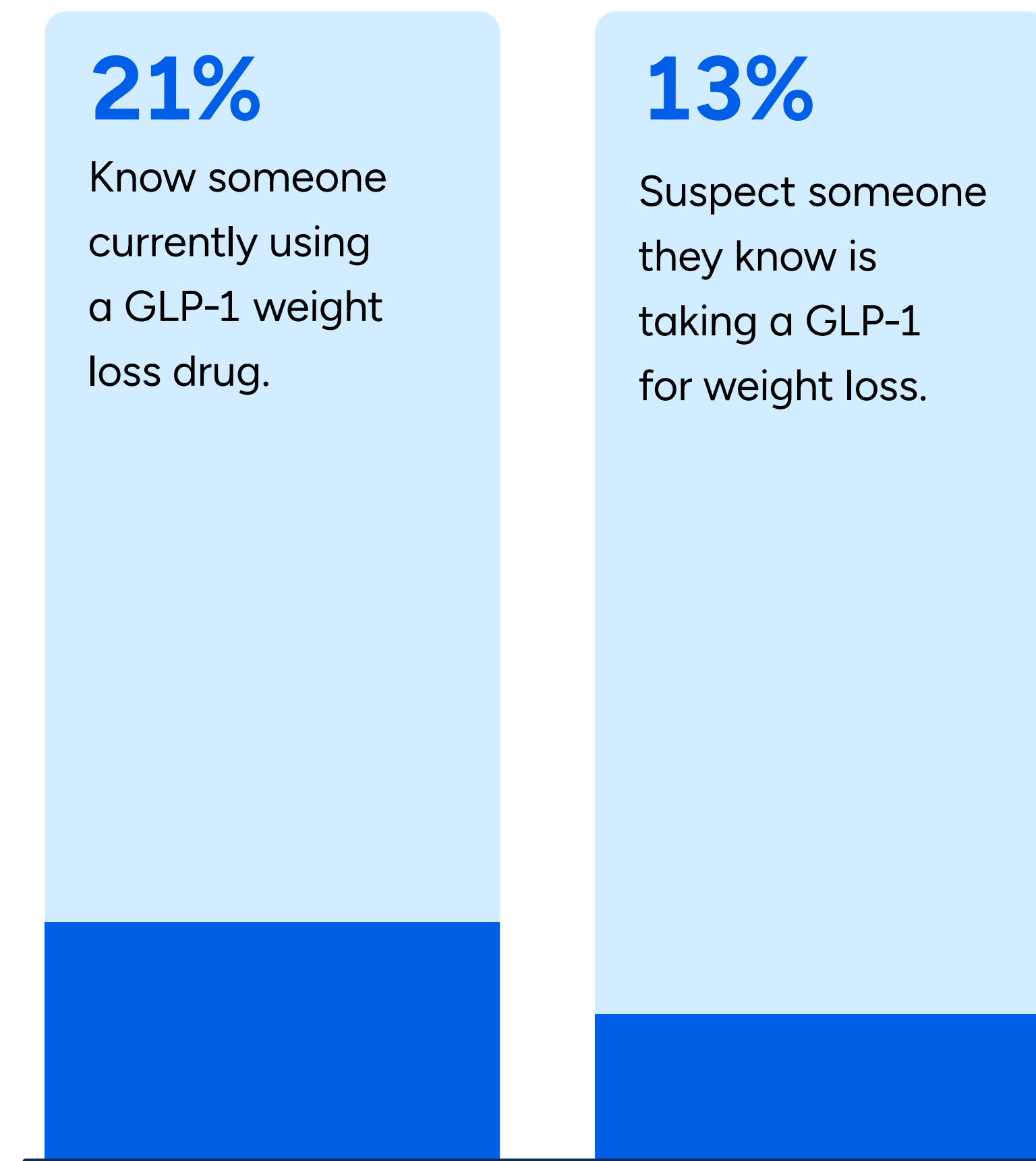
Many Americans know or suspect someone they know is on a GLP-1 drug.

