



HSV Triggers



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HSV triggers are factors that adversely affect your immune system and increase the likelihood of herpes outbreaks. Many HSV triggers are universal and can trigger an outbreak in most people. However, we all have individual strengths and weaknesses, depending on our physical and emotional health states before an outbreak, which is why HSV triggers can be as unique as our fingerprints.

Understanding these universal HSV triggers can help reduce the chance of an outbreak, put your herpes in remission, and lower the risk of transmitting the herpes virus to others. **Here's the thing. All HSV triggers share a common denominator often overlooked: the elephant in the room that causes frequent and severe herpes episodes.**

What's the common denominator, the elephant in the room? You'll find it highlighted in every HSV trigger below. The following are considered universal HSV triggers.

- Toxic relationships
- Sexual activities (friction)
- Colds, flu, and COVID-19
- Not exercising or exercising incorrectly
- Sitting for too long
- Improper posture
- Lack of quality sleep
- Hormonal changes
- Autoimmune disorders
- Illnesses and infections
- Environmental toxins
- Sunlight and tanning beds
- Foods and ingredients
- Addictions
- Caffeine
- Anxiety disorders
- Medications and supplements
- Dental fillings
- Surgery
- Injuries
- Electromagnetic frequencies
- Medical Marijuana

- **Toxic Relationships**

Of all of the ailments I've researched, herpes is the one that provides the ultimate example of how emotions and physical illness are intimately connected. If you have had herpes for any length of time, you probably realized early on that an argument, shock, outrage, or sudden sadness or grief can cause an outbreak within days. [Toxic relationships](#) are traumatic and cause emotional strain centered on negative thought patterns, fear, anger, and resentment. Many lead to chronic stress and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ([PTSD](#)). Ongoing psychological stress leads to chemical changes in the body that reduce white blood cell activity, deplete essential nutrients, and lead to immune system dysfunction and cellular fatigue. The result is diminished defense against infection and impaired ability to heal. If you hardly recognize yourself in a relationship, pay attention. Confusion, disappointment, and hurt will keep you stressed and experiencing recurring outbreaks, no matter what else you might do to put your herpes in remission. Sooner or later, you will have to let go of the stress by working things out or leaving the relationship to save yourself. Toxic relationships can occur between lovers, friends, and coworkers. Why do toxic relationships cause outbreaks? They cause stress, which causes **inflammation**.

- **Sexual Activities**

During sexual activities, friction can irritate the skin, cause microscopic tears, and bring on an outbreak, especially when there isn't enough lubrication. Certain positions during intercourse can also irritate nerve endings in the lower back, sacral, and pelvic area, reactivating the herpes virus. Additionally, [condoms](#) and toys can irritate delicate tissues when used without sufficient lubrication. Why do sexual activities cause herpes outbreaks? Skin irritation causes **inflammation**.

- Colds & Flu

Being ill with a cold, flu, or COVID-19 can trigger the herpes virus, so optimizing your immune system is essential. Fevers also trigger HSV, which is why cold sores are frequently referred to as fever blisters. Why do colds and flu trigger herpes outbreaks? Colds and flu trigger **inflammation**.

- Not Exercising or Exercising Incorrectly

Engaging in enjoyable activities and moderate physical exercise can help reduce stress and elevate your mood, ultimately benefiting your immune system. Exercise gets the heart beating and muscles working and helps to detoxify your system, which is essential in putting herpes in remission. Conversely, overexercising and certain positions, such as standard sit-ups, bicycling, rowing, and weightlifting (which can strain the shoulders and neck), can stress nerve ganglia where the herpes virus resides. Additionally, wearing hot, sweaty, or constricting clothing can irritate the skin and exacerbate outbreaks. Why does not exercising, exercising incorrectly, or wearing improper clothing trigger herpes outbreaks? Because it triggers **inflammation** in the body.

- Sitting for Too Long & Improper Posture

Pay attention to your posture. Genital herpes (HSV-2) lies dormant in the sacral ganglion, a group of nerves situated at the bottom of the spine. Should these nerves be irritated by pressure, movement, prolonged sitting, or any other factor that causes excess stress or pain to the nerve ganglion, it will increase the likelihood of genital outbreaks. If you tend to sit for most of your workday, it's essential to stand up, stretch, or walk around as often as possible. Why? Because anxiety and pain trigger **inflammation**.

