

Bed Bug Fact Sheet

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small, reddish-brown wingless insects that feed on human blood during the night. They are about the size of a lady bug or an apple seed. Bed bugs do not fly; they either crawl or are carried from place to place in a person's belongings. Before a bed bug feeds on blood, its body looks flat with a circle shaped abdomen; however, after it has fed, the body lengthens and becomes narrow. Bed bugs can survive for weeks to months without a blood meal.

Do bed bugs affect humans?

Bed bugs feed at night when people are sleeping. The bite of a bed bug is usually painless, and a person may not even know that they have been bitten until a large itchy welt appears on their skin several days later. Some people do not react to bed bug bites. While these bites may be a nuisance, bed bugs do not transmit disease to humans.

Where do bed bugs live?

Bed bugs are most commonly found in sleeping areas including beds and bedroom furniture, mattresses, and linens. Bed bugs may also be found in the cracks and crevices of bed frames, dressers or loosened wall paper.

Signs of bed bugs include:

- Presence of bed bugs
- Empty bed bug skins
- Blood spots or stains on bedding, mattresses, furniture or walls.

Getting rid of bed bugs:

Washing clothing and bedding in hot water will kill bed bugs on those items. The California Department of Public Health, Vector-borne Disease Section, recommends hiring a licensed pest control operator to get rid of bed bugs in the room or building where they are found.

Where can I get more information?

- Vector-Borne Disease Section at the California Department of Public Health:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/healthinfo/discond/pages/bedbugs.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/publications/Bed_Bugs_CDC-EPA_Statement.htm



Photo Courtesy of Piotr Naskrecki, CDC/Harvard University

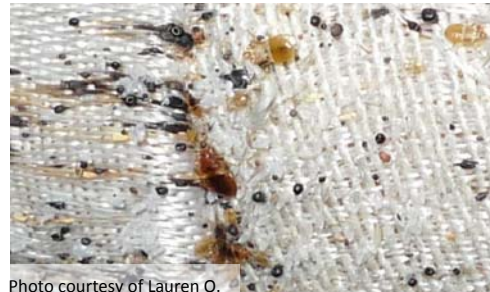


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