

Annotated Case: Marcus, 52

A full worked gut case, start to finish · reference for Lesson 2.5 (illustrative teaching case)

Presentation: bloating after most meals, fatigue worsening over the past year, occasional joint stiffness (“just getting older”). Diet described as “pretty good” but repetitive with limited plant variety; wine intake up over the past year “to unwind”. Each stage is annotated with where it loosely sits in the five-step HSI Method (Module 1, Lesson 1.5).

1 Identify · Assess

Antibiotics for a dental infection ~4 months ago (recovery often still incomplete); low-diversity diet limiting SCFA fermentation; increased wine intake — a direct gut irritant and a plausible marker of stress load.

2 Investigate · Assess

Bloating pattern + antibiotic timeline: a targeted SIBO breath test, not a full untargeted panel. Joint stiffness noted as worth tracking, not yet acted on.

3 Reduce burden · Integrate / Prioritise

If the breath test is positive, address the overgrowth first (Practitioner-track: lab-guided decision point). Regardless of result: reduce wine intake and the highly repeated, low-diversity meals.

4 Rebuild · Integrate / Prioritise

Support digestion directly: slow eating pace (he eats quickly, often at his desk) and adequate protein to support gut lining repair.

5 Reintroduce · Personalise

Once acute burden is addressed, gradually increase plant and fibre diversity — more different fibres. Introduce fermented foods gradually, watching for tolerance.

6 Reinforce · Personalise / Measure

Wine began as stress-coping after a promotion: identify what drives the behaviour (Mind and Regimen domains). Referral point: persistent joint stiffness with a gut-inflammation picture warrants a GP conversation to rule out inflammatory/autoimmune contribution.