

Dermatology Practical & Conceptual

# **Pseudonits or Hair Casts**

Vania Lukoviek<sup>1,2</sup>, Josep Malvehy<sup>1</sup>, Susana Puig<sup>1</sup>, Sebastian Podlipnik<sup>1</sup>

Department of Dermatology, University of Barcelona, Spain
Department of Dermatology, University Hospital of Canarias, Tenerife, Spain

Key words: pseudonits, nits, dermoscopy, polarized light dermoscopy

Citation: Lukoviek V, Malvehy J, Puig S, Podlipnik S. Pseudonits or hair casts. *Dermatol Pract Concept.* 2020;10(4):e2020072. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5826/dpc.1004a72

Accepted: April 16, 2020; Published: October 26, 2020

Copyright: ©2020 Lukoviek et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Funding: None.

Competing interests: The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Authorship: All authors have contributed significantly to this publication.

Corresponding author: Sebastian Podlipnik, MD, PhD, Melanoma Unit, Dermatology Department, Hospital Clinic Barcelona, Villarroel 170, 08036, Barcelona, Spain. Email: podlipnik@clinic.cat

#### **Case Presentation**

A 34-year old female with an unremarkable medical history presented with a 3-month history of scalp pruritus. Physical examination revealed small whitish lesions resembling nits, abundant on one dreadlock. Trichoscopy showed many whitish, tubular and non-adherent structures on the hair shafts (Figure 1). There was no evidence of nits or lice on the rest of the scalp.

## **Teaching Point**

Pseudonits, hair casts, or keratin cysts are white objects that easily move along the hair. There are 2 types: (1) parakeratotic, associated with seborrheic dermatitis, psoriatic or excessive traction, and (2) peripilar, the pathogenesis of which is not clear but is more frequent in young women. Trichoscopy findings include whitish cylindrical structures around the hair shaft. Nits (main differential) present brown ovoid structure with a curved end (vital) or translucent structure with a planar end (empty). Pseudonits are frequently misdiagnosed as pediculosis capitis; trichoscopy, then, is essential for differentiation, avoiding patient anxiety and unnecessary treatments.

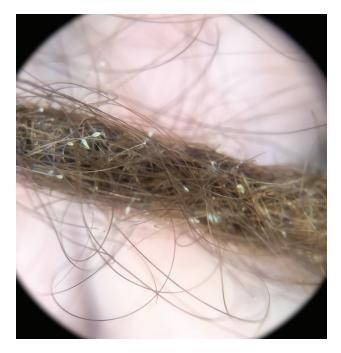


Figure 1. Trichoscopy reveals pseudonits.

#### Acknowledgments

Thanks to our patients and their families who are the main reason for our studies; to Paul Hetherington for helping with English editing and correction of the manuscript.

### References

- Lacarrubba F, Verzì AE, Micali G. Trichoscopy in the differential diagnosis of pseudonits. *Skin Appendage Disord*. 2019;5(3):142-145. DOI: 10.1159/000493741. PMID: 31049334.
- Lokhande AJ, Sutaria A. Adult onset hair casts: nits which do not itch! *Int J Trichology*. 2017;9(2):70-72. DOI: 10.4103/ijt. ijt\_30\_17. PMID: 28839391.
- França K, Tadeu Villa R, Rezende Silva I, Almedia Carvalho C, Bedin V. Hair casts or pseudonits. *Int J Trichology*. 2011;3(2):121-122. DOI: 10.4103/0974-7753.90834. PMID: 22223977.