

Bed Bugs

What is a bed bug?

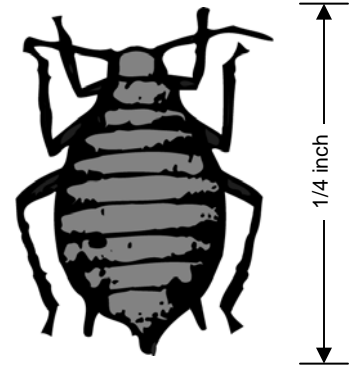
Bed bugs are tiny blood-sucking insects that feed on humans, pets, chickens, and other animals. They feed at night or in the dark. Although not painful at first, bed bug bites usually become red, swollen and itchy. Reactions to bites range from mild to severe. Bed bugs are not known to spread any diseases.

Bed bug facts

Bed bugs are 4 to 5 mm long (less than 1/4 of an inch) and have a flat head and a flat, oval body. Young bed bugs are yellow-white in color and change to a light to reddish brown as they mature. Bed bugs can live in furniture, cushions, mattresses and walls in your home.

Signs of bed bugs

Indications of a bed bug infestation include: small blood stains on wall and sheets (stains are from bed bug excretions, not bites), skins shed from the early life stages of the bed bug and an odor similar to the smell of fresh raspberries. Bed bugs multiply rapidly and can quickly infest your home.



How bed bugs get into your home

Bed bugs can enter your home when you bring in infested furniture, bedding, old books, laundry and suitcases. They may also enter your home through water pipes, gutters, windows and walls. Proper sanitation in your home will help keep bed bugs out. If you notice signs of bed bugs in one area, it is likely they are hiding in other places too. Bed bugs can be hard to get rid of because they hide in small places like the cording around mattresses, under buttons and in the seams of cushions. Check for bed bugs hiding in your bedding, draperies, furniture, cracks in the walls and behind loose wall paper.

How to get rid of bed bugs

To get rid of bed bugs you can:

- It's easier to kill bed bugs with heat than cold, freezing temperatures do not kill them. All stages of the life cycle can be killed by a 7 minute exposure to 115° F.
- Bed bugs and eggs can be vacuumed by the use of a nozzle attachment. Vacuum all the crevices on mattresses, bed frame, base boards and any objects close to the bed. Vacuum and steam clean carpets. It is essential to vacuum daily and empty your vacuum immediately in an outdoor trash container.
- Wash all bedding, draperies and clothing in hot water on a regular basis. Place them in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.



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Bed Bugs – Continued

- Use insecticides to get rid of bed bugs that are hiding in walls and other large objects. (Choose insecticides with “pyrethrins” as an active ingredient on the label. Only use insecticides labeled for household use because some insecticides can damage or stain your furniture, wall paper, etc. Use care when applying insecticides, especially around children, the elderly, immuno-compromised people, and anyone else who may be sensitive to insecticides. Always follow label directions carefully.)

Bed bugs can be difficult to get rid of because they hide so well. If two weeks have passed since you first tried to rid your home of bed bugs and you still notice signs of bed bugs, repeat the above steps. For heavy infestations, contact a pest control service.



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