

# Demodex Blepharitis

Walt Whitley, OD, MBA, FAAO  
Virginia Eye Consultants  
Eyecare Partners, LLC

American Optometric Association  
Coding Committee



# DISCLOSURES - WALTER O. WHITLEY, OD, MBA, FAAO HAS RECEIVED CONSULTING FEES, HONORARIUM OR RESEARCH FUNDING FROM:

- Alcon: Advisory Board, Consultant, Speaker
- Aldeyra: Consultant
- Allergan: Advisory Board, Consultant, Speaker
- Apellis: Consultant
- Bausch and Lomb: Advisory Board, Speaker
- Bruder: Advisory Board
- Dompe: Consultant, Speaker
- Eyenovia: Consultant
- Heru: Consultant, Research
- Iveric Bio: Consultant
- Mediprint Pharma: Consultant
- Novaliq: Advisory Board
- Novartis: Consultant
- Oyster Point: Advisory Board, Speaker
- Regener-Eyes: Consultant
- Science Based Health: Advisory Board, Speaker
- Sun Pharmaceuticals: Speaker
- Tarsus Pharmaceuticals: Advisory Board, Consultant
- Thea Pharmaceuticals: Advisory Board, Consultant
- Visus Pharmaceuticals: Advisory Board

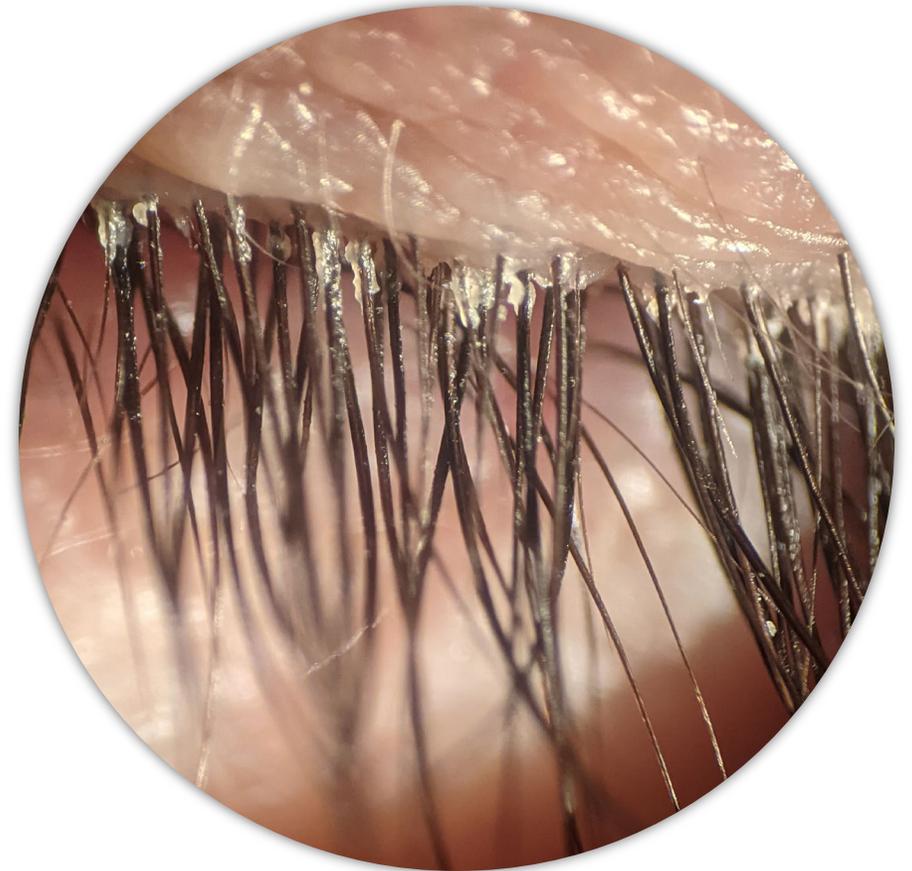
# DEMODEX BLEPHARITIS: WHAT IS IT?

