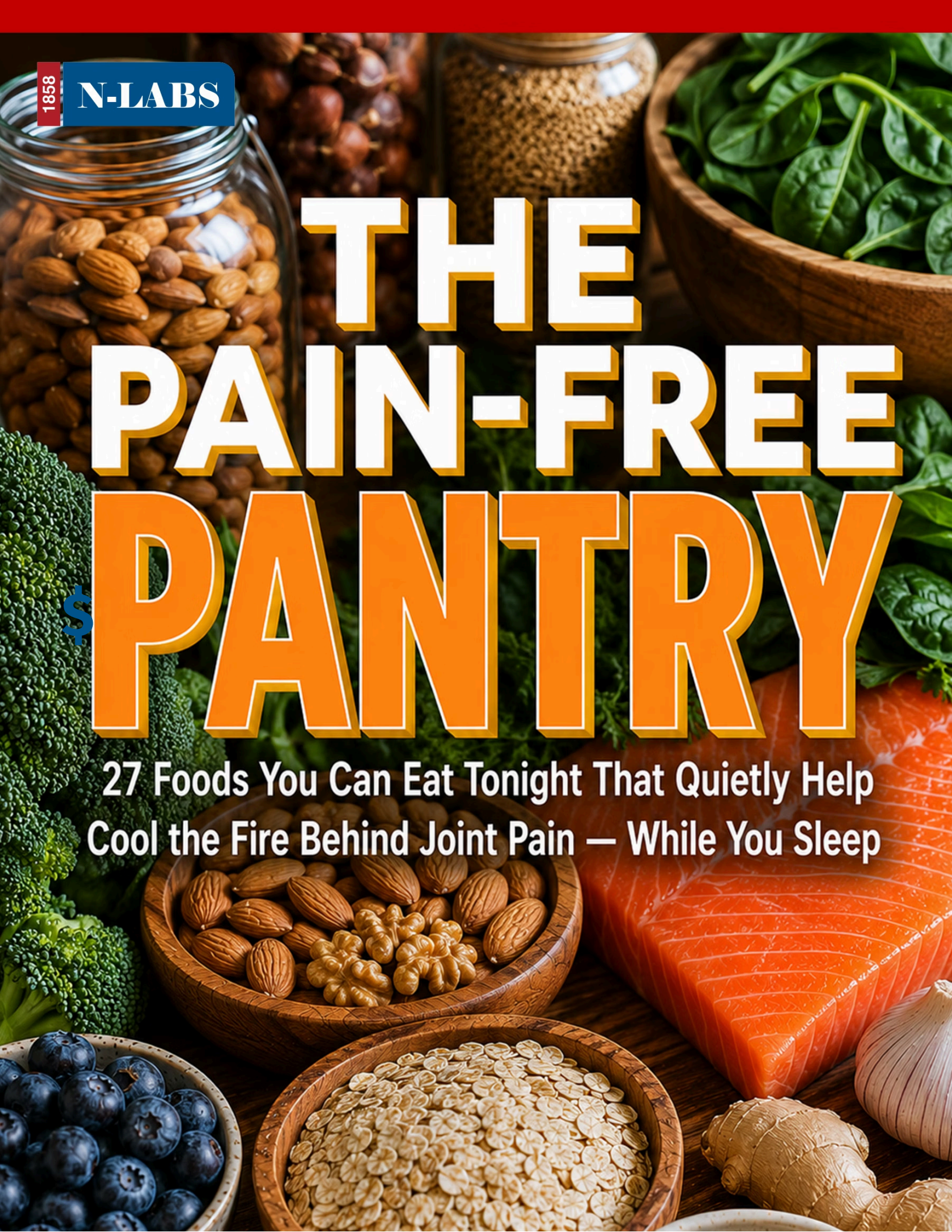

1858
N-LABS
THE
PAIN-FREE
PANTRY
27 Foods You Can Eat Tonight That Quietly Help
Cool the Fire Behind Joint Pain — While You Sleep

