

Bed Bugs

What are bed bugs?

- Bed bugs are small, reddish-brown in color, wingless, flat, parasitic insects that feed on the blood of people and animals while they sleep but are not known to spread disease.
- They can live up to a year without a blood meal.



What are the symptoms of bed bug bites?

- While sleeping, bite marks on the face, neck, arms, hands, or any body part appear up to 14 days later. Other bed bug symptoms include insomnia, anxiety, and skin problems.
- Bites may cause an allergic reaction or excessive scratching that may lead to a secondary skin infection. Allergic symptoms may include enlarged bite marks, painful swelling at the bite site, and rarely anaphylaxis.
- Avoid scratching the bites, apply antiseptic creams or lotions to them, and take an antihistamine.

What are the signs of a bed bug infestation?

- Itchy areas you did not have when you went to sleep
- Bed bugs, exoskeletons after molting, in the fold of mattresses and sheets
- Rust-colored fecal material on the mattress, nearby furniture, pajamas, and walls
- Sweet-musty odor from bugs' scent gland



How can I prevent getting bed bugs?

- The best way to prevent bed bugs is regular inspection for the signs of an infestation.
- When traveling, use luggage racks to hold your luggage when packing or unpacking rather than setting your luggage on the bed or floor.
- Check the mattress and headboard for signs of bed bugs before sleeping.
- Upon returning home, unpack directly into a washing machine and inspect your luggage carefully.
- The most effective way to control bed bugs is a coordinated effort among resident, property managers, and pest management professionals.
- **Residents** can clean bedding, linens, curtains, and clothing in hot water and dry them on highest dryer setting and use a stiff brush to remove from mattress seams. Vacuum the bed and surrounding area frequently and immediately remove vacuum bag and place in garbage outside. Mattress and box springs should be covered with a tight-woven zippered cover for at least a year. Cracks and crevices should be sealed, and clutter removed to remove hiding places.
- **Property managers and pest management professionals** may use a variety of surveillance and control methods: monitoring devices (like sticky traps), heat treatments, nonchemical and chemical pesticides.



For More Information: Visit cdc.gov or epa.gov and type Bed Bugs in the SEARCH box.

