# THE **INELUENCE** ISSUE PART **3** The MH Top 30 Influencers

But this shift will also create more competition online. "The barriers of entry are greatly reduced, but the bar for quality will likely go up-with more content out there, it will be harder to stand out," Miller says. We will rely even more on AI systems to find us the answers we're looking for but could also get higher-quality entertainment and information.

Soon it may be difficult to tell what content is made by your favorite influencer and what's generated through AI. "It's early days, but there will be an explosion of AI-generated content on social channels, given it's getting much easier to create visual content," says Liz Snower, cofounder of Iconiq, which makes conversational AI characters. "It will be possible for your favorite influencer to have fullblown conversations about anything with thousands of fans in the DMs at once."

Human content creators will also have to fend off fully digital influencers. The next big YouTube star, podcaster, or newsletter writer might not even be human. Lil Miquela is a CGI character on Instagram that's amassed more than 2.8 million followers. Last year, the teen-clothing retailer PacSun announced a multi-season partnership with the virtual creator. Snower says future AI influencers, which will offer content tailored to the viewer, will likely look like Kuki, an AI-powered chatbot and persona that has appeared in influencer campaigns for H&M and Voque. Eventually, platforms like Instagram will need verifications to make it clear to consumers what is human and what is AI.

If AI makes it easy to generate endless virtual influencers, each of which is able to personalize its content to our interests and desires, then perhaps we're still only at the beginning of the influencer era. "Imagine a creator in Brazil films a portion of a You-Tube video and the rest is AI generated and customized to viewers around the world," says Miller.

Soon we could all have our own army of AI-powered virtual characters that we increasingly view as friends.

"And what's the most powerful form of marketing?" says Gahan. "A recommendation from a friend."

TAYLOR LORENZ covers online culture for The Washington Post and is the author of Extremely Online: The Untold Story of Fame, Influence, and Power on the Internet (October 2023).

## WHAT MAKES A MEN'S HEALTH-APPROVED INFLUENCER?

The bar is high. We looked for accounts that provide strong amounts of three key factors: information, inspiration, and instruction. Did follower counts help? Of course. But degrees (M.D., Ph.D., etc.) and certifications (C.S.C.S., R.D., etc.) were also highly valued-and in topic areas where they aren't common, sheer experience counted, too. As did the message, which had to be uplifting, not competitive or shaming. Their advice had to feel safe, practical, and, of course, fun and useful. These 30 are worth a follow. -THE EDITORS OF MEN'S HEALTH



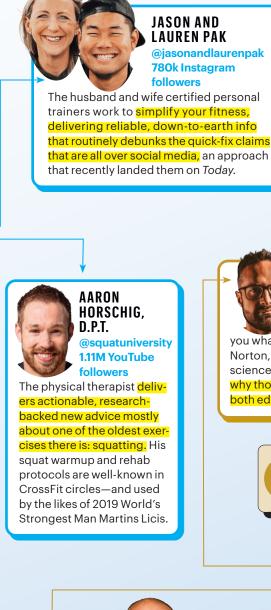


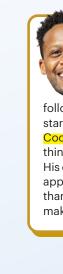
13.3M YouTube followers The innovative trainer built his brand on results-driven online programs with fun and insightful video instruction, a formula widely copied by other trainers. His annual fitness summit, AX Live, draws top fitness minds and regular joes and has become something of a Fitness State of the Union. So wide reaching is Cavaliere's influence that Sylvester Stallone credited him on Instagram with revitalizing his routines.

# HELLAH SIDIBE ahellahgood9 214k Instagram followers. 290k on YouTube

(@HellahGood) This relentlessly positive former pro soccer player has run at least two miles every single day since May 15, 2017, helping to introduce and drive interest in the concept of a run streak.

**BRAD SCHOENFELD,** PH.D., C.S.C.S. @bradschoenfeldphd 327k Instagram follower The renowned muscle researcher at Lehman College brings context to complicated fitness studies. He's emerged as a go-to source of information for trainers and is regularly quoted by The New York Times-and MH as well.





LAYNE NORTON, PH.D. @biolayne 798k Instagram followers

you what you should and shouldn't eat. Norton, who has a Ph.D. in nutritional sciences, has built a following telling you why those people are wrong in a way that's both educational and freeing.



# JOSÉ ANDRÉS

@chefioseandres 960k Instagram followers Andrés isn't just changing the culinary world-he's changing the world itself through his passion for simple, nutritious food; his nonprofit, World Central Kitchen; and kindness (which counts for a lot these days).



# **KEVIN CURRY**

@fitmencook **1.6M Instagram followers** 

Before FitMenCook, fit men didn't really cook. Or at least they didn't amass a following for it online. Then along came Curry, who started posting healthy meals to Tumblr as FitMen-Cook in 2012. Chili. Smoothies. Pasta dishes. All things that seemed not only delicious but doable. His empire has grown to include a cookbook, an app, and a meal-delivery service. He's posted more than 4,000 free recipes and tips on Instagram that

make it easier to cook healthy meals.

