

HEALTH RULES

RETOX IS THE NEW DETOX

There's a health movement on the horizon: Yoga guru Lauren Imparato explains her philosophy *By* JENNIFER GOLDSTEIN

MARIE CLAIRE: THE TITLE OF YOUR NEW BOOK—RETOX: YOGA, FOOD, ATTITUDE—REALLY GOT OUR ATTENTION. IS IT FINALLY OK TO HAVE RED MEAT, DRINK DIET SODA, AND EAT GUMMY BEARS?

LAUREN IMPARATO: Not quite. The retox concept is about adding instead of eliminating. Society has become so obsessed with eliminating the bad—and having this guilt if we don't—whereas I think it's more about adding in the right tools, foods, and exercises.

MC: WHERE DID THE WORD RETOX COME FROM?

LI: I used to say it when I worked on Wall Street, before I became a yoga instructor. My friends and I were infamous for long drinking brunches, but I never went a day without sweating. So I'd say, "Detox to retox, guys! I'm going for a run, then I'll meet you for brunch." Basically, retox is about balance.

MC: AND WE NEED A BOOK TO TEACH US THAT?

LI: If you read almost everything out there on wellness, the majority of it speaks to this person who has time to steam her lunches or the bandwidth to meditate for an hour in the middle of the workday or go on a weeklong retreat. That's not realistic! This is modern life, and it's only getting busier.

MC: SO WHAT IS REALISTIC?

LI: Mixing and matching advice to find what works for you. Each chapter I wrote addresses a different problem of modern life and offers tools—yoga poses, music, philosophy, foods—that help. Maybe you follow tips from the back-pain chapter on Mondays and the PMS chapter on Fridays and the chapter about finding success at work another day.



The new thinking: Don't freak out if you miss a yoga class

MC: WHAT IF WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHICH TOOLS WE NEED WHICH DAYS? WOULDN'T A CLEAR SET OF RULES ON WHAT'S HEALTHY, ONCE AND FOR ALL, BE EASIER?

LI: Blindly adhering to rules may be easier, but it sometimes prevents you from really finding out what's going on with your body. Certain foods may be right for some people but not others. I used to be like that. I was strictly vegetarian—almost vegan—for years, and I stuck to it even though my body obviously hated it and my hair and nails were brittle. And I've had clients who think, for example, if they don't have their morning protein shake, it's all going to shit. But what if what they actually need that day is another hour of sleep instead of a workout, or an hour to chat with a friend?

MC: WHAT IF YOU WANT TO CHAT OVER A GLASS OF WINE?

LI: Sure—that's the point of retox. I won't say, "If you follow these exact rules, you are going to be healthy and happy and not get cancer." I know other health practitioners say that sort of thing, and it's good business for them—but no one can make those promises. I'm just trying to introduce a new lens for wellness that's nondogmatic. It's about living life!



THE MYTH OF KALE ... AND OTHER SEEMINGLY HEALTHY HABITS THAT MAYBE AREN'T

1

OLD RULE: EAT MORE KALE.

New thinking: The leafy green is hard to digest when raw and can make you "super bloat-y," says Imparato. Instead, try cooking greens and always top with olive oil (think of it as a lubricant for the digestive system, she says).

2

OLD RULE: BRING ON THE HEAT!

New thinking: "People think sweating is detoxifying," says Imparato, but workouts in heated rooms can cause muscles to overstretch, which may lead to injury. Exercise at room temp and break a sweat from exertion.

3

OLD RULE: ORDER SALAD WHEN DINING OUT.

New thinking: Not necessarily if it's a business dinner. One slightly indulgent meal will not derail a diet, but picky eating could affect your professional reputation. Order real, healthy food, like fish or multiple sides.

4

OLD RULE: FRUIT IS NATURE'S CANDY.

New thinking: It might be closer to actual candy! Many types—especially mango, pineapple, bananas, and peaches—are really quite high in sugar. Opt for less sweet options like blueberries, raspberries, and apricots.

5

OLD RULE: SPINNING IS GENTLER THAN RUNNING.

New thinking: The exercise may be low-impact, but all the "side-to-side, arm-flapping motions" can cause elbow injuries, says Imparato. Try yoga poses that increase your metabolic rate, like sun salutations.