

BLUE ZONES

“Your body holds deep wisdom. Trust in it. Learn from it. Nourish it.
Watch your life transform and be healthy.” – Bella Bleue



Blue Zones Project recommends eating as wide a variety of vegetables as you can. GETTY IMAGES

Simple ways to add plant slant to your diet

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Your mom was right when she said to eat your fruits and vegetables. Eating a plant slant diet is a great way to get your nutrients and has been shown to decrease instances of heart disease, stroke, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and even premature death. • Plant slant is also a Blue Zones Power 9 principle shared by the longest-lived people in the world. • While there is still a long way to go, the good news is, the rest of the world is slowly catching on to what moms have been preaching to their children all this time. According to a November article in Restaurant Business, even fast food restaurants like McDonald’s are hopping on the veggie train as part of their growth strategy with the future rollout of the “McPlant,” a plant-based menu platform developed exclusively for the Chicago-based company. • Here are some simple ways to incorporate more fruits and vegetables in your diet to give your body the nutrition boost it needs.

Make smoothies

Smoothies are easy to make and they are a great way to mix fruits and vegetables in a way that’s nutritious and delicious! Kids love them too. They can be enjoyed in the morning for breakfast or even between meals as a snack or pick-me-up. It is important to incorporate whole plant-based ingredients like kale and spinach, and stay away from adding ingredients with too much sugar. Watch local Health Coach, Michelle Kramer demonstrate how to make all-natural and delicious plant-based smoothies at [BlueZonesProjectSSWFL.eventbrite.com](https://www.bluezonesprojectsswfl.com).

Start a plant-based potluck Moai

Moai is an Okinawan term to describe a group that meets regularly for a common purpose. Blue Zones Project helps organize many types of Moais that include walking groups, restaurant-hopping at Blue Zones Project approved locations, and potluck get togethers.

In 2019, NBC’s “Today” show took note of Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida and followed 22 plant-based potluck Moais. In just 3 months, 100% of participants said their Moai

had a positive impact on their well-being and 100% were eating more plant-based meals. Almost 70% said they had made new friends and many lost weight, lowered their cholesterol and/or reduced their blood sugar.

While face-to-face potluck Moais are not feasible for many right now, meeting virtually is still a great way to share recipes and connect. For more information or to get help starting a potluck moai, contact Blue Zones Project Engagement Lead, Rafael Campo at Rafael.Campo@sharecare.com.

Eat a Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean diet is based on commonalities found in traditional eating patterns of people who live in the Mediterranean region, particularly bordering the Mediterranean sea.

It has been found that in addition to an active lifestyle, this diet rich in nutrient dense foods like olive oil, fruits and vegetables, grains, beans, nuts and fish has many health benefits. Only in the last 50 years has it been the subject of intensive clinical research and gained traction in the health and scientific community as one of the healthiest diets in the world.

In fact, U.S. News & World Report recently announced the Mediterranean Diet as the No. 1 Best Overall Diet for the fourth year in a row! To view Blue Zones Project cooking demonstrations with great Mediterranean recipes, visit [BlueZonesProjectSwfl.eventbrite.com](https://www.bluezonesprojectswfl.com).

Make a veggie soup

Soups are a great way to eat multiple servings of vegetables at once. Simply add some of your favorite greens, beans, spices, and other vegetables together and cook in a vegetable or chicken broth. You can do a search online for soup recipes or learn how to make a delicious Blue Zones Project Minestrone soup by visiting [bzipminestrone.eventbrite.com](https://www.bluezonesprojectswfl.com).

Brought to Southwest Florida by NCH Healthcare System, in collaboration with Sharecare, Inc., Blue Zones Project is a vital part of Southwest Florida’s well-being improvement initiative that encourages changes in the community that lead to healthier options. For more information about Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, visit [southwestflorida.bluezonesproject.com](https://www.southwestflorida.bluezonesproject.com).