**21%**

Know someone currently using a GLP-1 weight loss drug.

**13%**

Suspect someone they know is taking a GLP-1 for weight loss.



## Food vs. Medicine

While some view GLP-1s as a magic pill (or injection) for weight loss, the majority of Americans (84%) have concerns about these drugs, including cost, side effects, and needing to take them for life to maintain weight loss. Despite what we see in the media, most U.S. adults would rather try lifestyle changes to lose weight vs. a GLP-1 drug.

### Weight loss that lasts

**69%** Of respondents would rather lose weight through diet and exercise vs. weight-loss drugs.

## Reasons people want to lose weight



Increase energy



Improve mood



Improve appearance or self-esteem



Prevent or reverse a chronic condition



Live longer

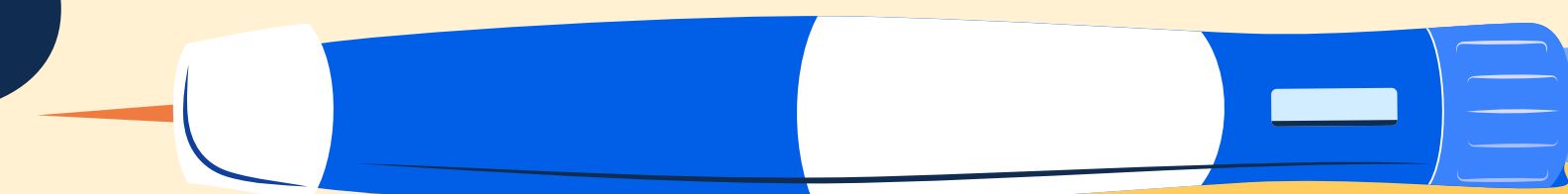


Improve sleep quality

Only

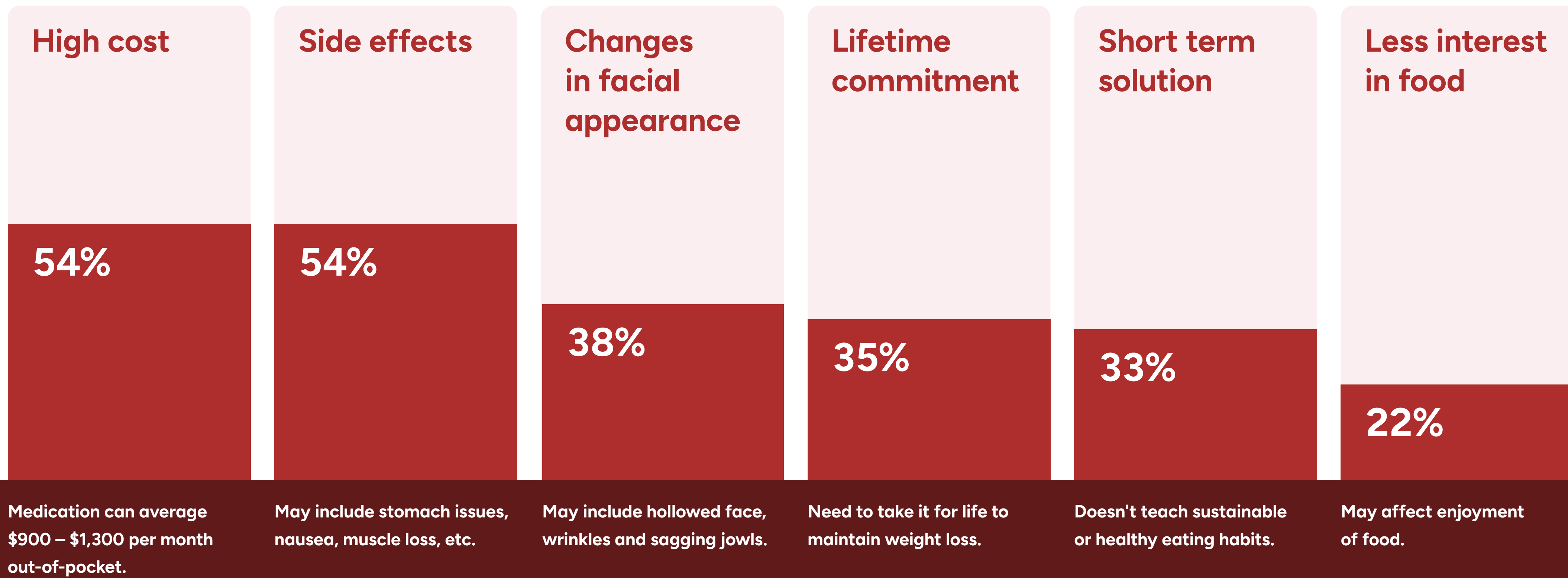
**8%**

Of Americans would plan to take a weight loss medication for life.



