

Bed Bugs

What are they?

- Bed bugs are tiny (4 to 5 mm long) insects that have a flat head and oval body.
- Young bed bugs are yellowish white and change to reddish brown as they age.
- Bed bugs cannot fly or jump, but can crawl quickly into small spaces.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood and usually bite at night or in the dark.
- Bites often cause a welt on the skin that becomes irritated, inflamed and itchy.
- Itchiness can last for weeks and with scratching may lead to skin infections.
- Bed bugs are pests that are not known to spread disease.

How are they spread?

- Bed bugs can be a problem in the cleanest of homes and hotels.
- Bed bugs can be brought into the home through clothing and luggage, second-hand beds, bedding materials, furniture can spread bed bugs.
- Bed bugs can hide in crevices of mattresses, molding, behind outlets and inside light fixtures.
- Bed bugs can multiply rapidly and quickly infest your home.

What can be done to prevent their spread?

- Learn how to identify bed bugs. If you find any bed bugs, kill them right away.
- Ensure that second-hand items have been carefully inspected before you bring them into your home. Wash clothing and linens in hot water and dry in a hot dryer.

- **Use caution when traveling/visiting to make sure your luggage is not contaminated:**
 - Bring in items that you need and avoid placing bags next to the floor, furniture or walls (if this is unavoidable, place items in a closed white plastic kitchen bag and inspect items carefully before returning home).
 - Inspect shoes, clothing and belongings after a trip. Wash clothing and linens in hot water and dry in a hot dryer.

If bed bugs have been found

- The best method of removing bed bugs is by pest control expert. Check the yellow pages or internet for local pest control services. Put personal clothing and bedding in an air tight sealed bag until it can be washed.
- Wash all clothing and bedding in a very hot water and dry on a hot cycle in the dryer for 20 minutes or more.
- Check seams and the underside of furniture for evidence of bed bugs.
- Vacuuming and steam cleaning may also be done.
- Vacuum bags and canisters contents should be emptied into a sealable bag right away and thrown out.

Is there treatment for bed bug bites?

- Most bed bug bites go away on their own and do not need treatment. Keep the skin around the bites clean and avoid scratching them.
- Your doctor will decide if you need treatment for the bites if they become infected.

For more information

American Academy of dermatologists

<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/itchy-skin/bedbugs>

**Stop the spread of germs and infection.
Clean your hands.**