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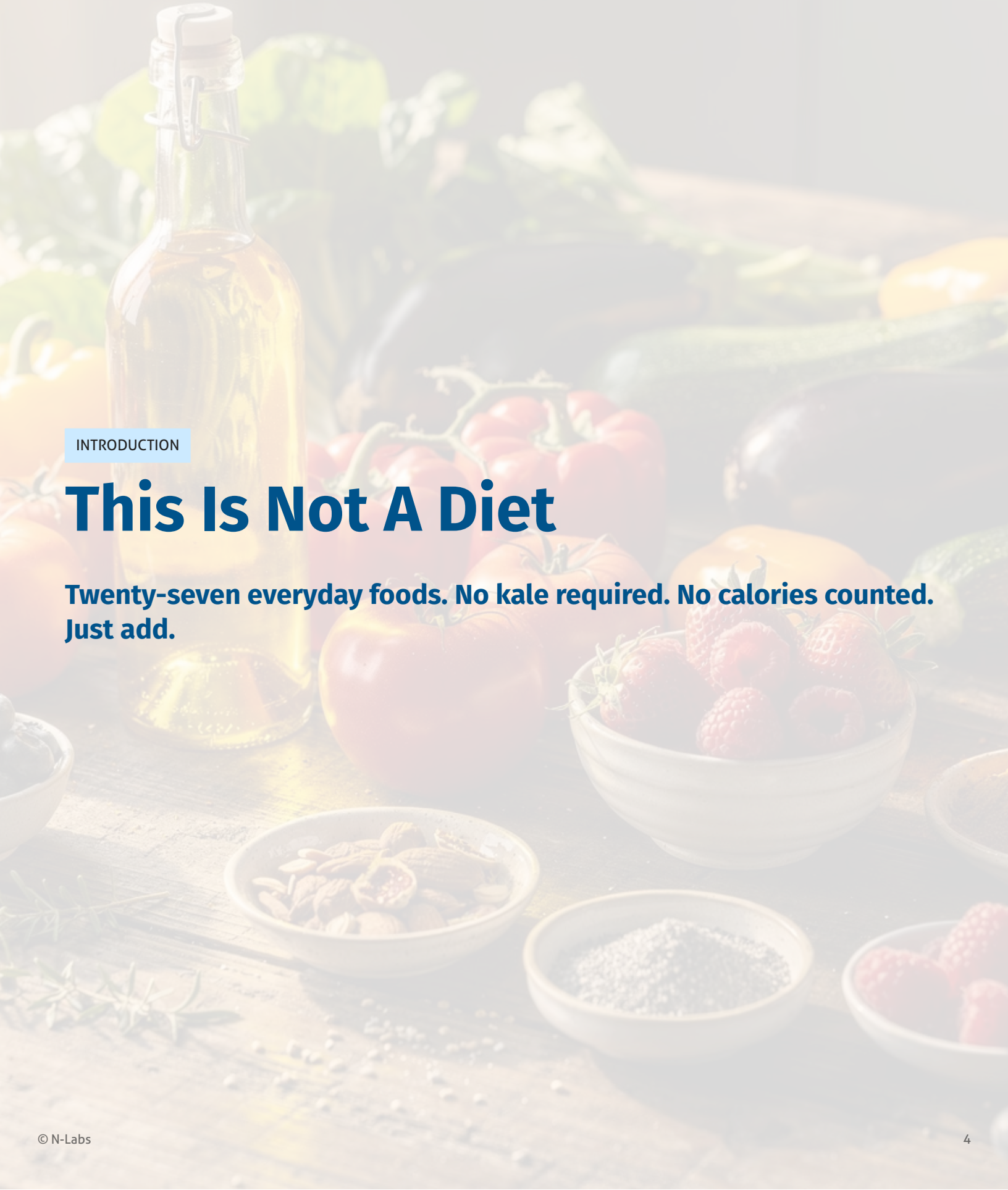
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INTRODUCTION

This Is Not A Diet

Twenty-seven everyday foods. No kale required. No calories counted. Just add.

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Take a breath, because I am about to tell you something no one in the joint-pain business ever seems to say. You do not have to give up the foods you love. You do not have to choke down kale, you do not have to count a single calorie, and you do not have to feel hungry at nine o'clock at night wondering where the joy went. This guide asks you to take nothing away. It only asks you to add.