# GLP-1 Drawbacks – The concerns about weight loss drugs are real

What would stop Americans from taking a GLP-1 drug for weight loss, even if prescribed by their doctor?



## Body Positivity Beware

More adults want to lose weight for energy (66%) over improved appearance (63%). But with the increasing popularity of weight loss drugs, Americans have gone from celebrating bodies of all sizes to obsessing about which celebrities – or even friends and family – are using GLP-1s. How has this shaped our view of body positivity?

# 64%

Of Americans believe that the focus on GLP-1s is bad for the body positivity movement.



# The Parents Are Not Alright

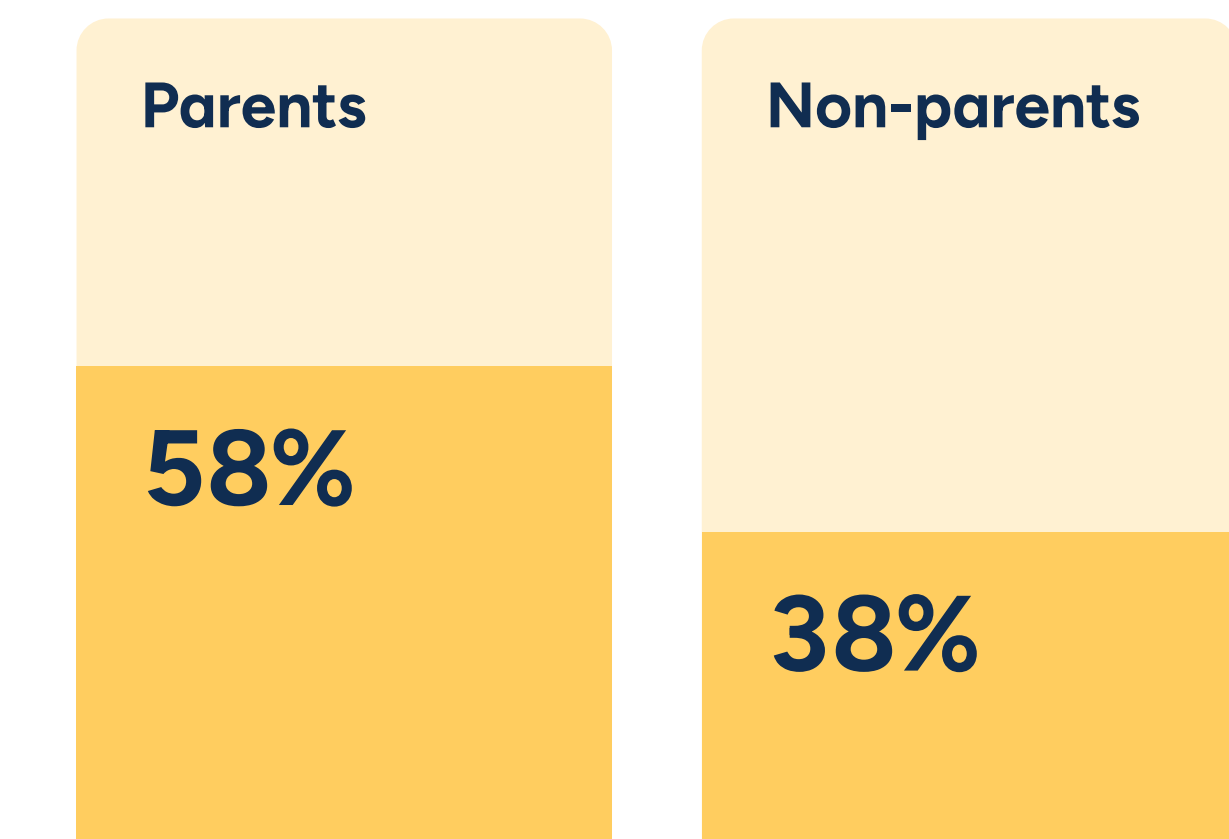
Parents are busier than ever, so it's no surprise many are struggling with their health. When compared to non-parents, American parents are nearly twice as likely to say lack of time is a top barrier to healthy eating (42% vs 22%) and more likely to be tricked by nutrition labels (90% vs 71%).