- **Lack of Quality Sleep**

During sleep, particularly during REM sleep (the phase of in-depth dreaming), significant repairs are made to the body's tissues, and energy is restored. Most of this work begins around 11 PM and lasts for the next 4-5 hours, so it's essential to get 8-10 hours of sleep each night. Lack of sleep negatively impacts your immune system, and your body cannot heal properly without adequate rest and sleep. If your sheets are empty at night or you can't get to sleep or stay asleep, you've got a real problem. So, why does a lack of quality sleep cause herpes outbreaks? You guessed it. It causes **inflammation**.

- **Hormonal Changes**

Anything that causes your hormones to dip and dive will affect your immune system and its ability to function correctly. Menstrual cycles, pregnancy, menopause, andropause (male menopause) can affect the frequency and duration of herpes outbreaks. Problems with your adrenal glands, gallbladder, or liver, as well as gut dysbiosis, can also lead to immune issues. Why? If your hormones aren't functioning correctly, you'll develop **inflammation**, which triggers outbreaks.

- **Autoimmune Disorders & Illnesses**

Autoimmune disorders are self-attacking disorders in which your immune system is too aggressive and directed at an inappropriate target. Autoimmune conditions are caused by too much inflammation in the body. Inflammation encourages the release of histamine, which in turn increases **inflammation** in the body, triggering further outbreaks.

• Environmental Toxins

The frequency of outbreaks you experience can depend on how sensitive or allergic you are to certain environmental toxins, such as food additives, plastics, dust, molds, pesticides (and other chemicals), pollution, mothballs, household cleaners, room sprays, and colognes. 50% of all stress is caused by physical or environmental stress. Environmental stress triggers often correlate with poor living conditions, but not always. Environmental stress can also arise from living in a cluttered or loud environment, or from electromagnetic overload. Environmental toxins cause **inflammation**. Still, even if you live under an inner-city bridge, there are things you can do environmentally to put HSV in remission. See [Creating Healthy Spaces](#) for simple and healthy tips.

• Sunlight & Tanning Beds

Excessive sunlight can trigger outbreaks of cold sores. Two hours of midday sun for one week can cause a cold sore to appear within seven days. Ultraviolet light from tanning beds can trigger both cold sores and genital outbreaks. They may also trigger [Shingles](#). When outdoors, wear a hat and use natural ingredients, such as virgin coconut oil, to protect your skin from mild sunlight. For hotter temperatures, you can opt for more protection by using an over-the-counter sunscreen (no higher than SPF 7), but this can backfire. Most sunscreens have chemical screening agents and are known to cause [Cancer](#).

Additionally, many lip balms and sunscreens contain citrus essential oils, which can irritate your skin, cause sunburns (**inflammation**), and potentially trigger HSV. Why do sunlight and tanning beds trigger herpes outbreaks? They trigger **inflammation**.

Note: If you don't get much sun, consider taking a [vitamin D3](#) supplement. Vitamin D3 is essential for optimal immunity when fighting viruses.

• Foods & Ingredients

The Herpes Simplex Virus relies on the body to fall out of balance to become symptomatic. Particular foods, ingredients, the way meals are prepared, and overeating can trigger outbreaks relatively quickly, as adverse reactions to certain foods or those to which you are sensitive, such as gluten in bread and cereal grains, can significantly stress your entire immune system. When searching for herpes "cures", you will undoubtedly read about the importance of eating a balanced diet brimming with natural foods, which is good advice. The reason behind doing so is to reduce **inflammation**. However, even healthy foods can cause inflammation, which is why it's essential to consume a proper [anti-HSV diet](#).

• Addictions

Addictions of any kind are stressful because they are over-stimulating. [Stress](#) is an event, action, or thought that requires you to adapt or change in response to it. Addictions require you to adapt to your habit or address it, which is why they are a real bother. There is no managing an addiction without also managing the stress involved. Whether it is food, alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, gambling, sex, or shopping, addictions wreak havoc on the immune system because of the physical and mental stimulation involved. Stress triggers a chemical response in the body that leads to inflammation. When you have a physical addiction to a substance, such as sugar, caffeine, or a drug, it means you are sensitive to it. If you weren't sensitive to it, you wouldn't be addicted. It wouldn't affect you. Your body and mind would not cry out for more. It's the things we're sensitive to that we end up addicted to. When you hear others speaking of a genetic predisposition toward alcoholism, for example, it means you inherited a particular sensitivity. This sensitivity can span four generations. Excessive consumption of alcohol, sugar, caffeine, and medications causes **inflammation**, which tips the scales out of your favor and right into a herpes outbreak or worse.