That is the whole idea, and it is the opposite of a diet. A diet is a list of subtractions — no this, no that, smaller portions, more guilt. What you are holding is a list of additions. Twenty-seven everyday foods, most of them already sitting in your kitchen, that you simply put on your plate more often. Add them in, and they quietly go to work on the very thing that keeps your joints sore.

> A diet is a list of things you can't have. This is a list of things you get to add.

Now let me be honest with you, because honesty is the only thing that earns your trust. No food is a magic eraser. A blueberry will not regrow a joint overnight, and anyone who promises you that is selling you a fairy tale. Here is what these foods actually do, and it is plenty. Much of the ache in an older joint is driven by inflammation — a low, constant fire your body keeps burning. The foods in this guide are some of the most reliable natural ways to turn the temperature on that fire down.

And here is why that matters so much. If your body is calmer and less inflamed, then the quiet repair work it does every night — the maintenance every body does while you sleep — is no longer fighting a five-alarm fire just to keep up. You are not forcing your joints to rebuild. You are clearing the smoke so your body can do its own work in peace.

Think of Arctic Blast™ as the fast-acting fuel that takes the edge off today, and think of this pantry as the long game that changes the weather inside your body week after week. The drops handle the moment. The plate handles the months. Together they are a system, and the system beats any single bottle every time. So let's go shopping — for under forty dollars, with no kale in the cart.

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PART ONE

How Your Plate Talks To Your Joints

Two short ideas that change everything: why adding beats subtracting, and how a forkful of food can quietly cool the fire that makes you ache.

CHAPTER ONE

The Additive Secret

THE PROBLEM

Most people fail at "eating better" for the same reason: it is built on saying no. No bread, no sugar, no fun, no Sunday dinner the way your mother made it. Willpower like that runs out fast, usually right around the time the rest of the family pulls out dessert. And when the no-list finally breaks, you feel like a failure and quit the whole thing. The problem was never you. The problem was a plan built entirely on loss.

THE NEW WAY

So flip it completely. Instead of fighting to remove the foods that feed the fire, you focus on crowding them out with foods that cool it. You do not have to ban the dinner roll. You just put a drizzle of good olive oil, a handful of berries, and a piece of fish on the plate next to it. Add enough of the good, and the bad naturally takes up less room — no white-knuckle willpower required.

The logic is simple and it actually holds. If your plate is half-full of foods that lower inflammation, then there is simply less room left for the ones that raise it — and you got there by adding something you enjoy, not by punishing yourself.

THE PROOF

This is not a gimmick. Nutrition researchers have a name for the "crowding out" effect, and the eating patterns most consistently linked to lower inflammation — the Mediterranean way of eating is the famous one — are not defined by what they forbid. They are defined by what they pile on: olive oil, fish, vegetables, beans, nuts. People stick with it for decades precisely because it never feels like deprivation.

> You don't beat a bad plate by subtracting. You beat it by crowding it out with good.

DO THIS NOW

Change the question. Stop thinking "what do I have to cut?" and start thinking "what can I add?" That one shift sticks where willpower fails.

Add, don't subtract. Just add one cooling food to a meal you already eat. That is the entire starting move.

Drop the guilt. Keep the foods you love. We are making room around them, not taking them away.



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CHAPTER TWO

The Fire Behind The Ache

THE PROBLEM

Here is something most people over fifty were never told plainly. A big share of everyday joint pain is not just "wear and tear." It is inflammation — a slow, smoldering fire your body keeps burning in the background. You cannot see it and you cannot feel it directly, but you feel what it does: the morning stiffness, the swelling, the ache that flares when you have been sitting too long. And every day, without knowing it, you have been either feeding that fire or cooling it, three meals at a time.

THE NEW WAY

Once you understand that food is fuel for that fire, every meal becomes a small choice. Some foods are like dry kindling — they make the fire flare hotter. Others are like a damp cloth laid over the coals — they bring the temperature down. You are not eating to lose weight here. You are eating to change the temperature inside your own body, and that is a goal you can actually hit at breakfast.

Picture your joints as a campfire that has been smoldering too long. Pile on dry sticks and it roars. Lay a wet blanket over it and it settles into a low, manageable glow. The twenty-seven foods in this guide are the wet blanket. They will not put the fire out forever, but they keep it from raging — and a calm fire is a body that hurts less and repairs better.

