

CASE STUDY

1. Initial Review & Key Observations

Top 3 things I noticed about this client's health story:

- **Her transition to veganism marked the onset of her health issues.** She's remained vegan despite these challenges, which suggests strong personal or ethical motivation. I'd want to ask more about why she initially chose this path and why she continues it despite ongoing symptoms.
- **Chronic under-eating during the day has led to unmindful, processed food consumption at night.** This nutrient imbalance may be driving fatigue, blood sugar swings, and poor satiety. It also undermines the benefits of her otherwise home-cooked vegan meals.
- **Despite cooking 90% of her meals, she still experiences major symptoms.** This suggests a need for nutrition education around building a balanced, blood sugar-stabilizing, and gut-friendly vegan plate.

Additional observations:

- Extensive history of antibiotic use + GI issues = likely gut dysbiosis.
- Relies on two sleep medications, yet still experiences fatigue and insomnia.
- High stress, excess caffeine, and low energy form a vicious cycle.
- Acne, eczema, hormone imbalances, and food sensitivities may be downstream effects of gut, diet, and lifestyle factors.

2. Top 2–3 Root Cause Hypotheses

(Based on intake history only)

1. Gut Dysbiosis

- History of antibiotic use + GI symptoms (gas, bloating, irregular stools)

- Skin issues (acne, eczema), hormone imbalances, fatigue — all gut-linked
- Possible contribution of low microbial diversity from long-term veganism without fermented/prebiotic-rich foods

2. Chronic Blood Sugar Dysregulation

- Undereating → processed carb cravings at night → blood sugar spikes + crashes
- Symptoms: fatigue, cravings, poor sleep, irritability, fogginess

3. Micronutrient Deficiencies from an Unbalanced Vegan Diet

- Ongoing fatigue, low resilience to stress, acne, and brain fog could stem from lack of B12, iron, omega-3s, zinc, etc.

3. Prioritized Focus for Month 1

“If this were my client, I would start by addressing **her current vegan diet because **it's essential to understand whether she wants to continue this dietary approach in order to build an effective and sustainable plan.**”**

Foundational strategy (RESET-aligned):

Restore the gut and stabilize blood sugar to reduce fatigue and cravings. Begin with a nutrient-dense food plan tailored to her chosen diet, while laying the foundation for long-term digestive healing and metabolic balance.

4. Client-Facing Summary (3–5 sentences)

Here's how I'd explain our focus for Month 1:

“Based on your intake, it sounds like your energy, digestion, and skin are all deeply connected to your gut health and how your diet is supporting you. I noticed you've been on antibiotics in the past and still struggle with GI symptoms, so our first step will be to rebuild your gut microbiome. I'll help you create a nutrient-rich, blood sugar-balancing meal plan within your vegan preferences to help stabilize your energy and reduce cravings. We'll also focus on small, simple changes to help with sleep and stress along the way.”

5. Tier 1 Protocol

Nutrition

- Reduce coffee to **1 cup/day**, and replace additional cups with **green tea** or **herbal adaptogens** like tulsi or rooibos. Hydrate consistently.
- Focus on **prebiotic and probiotic-rich vegan foods** daily: flaxseed, garlic, onion, oats, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, bananas, lentils, etc.
- Provide a **simple vegan meal plan** to ensure complete macros and blood sugar balance with each meal (protein + fat + fiber-rich carb).
- Remove **ultra-processed foods**, **seed oils**, and **refined sugar** as non-negotiables.

Lifestyle

- Encourage **1–2 runs/week**, and introduce **gentle yoga or breathwork** to manage stress.
- Support sleep hygiene: **sunlight in the morning**, blue light reduction at night, relaxing wind-down routine.
- Create a **mindful, enjoyable kitchen space** to strengthen healthy habits.

Supplements *(suggestions; lab review needed for precision)*

- **L-glutamine** (gut lining support, especially without bone broth)
- **Vegan multivitamin** (with B12, iron, D, zinc, iodine, choline, selenium)
- **Lion's mane or reishi** for brain fog/stress
- **Magnesium glycinate** (if tolerated) for sleep/stress

6. Session 1 Outline

Topics to Review:

- Clarify her commitment to veganism: is it ethical, health-motivated, both?
- Current symptoms overview (gut, skin, hormones, fatigue)
- Daily rhythm (energy, meals, sleep, stress, movement)
- Food journal (if available)

Questions to Ask:

- What led you to go vegan, and what's kept you committed despite symptoms?
- What are your energy levels like at different times of day?
- What are your stressors? How do you currently manage stress?
- Do the medications/supplements you are on have any adverse effects?

Education to Deliver:

- How blood sugar works
- How gut health influences energy, hormones, skin
- Hidden stressors (caffeine, blue light, over/under-exercising)
- Benefits of nutrient density and how to build a balanced vegan plate

Initial Goals to Set:

- Swap processed snacks for balanced whole food options
- Begin gut-friendly additions (1 probiotic + 2 prebiotic foods daily)
- Cut caffeine in half and start a mindful morning routine
- Track sleep and energy in a weekly log

7. Progress Markers + Next Step Indicators

Signs of progress:

- Reduced fatigue and mid-day crashes
- More consistent bowel movements
- Fewer cravings, especially at night
- Clearer skin or reduced flare-ups
- Improved sleep onset and duration

When to shift or expand:

- If symptoms persist after 4–6 weeks, re-evaluate food triggers, stress, or deeper gut dysfunction (consider stool testing, SIBO, etc.)
- If baseline improves, move toward longer-term goals (hormone balance, reintroductions, etc.)

8. Your Confidence Check**Feels Solid:**

- Helping her build a complete, balanced vegan meal structure
- Addressing caffeine/stress/sleep loop
- Targeting gut health and blood sugar regulation as foundational pillars

Feels Uncertain:

- Specific food selections to optimize vegan nutrition (needs more research)
- Full impact of current medications — might need a functional practitioner consult
- Whether she's open to even small dietary flexibility (like ghee, eggs, or broth)

Questions for Revived Roots Leadership or Mentor:

- How do we approach vegan clients who are committed but struggling? Is partial animal product reintroduction ever encouraged or required?
- Would you support raw dairy as a reintroduction strategy for dairy-sensitive clients?
- Do you view 100% whole wheat as problematic, or just refined wheat?
- Should we update intake forms to specify types of toxic exposure (e.g., household cleaners, cookware, plastics)?