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**FREQUENCY OF DEMODEX FOLLICULORUM INFESTATION AND
POSSIBLE PATHOGENIC ROLE IN CHRONIC BLEPHARITIS.
PRELIMINARY STUDY.**

Anamaria Baptista Coutinho, Maria Cristina Martins, João Pessoa de Souza Filho, Acácio Alves de Souza Lima Filho, Marta de Filippi. Sartori Jundiaí School of Medicine - SP Purpose: To demonstrate the frequency of Demodex folliculorum in symptomatic chronic blepharitis compared to asymptomatic patients, in different age groups. Methods: Prospective, case-control study, 85 patients have been selected from the Ophthalmology Department of Jundiaí School of Medicine - Franco da Rocha-SP with clinical diagnosis of chronic blepharitis. 62 of them were symptomatic and 23 were asymptomatic. The symptomatic and asymptomatic chronic blepharitis patients were subdivided into 5 age groups (0-25; 26-50; 51-70; 71-90; >90). Eyelashes, from the upper and lower lid were epilated and examined for Demodex folliculorum by light microscopy. Results: This data showed 82,26%; Demodex infestation in symptomatic blepharitis patients and 52,10% in asymptomatic patients. Conclusion: A high frequency of Demodex folliculorum was found in chronic blepharitis patients, being higher in the symptomatic ones. Keywords: Acari, Demodex folliculorum, Blepharitis.