• Caffeine

Caffeine is a substance that stimulates the adrenal glands to release adrenaline, the hormone that triggers the "fight, flight, or freeze" response. People often use caffeine to maintain alertness. As an addictive drug, it can take more and more caffeine to produce the same amount of alertness, so it's easy to end up drinking more and more to get that same response. The more caffeine you use, the more adrenaline is produced until you finally reach a stage of adrenal fatigue. Adrenal Burnout Syndrome weakens your immune system, allowing viruses and bacteria to attack and make you ill. Why? Because burnout causes **inflammation**. Caffeine also dehydrates the body, upsets the body's mineral balance, and causes acidity, all of which can trigger a herpes outbreak. Why? Because acidosis also causes **inflammation**. However, there is a plus side to caffeine. A little caffeine is beneficial, but only when consumed in amounts of less than 2 cups per day. When applied topically, studies show that it inhibits the replication of HSV-1 (cold sores).

Caffeine and carbonated beverages often go hand in hand (think Coke, Pepsi, Mountain Dew, and energy drinks). Carbonated water isn't good for you. According to The University of Maryland Medical Center, carbonated drinks can irritate the stomach and intestinal lining, which can cause bloating, pain, **inflammation**, and stomach ulcers. These side effects inhibit the body from absorbing nutrients, further contributing to inflammation and poor immunity.

• Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety disorders and nervous ills are all about emotional or physical stress. When you suffer from nervousness, panic attacks, Agoraphobia, or Depression, you experience more frequent or severe outbreaks. Why? Again, stress causes chemical changes in your body that cause **inflammation** and trigger herpes outbreaks. So that you know, anxiety disorders are almost always caused by a problem in the gut microbiome.

- Medications & Supplements

Over-the-counter and prescription medications (including steroidal and antivirals) and recreational drugs (including marijuana) create adverse changes in your gut microbiome and encourage more frequent outbreaks due to the **inflammation** they cause. Some natural supplements, such as using probiotics that trigger histamine, can also cause more frequent outbreaks. Antiviral prescription medications can cause HSV to mutate and provoke more symptomatic and severe outbreaks.

- Dental Fillings (and other toxic metals)

Mercury amalgam dental fillings are toxic and reduce immune function. Most dental insurance companies don't cover the removal of these poisonous fillings, but if you have a mouth full of mercury fillings, it is well worth having them removed. How are herpes and metals related? Heavy metals are toxic, cause acidosis, and lead to **inflammation**. Herpes uses toxins to hide behind. You can eliminate heavy metals and toxins by cleansing and detoxifying your body. Mercury is known to cause toxicity of the brain and Autism.

- Surgery & Injuries

Surgery and injuries can trigger a herpes outbreak from surgical positioning (on the table), trauma to the nerve ganglia where herpes resides, medications (increase the release of histamine), and emotional trauma. Again, **inflammation**.

• Electromagnetic Frequencies

Increasingly, studies demonstrate that electromagnetic radiation from cell phones, computers, appliances, and radio waves can harm our immune systems by interfering with [mitochondrial](#) and [electromagnetic energy systems](#). The mitochondria are the powerhouses in every cell in your body. They create and transport energy through your bio-electrical grid. Less power means less energy. Less energy means more toxicity, more **inflammation**, and more outbreaks.

Note: Some say a full moon is enough to trigger an outbreak.

• Medical Marijuana

THC is the active ingredient in marijuana that makes you high. However, THC alters the immune response, making white blood cells 35-40% less effective at fighting disease. For this reason, I don't suggest using marijuana containing THC to relax or relieve herpes-associated pain. You're only doing yourself a disservice. Instead, use CBD oil, herbs, and essential oils for their calming and healing benefits. You'll find resources in [The Herpothecary](#).

• Stress & Trauma

[Stress](#) is a contributing factor to more frequent and severe outbreaks of herpes. However, it's not just any type of stress. It's chronic stress, traumatic events (the death of a loved one, an environmental catastrophe, a physical injury, etc.), or stress perceived as traumatic, which can

be different for everyone. Having a flat tire on the way to work may not be traumatic for someone who has a spare in their trunk, knows how to change a tire, and has an understanding boss. On the other hand, if you're stuck on the side of the freeway, don't know how to change a tire (spare or not), and your boss is the type to fire you for being five minutes late, the experience can be traumatic. An example of ongoing stress might be walking on eggshells in an abusive relationship. Sometimes, it's chronic physical stress, such as a physically demanding job, a nutritional deficiency, or insufficient sleep.

Why is chronic stress a cause of herpes outbreaks? Because it causes **inflammation, the elephant in the room!**

