

FROM DETOX TO DAILY ROUTINES: Wellness Trends - Inspired by Influencers

By: Liv Mogridge

Have you ever started a wellness trend, only to wonder why it's not working as well for you as it seems to for your favorite influencer? If you've felt that way, you're not alone. Influencers on social media—especially platforms like Instagram and TikTok—play a huge role in what we try, buy, and believe is "healthy." Whether it's a cold plunge, a supplement, or a trendy workout, these online personalities have a lot of sway. But what actually makes an influencer credible? And how do we decide which trends to follow and which to skip?

Authenticity Matters

Many of us are more likely to trust influencers who seem transparent and genuine. This point came up repeatedly in focus group discussions, survey responses, and academic research. For example, one participant mentioned, "I trust influencers who will actually use it for like a long enough time to tell, and they'll be honest if they're like, I really don't think this does that much." Another respondent noted how influencers like Jeffree Star earn credibility by saying things like, "I'm being paid for this, but I'm still gonna tell you the truth," and then directly comparing products.

Have you ever purchased a wellness product because an influencer recommended it?

no

yes

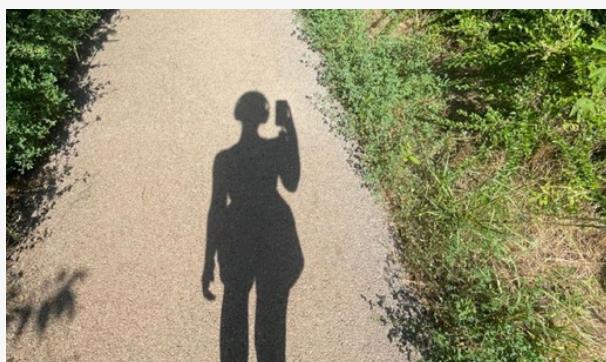
In addition to personal anecdotes, research supports this emphasis on authenticity. A recent study found that "influencers have the potential to positively impact health by providing authentic sources of information, yet their lack of expertise and commercial interests raise concerns" (Engel et al., 2023). The more authentic and consistent an influencer appears, the more people feel they can trust their recommendations.

Trends We See Everyday

Scrolling through social media, we're constantly exposed to a wave of wellness trends—some fleeting, some sticking around. From cold plunges to Pilates routines, influencers help popularize the latest health habits. One participant noted, "I think because influencers that we follow, if they just like promoted junk food all the time and didn't like take care of their bodies we wouldn't listen... we're always seeking to better ourselves and be a better person nowdays." Another person mentioned how certain influencers, like Alix Earl, regularly showcase their favorite makeup products and wellness routines: "her reviews are like her using certain like makeup on her face like other people care because you're always getting paid to do it." Supporting this, researchers have observed that "social media platforms have become breeding grounds for health trends, spreading information—both accurate and misleading—at a rapid pace" (Kaňková et al., 2024). Through both personal posts and industry analysis, it's clear that social media is a powerful driver of wellness trends.

How We React

How consumers respond to influencers often depends on the influencer's consistency and honesty. In the surveys, many students said they felt more confident about a product if the influencer had used it for a long time. "I wouldn't trust it if it's just the one post and they've never talked about it before," explained one participant. Another added, "When they consistently use something and showcase it over time, it feels more real, trustworthy, and not just like a one-time promotion." Similarly, one survey respondent highlighted the credibility built by ongoing endorsements: "In a video, every single one of them he swears by it I'm more likely to trust that because he's been doing it for like a year." This feedback aligns with findings from Dr. Sherry Pagoto, who noted that "consumers respond most favorably when influencers appear to practice what they preach, consistently showcasing their commitment to a product or trend over time" (Pagoto, 2023). Together, these perspectives show that audiences value reliability and genuine enthusiasm in influencer content.

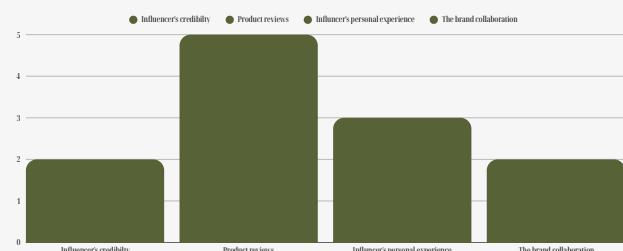


Picture is of someone going on a walk, getting 10k steps a day is a wellness trend

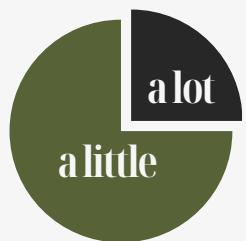
The Cost Factor

One of the biggest barriers to adopting wellness trends is cost, a topic that came up repeatedly in focus groups and survey responses.

What influenced your decision the most when following a wellness trend?



How much do you trust influencers when they promote wellness products?



Many students expressed frustration at how pricey certain wellness products can be. "Most people can't afford to buy like a \$100 supplement once a month; that's outrageous," said one respondent. Others pointed out that brands like Lululemon, which once felt exclusive and high-quality, have faced criticism for their rising prices. "Lululemon has gone down so much... so many people loved it but then it kind of got to a point where they were dominating the market and were able to raise all these prices," noted another participant. Research from The Guardian echoes these concerns, stating, "The high cost of certain products promoted by influencers often puts them out of reach for the average consumer, creating a disconnect between the image presented and the audience's reality" (Aggeler, 2024). While some influencers try to offer discounts or recommend alternatives, many followers still find the costs prohibitive. This cost issue often leads consumers to question whether certain trends are genuinely worth the investment.

Why Consistency Builds Trust

Long-term engagement with a product or trend can make or break an influencer's credibility. As one survey participant shared, "I trust influencers who will actually use it for like a long enough time to see results, and they'll be honest if they're like, I really don't think this does that much."

Another respondent cited Jeffree Star's approach, saying, "Jeffree Star is brutally honest he will tell you the truth and be like I'm being paid for this, and he'll sit there and like compare it to a competitor." A third added, "If you're thinking of a supplement or thinking about starting some type of workout... you see like the other bodies that have used it... I think it's important they're honest about what really works and what doesn't." Scholarly research agrees, with Alsharairi and Li (2024) noting, "Consumers are more likely to trust influencers who demonstrate long-term use of a product, showing real-life results rather than one-off promotional posts." Together, these insights show how consistency builds a solid foundation of trust and credibility over time.

Conclusion

As college students who spend plenty of time online, we know how much social media influences the choices we make about health and wellness. It's not just about flashy posts or trendy routines—it's about finding influencers we trust and trends that make sense for our lives. While not every product will fit our budget or our goals, paying attention to authenticity, consistency, and real-world accessibility can help us separate the fads from the habits that actually improve our well-being.



Picture is of a wellness trend such as journaling and matcha

Next time a wellness trend shows up on your feed, pause and think about the influencer behind it. Are they being real with their audience? Do they actually use the product consistently, and are they upfront about both the pros and cons? Before diving in, choose just one question from this article to ask yourself. That quick check might be all you need to decide whether it's a trend worth trying—or one to keep scrolling past.

Sources

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