***Demodex blepharitis (DB)* is a common eyelid margin disease caused by an overgrowth of *Demodex* mites.<sup>1</sup>**

**It is characterized by collarettes, eyelid redness, inflammation, and ocular irritation.<sup>2</sup>**

It is highly prevalent but underdiagnosed, affecting

**~25** million U.S. eye care patients.<sup>3,4</sup>

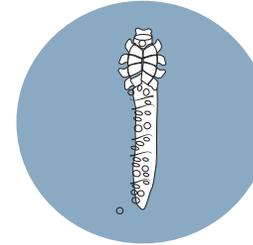


- 1. Fromstein SR et al. Clin Optom (Auckl). 2018;10:57-63 2. Rhee MK et al. Eye Contact Lens. 2023;10.1097 3. Trattler W et al. Clin Ophthalmol. 2022;16:1153-1164. 4. Atlas - O'Dell L et al. Clin Ophthalmol. 2022;16:2979-2987. doi:10.2147/OPHTH.S374530

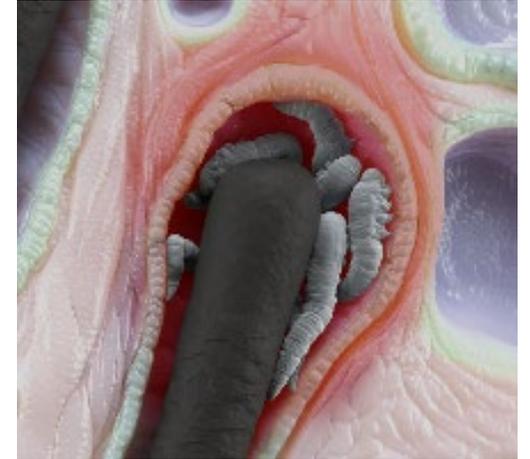
# DEMODEX BLEPHARITIS: PERVASIVE & DAMAGING

- Blepharitis is the **inflammation** of the eyelids causing irritation and redness
- **69%** of blepharitis cases are due to *Demodex* infestation leading to *Demodex* blepharitis<sup>1-4</sup>
  - *Demodex* mites are implicated in other diseases of the lid and lid margin, including blepharitis and meibomian gland dysfunction<sup>2,3</sup>
  - *Demodex* mites are associated with acne vulgaris, folliculitis, rosacea, seborrheic dermatitis, perioral and scalp hair loss, and basal cell carcinoma<sup>1,3</sup>
- *Demodex folliculorum* and *Demodex brevis* are the only 2 species found in humans<sup>5</sup>
  - The life cycle of the *Demodex* mite is approximately 14 to 18 days from egg to larval stage followed by the adult stage<sup>5</sup>
  - The life span of the mite is limited outside the living body; direct contact is required for transinfestation<sup>5</sup>

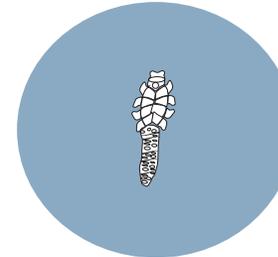
*D. folliculorum*



0.3-0.4 mm length  
Colonizes the base of the  
lash follicle<sup>2</sup>



*D. brevis*



0.1 mm length  
Colonizes the  
meibomian gland<sup>2</sup>



# DEMODEX BLEPHARITIS\* NEGATIVELY IMPACTS DAILY FUNCTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND SOCIAL QUALITY OF LIFE



Feels eyes/conscious of eyes all day

47%



Difficulty driving at night

47%



Additional time needed for daily hygiene routine

30%



Negative appearance of eyes or eyelids to others

23%



Constantly worrying about eyes or eyelids

23%



Difficulty wearing make-up

34%

(of females only)

\*Per an observational study of adult *Demodex* blepharitis patients from 8 US ophthalmic and optometric centers. O'Dell L, Dierker DS, Devries DK et al. Psychosocial impact of Demodex blepharitis. Clin Ophthalmol. 2022; 16:2979-2987.