THE PROOF

Doctors can actually measure this fire with a simple blood marker of inflammation. Study after study has watched that marker drop when people shift toward the kinds of foods in this guide and rise when they live on the fried, sugary, heavily processed stuff. The fire is real, it is measurable, and your fork is one of the most powerful tools you own for turning it down.

> Every meal either throws a stick on the fire or lays a blanket over it. There is no neutral plate.

DO THIS NOW

- **Name the fire.** Before each meal, ask one question: is this feeding the fire or cooling it?
- **Cool one meal.** Aim for one "cooling" food at every meal. Three a day adds up faster than you think.
- **Watch the mornings.** Notice your stiffest mornings and what you ate the night before. The pattern teaches you fast.



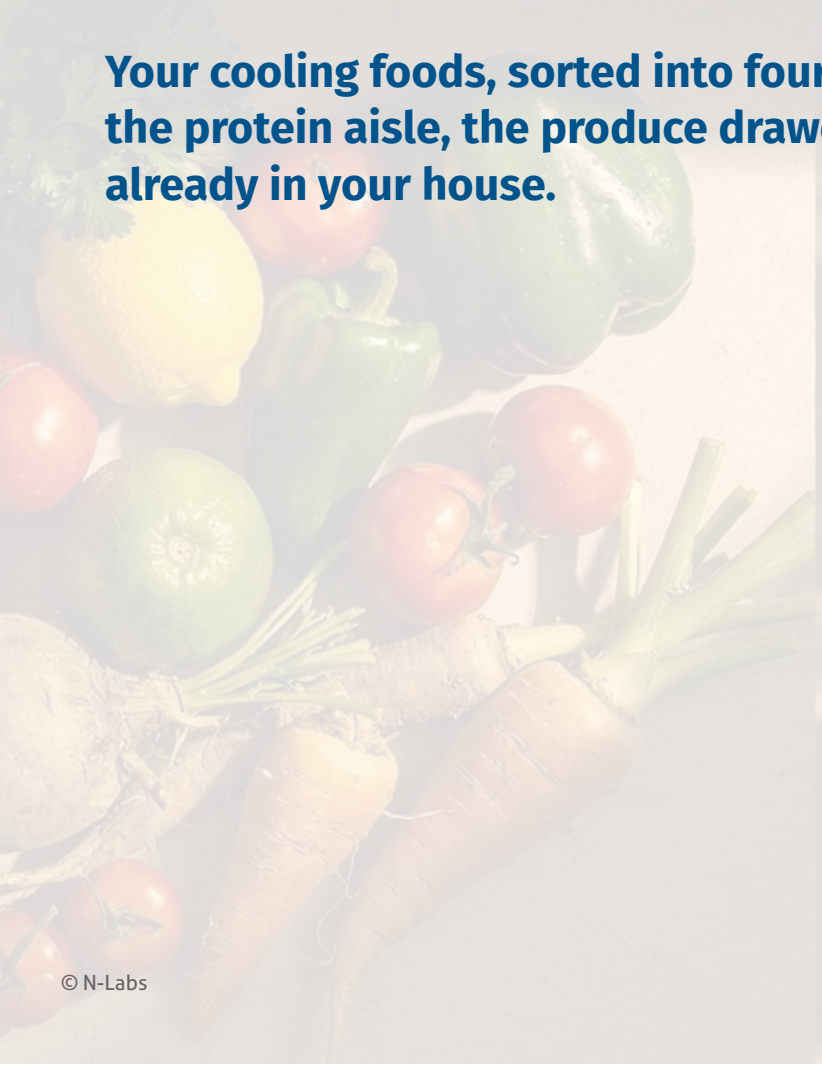
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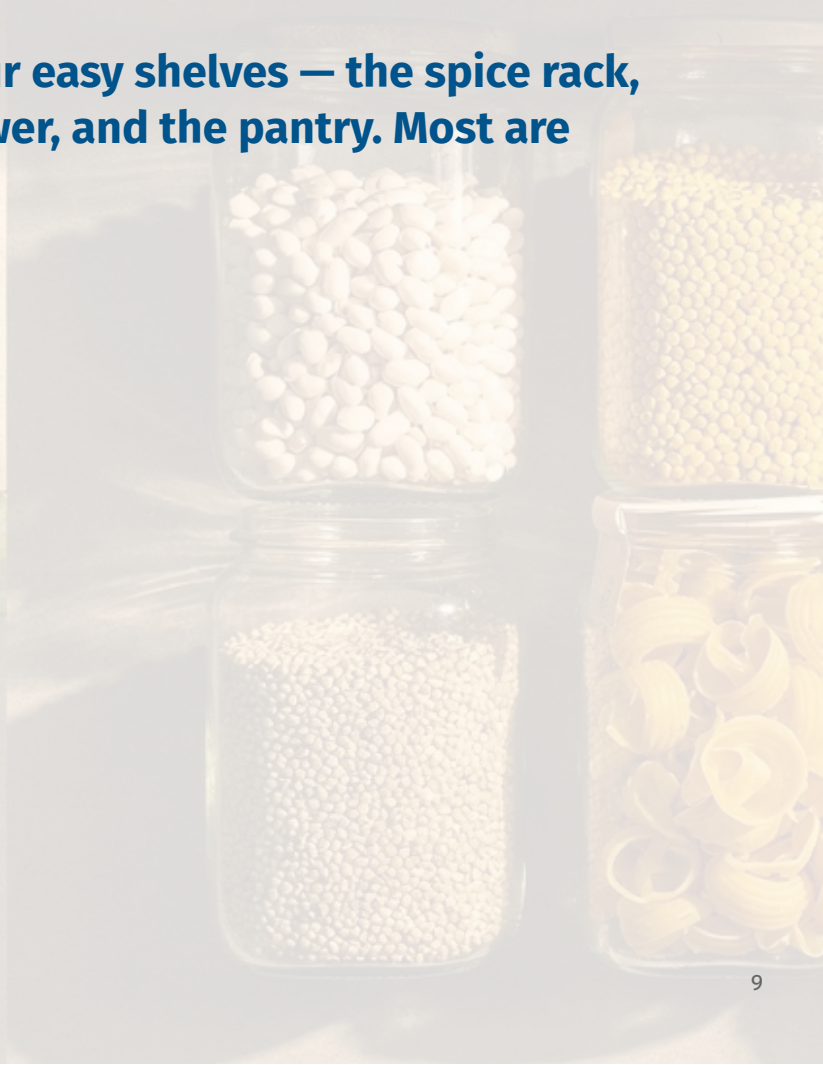