1 in 4 parents have considered taking a GLP-1 medication.



Parents' self-esteem and energy levels may be suffering as well.

Almost 6 in 10 parents (58%) believe their weight prevents them from fully enjoying summer plans, much more than non-parents (38%).



Parents are missing out on summer fun due to their weight.

## Roadblocks to Healthy Eating

Despite our best efforts, many of us are struggling to stay healthy. From grocery store inflation to the stress and time crunch of work and family, eating well often falls off the to-do list.

1 in 5 Americans say their health has declined in the last year.



85% of Americans have some barrier when it comes to maintaining a healthy diet.

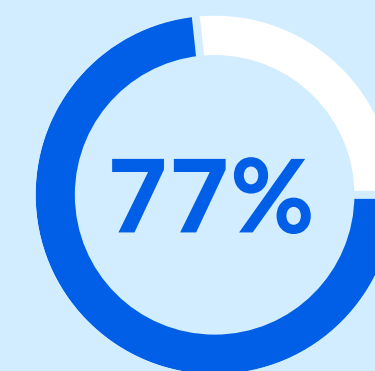
The top 5 obstacles are:



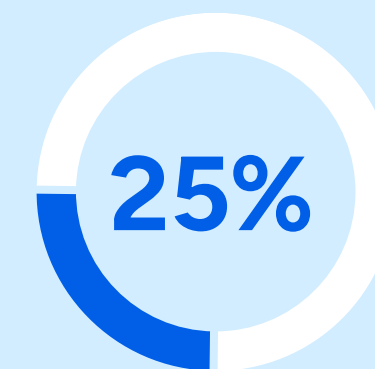
## Nutrition Nonsense

Nutrition advice isn't just from your doctor anymore. From TikTok to podcasts to Netflix documentaries, everyone has an opinion on what's best to eat for health. Oat milk or almond? Vegan or gluten-free? It's hard to know who to trust, leaving many Americans more confused than ever.

85% of Americans are either unfamiliar with the FDA MyPlate guidelines, find them unclear, or don't use them to make nutrition decisions.



Have been “tricked” by food packaging promoting health or nutritional benefits.



Of Americans say they eat majority processed food.



## About this survey

Virta commissioned this research to capture the perspective of 1,000 nationally representative U.S. adults on nutrition, health, and trends in GLP-1s for obesity and weight loss.

## About [Virta Health](#)

Virta Health is the leader in diabetes reversal and sustainable weight loss. Through a combination of personalized nutrition, technology, and expert support, Virta empowers members to build longer, healthier lives—while reducing or eliminating the need for medications.

## About [Wakefield Research](#)

Wakefield Research works with the biggest brands and agencies in the world in nearly 100 countries. We're also a resource for emerging and growing brands looking for an experienced partner. Top-tier media cite our research daily because of our reputation for quality, credible research insights. Most importantly, we work with organizations who value thoughtful and customized consultancy.

### Methodology

The Virta Health Survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 1,000 nationally representative US adults aged 18+, between July 11th and July 15th, 2024, using an email invitation and an online survey.

Data has been weighted.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

