Author/s:
Willems, A;Sinclair, R

Title:
Tufted cutaneous pili migrans

Date:
2021-08-01

Citation:
Willems, A. & Sinclair, R. (2021). Tufted cutaneous pili migrans. Clinical and Experimental Dermatology, 46 (6), pp.1102-1103. https://doi.org/10.1111/ced.14622.

Persistent Link:
https://hdl.handle.net/11343/278522

Article type : Correspondence

Tufted Cutaneous Pili Migrans: A Case Report

A. Willems[1] and R. Sinclair[1,2]

1. Sinclair Dermatology, Melbourne, Australia
2. Department of Medicine, University of Melbourne, Australia

Corresponding author: Dr Anneliese Willems MBBS, BmedSc, FRACGP

Email: Anneliese.willems@sinclairdermatology.com.au

Disclosure of interest: The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding: The authors report no additional funding for completion of the article.

Dear Editor,

In 2001 we reported a 37-year-old Indian male with a 7cm beard hair that grew beneath the stratum corneum and coined the term cutaneous pili migrans.[1] Since that time there have been numerous reports of this condition in the literature.[2, 3] Cutaneous pili migrans should be distinguished from imbedded hair[4] and Pili Cuniculati[5] where an exogenous human or animal hairs penetrates the skin like a splinter and remains dormant for a period of time.

We report a new variant of cutaneous pili migrans in an otherwise well 34-year-old male who presented with a 10-year history of a grey-black linear lesion in the suprapubic region. Examination revealed a slightly elevated grey to black linear eruption of approximately

25mm by 2mm. There was a small area of visibly broken stratum corneum to the medial margin (Figure 1). Dermoscopy revealed the lesion was a hair tuft comprising approximately twenty individual hair shafts. The tuft was able to be removed definitively with forceps (Figure 2).

Unlike the original description of cutaneous pili migrans where a single hair fibre grew from a follicle with a long anagen duration (approximately 6-12 months) to produce a 9cm linear burrow under the skin, in this case a single follicle cycled repeatedly and produced multiple hairs each 1-3 cm long. Each hair grew into the track created by the first hair to produce a sterile tuft of hair. The hair fibres in the tuft all had a telogen bulb.

The closest analogy to this is tufted folliculitis of the scalp which is often considered a variant of folliculitis decalvans.[6] This is an inflammatory condition and tufts comprise 20-50 fibres, some with anagen bulb and some with telogen bulbs. In tufted folliculitis the fibres are thought to arise from multiple follicles.

We did not perform a biopsy in this patient, but the long history of the lesion and the observation that all the fibres had telogen bulbs suggest that tufted cutaneous pili migrans arises from a single follicle.

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