PART TWO

The 27

Your cooling foods, sorted into four easy shelves — the spice rack, the protein aisle, the produce drawer, and the pantry. Most are already in your house.





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CHAPTER THREE

Shelf One: The Spice Rack

THE PROBLEM

The most powerful cooling agents in your whole kitchen are probably the ones gathering dust in the back of a cabinet. We treat spices as decoration — a shake here, a sprinkle there — when a few of them are among the most studied natural anti-inflammatories on earth. The problem is not that you lack them. It is that you use a pinch when you could be using a spoonful.

THE NEW WAY

Promote your spice rack from garnish to medicine cabinet. Start with the yellow one. Turmeric is the spice Mediterranean and South Asian grandmothers have leaned on for centuries, and its active compound has a long history of study for calming inflammation — think of it as a pressure valve on a steam pipe, quietly letting the pressure off before it builds. One tip that matters: pair it with a crack of black pepper, which helps your body actually absorb it.

Right beside it, keep ginger, turmeric's warming cousin, studied for the same fire-cooling reasons and easy to grate into tea or stir-fry. Then garlic and onions, the everyday base of half the world's cooking, both tied to lower inflammation. And do not skip the heat: cayenne and chili contain capsaicin — the very same compound that pharmacies put into rub-on pain creams. It works by calming the pain-signaling nerve fibers themselves, which is exactly why that cream tingles and then quiets the ache.

THE PROOF

This is not folklore dressed up. Turmeric and ginger have both been tested in people with achy knees, with several studies reporting real relief, and capsaicin is recognized clearly enough that it sits on the pharmacy shelf as an approved topical pain ingredient. The spice rack has been a medicine cabinet all along. Most of us just forgot how to use it.

