
Abstract
It is a commonly expressed expert view that stress is associated with frequent recurrences of genital herpes (GH) but the evidence for this is poor and it is often asserted that stress is the result of GH rather than any other cause. We have reviewed the recent literature on this topic, restricting evidence to only prospective studies. We have further combined and integrated this evidence with both human and animal work in the psychoneuroimmunological field to come up with suggestive evidence that recurrence rates of GH are indeed associated with antecedent chronic stress/depression, whatever might be the cause. We further discuss the psychoneuroimmunological underpinning of the systemic features of the recurrent GH prodrome. Recommendations about holistic management of recurrent GH that include both pharmacological and psychological therapies are given.