

Eyelid Condition - Demodex

The Following Information has been Prepared for You:

Demodex is a tiny parasitic mite that lives in hair follicles and oil glands. There are two species that have been identified on humans: *Demodex folliculorum* and *Demodex brevis*. Both species are found primarily on the face, nose, cheeks, eyebrows, forehead, and eyelashes. They can also be found in ears, on the scalp, and in skin folds.

Adults can grow up to 0.4 mm long and may be seen with the naked eye, but microscopes provide better views. They have very short legs, and move at a very slow speed. Demodex mites eat skin cells, hormones, and oil that are within the hair follicles. Eggs are laid deep into the hair follicles or oil glands and are inaccessible to treat or remove. They can only be treated once they hatch and migrate to the surface. Their life cycle is up to 20 days. Therefore, it is recommended to continue treatment for 12 weeks to significantly minimize their numbers.

Most humans acquire mites shortly after birth, and their numbers increase as the person ages. Mites usually only come out of their follicles at night, as they try to avoid light. Mites can transfer between people by skin and hair contact, and can live in towels, chairs, carpets, and bedding for several hours. Since they are more active at night, sleeping in close proximity to an infected individual poses a higher risk for cross-infection.

For the majority of people, mites cause no symptoms and are part of the "normal flora" on the human skin. It seems that in older people, those with suppressed immune systems (caused by stress or illness), or possibly those taking antibiotics, the mite population can sometimes dramatically increase and get out of control. Mite infestations are more common in people with HIV, children with leukemia, or patients on immunosuppressive drugs. Men are more prone to mite infestation than women because they have more sebaceous glands and facial hair.

SYMPTOMS:

While demodex is considered a normal skin flora, like many bacteria and yeast, an over-abundance of demodex may cause problems. The infestation causes a condition known as demodicosis, characterized by the following symptoms and skin disorders:

- Itching of the lids, especially at night
- Crusting along the base of the eyelashes
- Rosacea
- Blepharitis (inflammation of the edge of eyelids).
- Large pores
- Dilated veins
- Redness around the eyelids, nose, cheeks, forehead
- Thin hair
- Acne
- Blackheads
- Macules, papules, eczema, folliculitis and pigmentation

TREATMENT:

- Xdemvy prescription medication can eradicate demodex on the eyelids
- Special eyelid cleansers containing hypochlorous acid or tea tree oil - such as Blephadex, Oust, Sterilid and Cliradex - these brands are mild enough to use around the eyes. Tea tree oil-based shampoos are also helpful.
- Clove oil
- Consistently warm, moist compresses applied to the eyelids for 15 minutes, 4 times per day. Wash your hands and follow compresses with massage and pressure to the eyelid margin, to assist in expression of the oil glands. We offer our preferred brands of moist compresses for purchase at the front desk.

---IPL Treatments, provided by your eye doctor
 ---Borax Detergent for clothes and bedding
 ---Saunas – the heat kills the mites
 ---Sun exposure, in moderation
 ---Air clothing and bedding in the sun or tumble in the dryer, with heat
 ---Omega 3 supplements. We recommend the following brand: MaxiVision Tears. If you are taking blood thinners or bruise easily, notify your doctor, since Omega 3 supplements may also cause thinning of the blood and may be contraindicated.

Eyelid conditions should be carefully examined by an eye doctor to reduce the risk of scarring of the eyelid margin, which can cause loss of eyelashes, ingrown eyelashes or brittle and thin eyelashes. Chronic blepharitis will lead to atrophied and permanently damaged meibomian glands and severe dry eye disease.

Contact our office with any significant vision changes or emergencies that you feel require immediate attention.

Please Rate the Information You Received

	☐ Very helpful - all questions are answered ☐ Somewhat helpful - I still have questions ☐ Not helpful – none of my questions were answered
Comments / Questions / Typos:	

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