> A few of the strongest cooling agents on earth are already in your cabinet — you've been using a pinch when you could use a spoon.

DO THIS NOW

- **Go big on turmeric.** Stir half a teaspoon of turmeric plus a crack of black pepper into eggs, rice, soup, or a warm drink.
- **Add the warm spices.** Grate fresh ginger into tea or stir-fries, and use garlic and onion generously — they are free wins.
- **Bring the heat.** If you tolerate heat, add a little cayenne or chili to a dish a few times a week.



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CHAPTER FOUR

Shelf Two: Protein & The Good Fats

THE PROBLEM

Two of the best joint foods on the planet got slandered for forty years, and a whole generation crossed them off the list out of fear. People were warned away from the breakfast egg over cholesterol panic, and many never thought of oily fish as anything but expensive. So they ended up short on the exact building blocks and fats their joints needed most — not because the foods were bad, but because the old advice was.

THE NEW WAY

Welcome them back. Start with the breakfast food most boomers were told to avoid for decades — the humble egg. The cholesterol scare has been walked back, and eggs are once again understood for what they are: an affordable, complete source of the protein your body uses as raw material to maintain its own connective tissue. It is officially back on the menu. Your body cannot keep its framework in good repair without enough protein, and few foods deliver it cheaper.

Then the real star: oily fish. There is a three-dollar find in the freezer and canned aisle — mackerel and sardines — that is one of the most concentrated, affordable sources of omega-3 fats on earth, the very same fats sold in those costly joint-oil capsules. Except the whole fish gives you the omega-3s and the protein together, for a fraction of the price of the pills. Salmon does the same job if it is in your budget. These good fats are among the most reliable inflammation-coolers we know of.

Round the shelf out with plain Greek yogurt or kefir. The friendly bacteria in fermented dairy support your gut, and a calmer gut is increasingly linked to a calmer, less inflamed body overall.

THE PROOF

The heart doctors who once feared eggs now place oily fish near the center of the plate — the major guidelines recommend a couple of servings of fish a week, specifically for the omega-3s. The evidence that these fats lower the body's inflammation markers is some of the strongest in all of nutrition. The pills built a billion-dollar business on a nutrient you can buy whole for a few dollars a tin.

> The whole fish gives you everything the expensive capsule does — plus the protein — for the price of a tin.

DO THIS NOW

Eat the eggs. Bring back the egg — a couple at breakfast is a cheap, easy protein win.

Two fish a week. Get oily fish on your plate twice a week. Canned sardines or mackerel on toast is the budget hero.

Go fermented. Swap sugary yogurt for plain Greek yogurt or kefir to feed your gut.



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CHAPTER FIVE

Shelf Three: The Color Drawer

THE PROBLEM

Look in most refrigerator drawers and you will find them pale and beige — a sad half-bag of lettuce and not much else. That missing color is a missing weapon. The deep reds, purples, oranges, and greens in fruits and vegetables are not just pretty; the very pigments that give them their color are some of the body's best fire-fighters. An empty color drawer is a quiet daily loss.

THE NEW WAY

Make a rule so simple a child could follow it: get color on the plate. Berries lead the pack — blueberries, strawberries, and especially tart cherries, the deep-red fruit studied again and again for cooling inflammation and easing achy joints. Here is the happy surprise hiding in plain sight: even dark chocolate, the "junk food" a whole generation was told to feel guilty about, is now studied for the anti-inflammatory plant compounds in real cocoa. A square of the dark kind is a treat that earns its place.

Then build out the rainbow. Leafy greens like spinach (no kale required, I promise) bring a wall of protective compounds. Broccoli and its cousins carry a substance researchers connect to calmer joints. Tomatoes, bell peppers, sweet potatoes, oranges, and other citrus load you with the vitamin C your body must have to build and maintain connective tissue. Avocado brings cooling fats, and even humble mushrooms add their own quiet anti-inflammatory punch.

THE PROOF

The pattern across thousands of studies is boringly consistent: people who eat the most colorful plants carry the least inflammation and tend to report better joint comfort as the years go on. Tart cherries in particular keep showing up in the research for sore joints and recovery. This is the least controversial advice in all of nutrition, which is exactly why it works.