Many nutrition "experts" tell



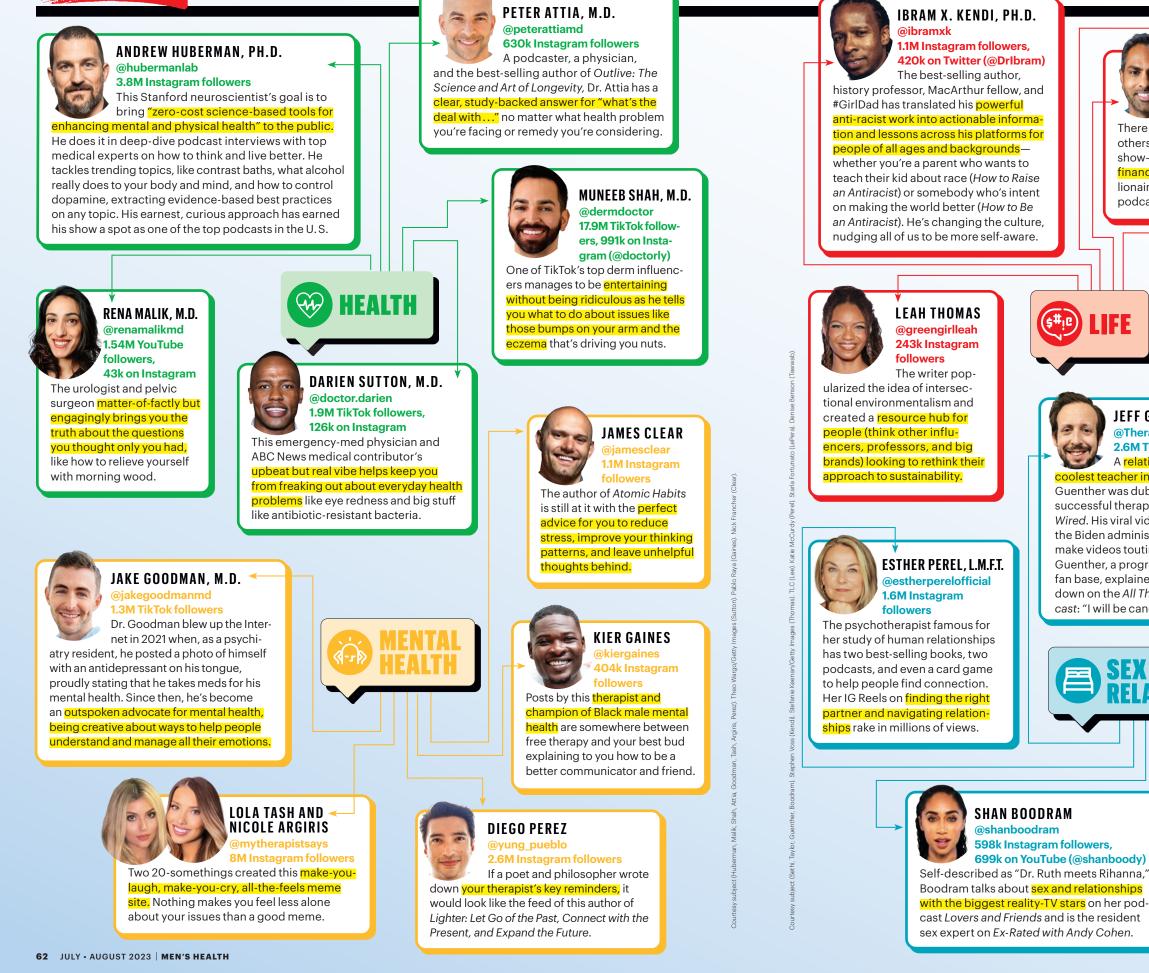
Where so much of food content online is pictureperfect, Coen's is practical. He whips up guick, inexpensive, healthy meals that don't feel overly...healthy. There's pasta! There's bacon! There's pizza!

# ASKER JEUKENDRUP, PH.D.

@aieukendrup 101k Instagram followers The sports-nutrition scientist presents study findings in fun infographics that turn complex topics into

"Hey, I get that now!" Follow him to feel like an instant nutrition expert.

# THE **INELUENCE** ISSUE PART **3**



### RAMIT SETHI @ramit 542k Instagram followers

There are a lot of finfluencers, but no others have a *How to Get Rich* Netflix show—an expansion of the personalfinance advice the self-made millionaire shares on his platforms and podcast, *I Will Teach You to Be Rich*.

WILL TAYLOR @brightbazaar 341k Instagram followers

A decade of smart style and decor tips earned Taylor a homeaccessories line at QVC and two inspirational design books.

# SANDRA LEE, M.D. @drpimplepopper 4.4M Instagram followers, 16.3M on TikTok, 7.76M on YouTube Come for the gross skin extractions,

stay for the oddly satisfying videos. Dr. Lee has spurred a lot of curiosity—and copycat influencers—around these dermatological procedures.

# JEFF GUENTHER, L.P.C.

@TherapyJeff

### **2.6M TikTok followers** A relationship expert with "your coolest teacher in high school" energy, Guenther was dubbed "one of the most successful therapist-cum-influencers" by

Wired. His viral videos caught the attention of the Biden administration, which asked him to make videos touting an economic campaign. Guenther, a progressive with a left-leaning fan base, explained why he turned them down on the All Things Private Practice Podcast: "I will be canceled by my audience."



NICOLE LEPERA, PH.D. @the.holistic .psychologist

> 6.6M Instagram followers LePera's viral posts help her millions of followers discover how their childhood trauma is affecting their adult relationships—and how to break the cycle. Her 2021 book, How to Do the Work, was a number-one NYT bestseller.

# NEDRA GLOVER TAWWAB

@nedratawwab
1.8M Instagram followers
Are you left scratching
your head whenever

someone brings up "boundaries"? In her empowering videos, this therapist explains what boundaries are and how to use them for healthier relationships—wisdom you can also find in her book Set Boundaries, Find Peace, an instant NYT bestseller.