



INFECTIOUS DISEASES (BACTERIAL, FUNGAL, VIRAL, PARASITIC, INFESTATIONS)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DERMOSCOPY IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF CUTANEOUS PARASITIC INFESTATIONS

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Background: Dermoscopy can be very helpful in establishing the right diagnosis of cutaneous parasitic infections from the doctor's office. Moreover, unnecessary invasive tests can be avoided. In scabies, a skin infestation due to the parasite *Sarcoptes scabiei*, the typical sign is a burrow with a triangular brown structure at the end, known as "jet with a contrail". Scalp infestations with *Pediculus humanus capitis*, known as pediculosis capitis, may be confirmed through dermoscopy by visualizing white nits attached to the hair shaft or as the parasite itself.

### Observation:

Case report 1. A 85 year-old female patient presented for an intensely pruritic generalized rash evolving for almost 6 months. She was previously diagnosed as having allergic contact dermatitis, for which she was hospitalized two times and treated with topical steroids and emollients, without any benefit. Clinical examination showed multiple erythematous papules and plaques all over her body, some discreet linear paths and excoriations. Dermoscopy revealed burrows with a brown triangular shaped structure at the end, confirming the diagnosis of scabies. After a topical treatment with 25% benzyl benzoate mixture, a complete remission of the lesions was noticed.

Case report 2. A 32 year-old female patient presented for a persistent and very itchy "seborrheic dermatitis" of the scalp, evolving for 2 months. She had previously received topical steroids solutions and ketoconazole shampoos, without a significant improvement. Dermoscopy of the hair shaft behind the ears revealed whitish nits stuck to the hair, pointing towards the diagnosis of pediculosis capitis. No other parasites were observed.





Some pseudonits suggesting seborrheic dermatitis were present as well. The treatment with a pediculicide shampoo resulted in a complete remission of the parasitic infestation.

Key message: The dermoscopy clues of parasitic infections may ease the work of the dermatologist in the direction of the right diagnosis.

