



What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are insects. *Cimex lectularius* is the species most commonly found in homes. Adult bed bugs have oval-shaped bodies with no wings. Prior to feeding, they are about 1/4 inch long and flat as paper. After feeding, they turn dark red and become bloated. Eggs are whitish, pear-shaped and about the size of a pinhead. Clusters of 10-50 eggs can be found in cracks and crevices.

Bed bugs have a one-year life span during which time a female can lay 200-400 eggs depending on food supply and temperature. Eggs hatch in about 10 days.

There are currently no known cases of disease associated with bed bug bites. Most people are not aware that they have been bitten. People who are more sensitive to the bite can have localized allergic reactions. Scratching the bitten areas may lead to infection.

What do bed bugs feed on?

Bed bugs prefer to feed on human blood, but will also bite mammals and birds. Bed bugs bite at night, and will bite all over a human body, especially around the face, neck, upper torso, arms and hands. Bed bugs can survive up to six months without feeding. Both male and female bed bugs bite.

How do bed bugs get into my home?

Bed bugs are often carried into a home on objects such as furniture and clothing. They can be found in areas such as:

- Seams, creases, tufts and folds of mattresses and box springs
- Cracks in the bed frame and head board
- Under chairs, couches, beds, dust covers
- Between the cushions of couches and chairs
- Under area rugs and the edges of carpets
- Between the folds of curtains
- In drawers
- Behind baseboards, and around window and door casings
- Behind electrical plates and under loose wallpaper, paintings and posters
- In cracks in plaster
- In telephones, radios, and clocks

Bed bugs can also travel from apartment to apartment along pipes, electrical wiring and other openings.



What can I do if I have bed bugs in my home?

The best method to deal with bed bugs is Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which combines a variety of techniques and products that pose the least risk to human health and the environment.

1. Consult with your local health department or a professional Pest Control operator to confirm that you have bed bugs.
2. Inspect your mattress and bed frame, particularly the folds, crevices and the underside, and other locations where bed bugs like to hide.
3. Use a nozzle attachment on the vacuum to capture the bed bugs and their eggs. Vacuum all crevices on your mattress, bed frame, baseboards and any objects close to the bed. It is essential to vacuum daily and empty the vacuum immediately.
4. Wash all your linens and place them in a hot dryer for 20 minutes. Consider covering your pillows and mattress with a plastic cover.
5. Remove all unnecessary clutter.
6. Seal cracks and crevices between baseboards, on wood bed frames, floors and walls with caulking. Repair or remove peeling wallpaper, tighten loose light switch covers, and seal any openings where pipes, wires or other utilities come into your home (pay special attention to walls that are shared between apartments).
7. Monitor daily by setting out glue boards or sticky tape (carpet tape works well) to catch the bed bugs. Closely examine any items that you are bringing into your home. **Note: Furniture put out by someone else for garbage pick-up could be infested with bed bugs. Use caution.**

Consult professional pest control services and discuss options that pose the least risk to humans and the environment.

Call for additional information.