> The pigment that colors a berry is the same thing that helps cool your joints. Eat the rainbow on purpose.

DO THIS NOW

Berries daily. Toss a handful of berries — fresh or frozen — onto breakfast every single day.

Chase color. Aim for two or three different colors on your dinner plate. Frozen counts and saves money.

Take the chocolate. Keep a square of real dark chocolate as your guilt-free evening treat.



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CHAPTER SIX

Shelf Four: The Pantry Staples

THE PROBLEM

The pantry is where good intentions go to die. It fills up with the cheap, processed, fire-feeding stuff because it is shelf-stable and easy. But the same shelf can hold some of the most powerful cooling foods in the house — the ones that anchor an entire week of meals for pennies. The problem is simply that no one ever told you which staples to stock.

THE NEW WAY

Start with the Sunday Sauce Secret — the one ingredient Italian families add by instinct without ever calling it medicine: good extra-virgin olive oil. It is the cooling backbone of the whole Mediterranean way of eating, and it earns the name. Drizzle it on at the end, raw, where its delicate compounds survive. Then stock the quiet workhorses: walnuts and ground flaxseed for plant omega-3s, and beans and lentils, which are cheap, filling, and tied to lower inflammation across the board.

Finish with what you drink. Green tea is rich in a polyphenol studied for calming inflammation, and it makes an easy swap for a second cup of coffee. None of these staples are fancy. All of them are cheap. Together they turn an ordinary pantry into the foundation of a low-fire kitchen.

THE PROOF

Here is the one that surprises people most. When researchers asked why the Mediterranean diet fights inflammation so well, they discovered a natural compound in fresh extra-virgin olive oil that works on the very same inflammation pathway as ibuprofen — the over-the-counter pain reliever. A common pain pill and a good drizzle of olive oil were quietly pulling on the same lever. That is not marketing. That is the chemistry that built a billion-dollar olive grove.

> Scientists found a compound in fresh olive oil that pulls the same lever as ibuprofen. The Sunday sauce was medicine all along.

DO THIS NOW

- **Pour the olive oil.** Finish dishes with a raw drizzle of good extra-virgin olive oil, every day.
- **Stock the workhorses.** Keep beans, lentils, walnuts, and ground flaxseed stocked — cheap anchors for any meal.
- **Pour the green tea.** Swap one coffee for green tea most days.



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PART THREE

The Sugar

Two crowd-pleasers: the bread loophole that lets you keep the loaf, and the whole 27-food plan for under forty dollars a week.

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SUGAR CHAPTER — SEVEN

The Bread Loophole

THE PROBLEM

For a lot of people, the hardest word in any eating plan is the same: bread. It is comfort, it is tradition, it is the warm slice with dinner you actually look forward to. So when a guide says "give up bread," most folks quietly close the guide. The trouble is that not all bread is the same, and the blanket rule throws out the good loaves with the bad.

THE NEW WAY

So keep the bread — just get smarter about which loaf. The fire-feeding kind is the soft, fluffy, ultra-processed white bread stripped of everything good. The friendly kind is real, slowly-fermented sourdough or a true 100-percent whole-grain loaf, where the fiber and the fermentation change how your body handles it. You are not banning bread. You are trading up to a loaf that works with you instead of against you.

Here is the thirty-second test you can run on any loaf in any grocery store. Flip the package over and read the very first ingredient. If it says "whole" grain or it is a genuine sourdough with a short, real ingredient list, it passes. If the first word is "enriched" or "white" flour and the list runs long with words you can't pronounce, put it back. That is the entire loophole.

THE PROOF

Whole grains, eaten in place of refined ones, are consistently tied to lower inflammation in the research — the opposite of what the stripped white stuff tends to do. And real sourdough fermentation changes the bread in ways that tend to sit easier in the body. You were never the problem for loving bread. You just needed to know which loaf loved you back.

> You don't have to give up bread. You just have to read the first ingredient on the bag.

