



SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURE 5.

Schematic outline of potential pathways influencing vaginal mucosal iron homeostasis and lactoferrin production following genital infection

Infective organisms attach to superficial epithelial cells; replication and inflammatory signal induction; systemic inflammatory response and increased Lf production from tissue neutrophils (Masson et al); increase in liver hepcidin expression in response to inflammation, with possible contribution from endogenous neutrophil hepcidin (Peyssonnaud et al, 2006); with infection, hepcidin blocks ferroportin and macrophage iron release into tissues (Ganz), influencing saturation of neutrophil apolactoferrin and amount of transudated free iron (Tang, 2007); association of leptin from epithelial cells with BMI and adipose tissue induces IL23 (Madan et al, 2014), neutrophil recruitment and Lf expression.

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