# CURRENT ICD-10-CM: DEMODEX FOLLICULORUM

## Demodex folliculorum (infestation) B88.0

- - contact -see Dermatitis, eyelid, allergic
- - due to
- - - Demodex species B88.0

## B88 Other infestations

### B88.0 Other acariasis

Acarine dermatitis

Dermatitis due to Demodex species

Dermatitis due to Demanyssus gallinae

Dermatitis due to Liponyssoides sanguineus

Trombiculosis

Excludes2: scabies (B86)

# CURRENT ICD-10-CM CHAPTER 7 INTRODUCTION

## Chapter 7

### Diseases of the eye and adnexa (H00-H59)

**Note: Use an external cause code following the code for the eye condition, if applicable, to identify the cause of the eye condition**

**Excludes2:** certain conditions originating in the perinatal period (P04-P96)

**certain infectious and parasitic diseases (A00-B99)**

complications of pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium (O00-O9A)

congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities (Q00-Q99)

diabetes mellitus related eye conditions (E09.3-, E10.3-, E11.3-, E13.3-)

endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases (E00-E88)

injury (trauma) of eye and orbit (S05.-)

injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes (S00-T88)

neoplasms (C00-D49)

symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified (R00-R94)

syphilis related eye disorders (A50.01, A50.3-, A51.43, A52.71)

# CURRENT ICD-10-CM: BLEPHARITIS

**H01 Other inflammation of eyelid**

**H01.0 Blepharitis**

**Excludes1: blepharoconjunctivitis (H10.5-)**

## **H01.02 Squamous blepharitis**

**H01.021 Squamous blepharitis right upper eyelid**

**H01.022 Squamous blepharitis right lower eyelid**

**H01.023 Squamous blepharitis right eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.024 Squamous blepharitis left upper eyelid**

**H01.025 Squamous blepharitis left lower eyelid**

**H01.026 Squamous blepharitis left eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.029 Squamous blepharitis unspecified eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.02A Squamous blepharitis right eye, upper and lower eyelids**

**H01.02B Squamous blepharitis left eye, upper and lower eyelids**

## **H01.00 Unspecified blepharitis**

**H01.001 Unspecified blepharitis right upper eyelid**

**H01.002 Unspecified blepharitis right lower eyelid**

**H01.003 Unspecified blepharitis right eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.004 Unspecified blepharitis left upper eyelid**

**H01.005 Unspecified blepharitis left lower eyelid**

**H01.006 Unspecified blepharitis left eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.009 Unspecified blepharitis unspecified eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.00A Unspecified blepharitis right eye, upper and lower eyelids**

**H01.00B Unspecified blepharitis left eye, upper and lower eyelids**

## **H01.01 Ulcerative blepharitis**

**H01.011 Ulcerative blepharitis right upper eyelid**

**H01.012 Ulcerative blepharitis right lower eyelid**

**H01.013 Ulcerative blepharitis right eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.014 Ulcerative blepharitis left upper eyelid**

**H01.015 Ulcerative blepharitis left lower eyelid**

**H01.016 Ulcerative blepharitis left eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.019 Ulcerative blepharitis unspecified eye, unspecified eyelid**

**H01.01A Ulcerative blepharitis right eye, upper and lower eyelids**

**H01.01B Ulcerative blepharitis left eye, upper and lower eyelids**

# SUMMARY: CODING FOR DEMODEX BLEPHARITIS

Based on the existing codes and the current ICD-10-CM official guidelines for coding and reporting\*, the likely coding currently for demodex blepharitis would be the following:

*1° diagnosis:* H00.01-, H00.02-, or H00.03- (Blepharitis)

*2° diagnosis:* B88.0 (Other acariasis)

However, demodex blepharitis has characteristics distinct from other blepharitis conditions.

A specific, distinct code to designate Demodex Blepharitis would aid in identification and research into this common condition leading to improved treatments and eradication.



THANK YOU

WWHITLEY@CVPHEALTH.COM