DO THIS NOW

- **Run the 30-second test.** Read the first ingredient. "Whole" grain or true sourdough passes; "enriched" or "white" goes back.
- **Trade up the loaf.** Make the switch on your everyday loaf and keep enjoying your slice with dinner.
- **Dip, don't butter.** Drizzle that good olive oil on it instead of butter for a double cooling win.



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SUGAR CHAPTER — EIGHT

The $40 Week

THE PROBLEM

The fastest way to quit before you start is to stand in the kitchen, overwhelmed, with no idea what to actually buy. "Eat anti-inflammatory foods" is a nice idea and a useless instruction. Without a plan, the cognitive load wins, the good intentions fade, and you are back to whatever was easiest. So let's remove every excuse and lay the whole thing out as one cheap, simple shopping list.

THE NEW WAY

Here are all twenty-seven, grouped the way you shop. None of it is fancy, frozen counts everywhere, and the whole list comes in comfortably under forty dollars a week for one person. Print it, fold it into your wallet, and you never have to think about it again.

Spice rack (7)

Turmeric, ginger, garlic, onion, cayenne or chili, black pepper, cinnamon.

Protein & good fats (5)

Eggs, canned or frozen sardines, mackerel, salmon if budget allows, plain Greek yogurt or kefir.

Color drawer (11)

Blueberries, strawberries, tart cherries, spinach, broccoli, tomatoes, bell peppers, sweet potato, oranges, avocado, mushrooms.

Pantry staples (5)

Extra-virgin olive oil, walnuts, ground flaxseed, beans or lentils, green tea.

And a guilt-free bonus that didn't need a slot on the budget: a small bar of real dark chocolate for the evenings. That is the entire plan. Twenty-seven foods, four shelves, one short list.

THE PROOF

Every food on that list is cheap precisely because it is humble — tins, frozen bags, dried beans, root vegetables, spices that last for months. The expensive version of joint care comes in a supplement bottle. The affordable version comes in a grocery bag, and it feeds you dinner besides. Remember where the drops fit: Arctic Blast™ is the fast fuel for relief in the moment, and this list is the slow, steady cooling that works in the background, meal after meal.

> The expensive version of joint care comes in a bottle. The affordable version comes in a grocery bag — and it makes you dinner.

DO THIS NOW

- **Print the list.** Copy the four-shelf list, fold it into your wallet, and shop straight off it.
- **Buy frozen.** Lean on frozen and canned — just as cooling, far cheaper, and they never spoil on you.
- **Start small.** Add a few items this week, not all twenty-seven. Build the pantry one trip at a time.



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CLOSING

Set The Table

You came in bracing for another diet — another long list of everything you would have to give up. Instead you are leaving with a grocery list and permission to keep the foods you love. That is the whole spirit of this guide. We never took anything off your plate. We simply crowded it with foods that quietly work for you instead of against you.

Hold on to the one big idea. Much of the ache is a low fire of inflammation, and three times a day you get to choose whether to feed it or cool it. You will not win every meal, and you do not have to. Aim for one cooling food at a time, let the good crowd out the rest, and let the steady, unglamorous work of an honest plate do what no single bottle ever could.

And keep the system clear in your mind. The pantry is the long game that changes the weather inside your body over weeks and months. Arctic Blast™ is the fast-acting fuel that helps with the moment so you can keep showing up for the long game. The plate does the patient work. The drops help you get through today while it adds up. Neither replaces the care of your doctor — they sit alongside it.

> We didn't take a single thing off your plate. We just gave you 27 reasons to add.

So tonight, do one small thing. Crack a couple of eggs, drizzle the good olive oil, throw a handful of berries on the side, and crack some pepper over a spoon of turmeric. That is a pain-cooling meal, made from a pantry, in under ten minutes. You do not need kale and you do not need willpower. You just need to set the table and add.

To your table,

Diane Mercer

A note on safety: This guide is for general education and is not medical advice. Foods described here are associated in research with lower inflammation and better comfort for some people; they are not a treatment or cure and do not rebuild or regrow joint tissue. Individual results vary. If you take blood thinners or other medications, or have a health condition, talk to your doctor or pharmacist before making big changes — some foods and supplements can interact with medicines. Arctic Blast™ is intended to be used as directed and alongside, not in place of, the care of your healthcare provider.

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