

STOP BED BUGS

WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping. Adult bed bugs have flat, rusty-red colored oval bodies. About the size of an apple seed, they are big enough to be easily seen, but often hide in cracks in furniture, floors, or walls. They can live for several months without feeding.

WHAT DOES A BED BUG BITE FEEL AND LOOK LIKE?

Most people do not feel the bed bug biting. Most bed bug bites are initially painless, but later turn into large, itchy skin welts. These welts do not have a red spot in the center like flea bites. Remember that there are other bugs that look like bed bugs and some even bite humans and produce similar bite-like reactions.

ARE BED BUGS DANGEROUS?

Although bed bugs are a nuisance, they are not known to spread disease.

HOW DOES A HOME BECOME INFESTED WITH BED BUGS?

In most cases, people carry bed bugs into their homes unknowingly, in infested luggage, furniture, bedding, or clothing. Bed bugs may also travel between apartments through small crevices and cracks in walls and floors.

Bed bugs are sometimes thought to occur only in poor and unsanitary conditions. This is not the case. Bed bugs can be found even in very clean environments.



HOW CAN I GET RID OF BED BUGS?

Before treating an infestation, it is very important to correctly identify the bug. The Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends that homeowners hire pest control professionals licensed by the CT Department of Environmental Protection to identify and help get rid of bed bugs.

The homeowner can:

1. Find out where bed bugs are hiding in your home. Use a bright flashlight to check:
 - Behind your headboard.
 - In the seams and tufts of your mattress and inside the box spring.
 - Along bedroom baseboard cracks.
 - In and around nightstands.
 - Electronics such as radios, phones, TV's.
2. Clean areas where bed bugs are likely to hide, such as bedding, linens, curtains, rugs, carpets, and clothes. To kill bed bugs:
 - Wash items in hot water and dry them on the highest dryer setting for at least 30 minutes. Store the items in a plastic bag until the bed bug problem has been resolved.
 - Vacuum mattresses, bed frames, nearby furniture, floors, carpets and other areas that cannot be washed. Pay special attention to cracks and open spaces. Immediately after vacuuming, put the vacuum cleaner bag in a sealed plastic bag and throw it away in an outdoor container. Steam cleaning carpets may also help.
 - Remove clutter from the room, discard unwanted items.
 - Seal mattresses and box springs in plastic/vinyl covers approved for against bed bugs. Mattresses and box springs do not always need to be thrown out in controlling bed bugs.
 - Call a professional, licensed pest control company for further assistance.

3. Be very cautious about using pesticides yourself. Pesticides can be harmful to people and pets. Do not use pesticides on cribs, mattresses, or bedding because of possible allergic reactions. It is best to hire or seek the advise of a professional if pesticides are to be used.

HOW CAN I REDUCE THE CHANCE OF BED BUGS INFECTING MY HOME, WORKPLACE OR CLASSROOM?

At home:

- After returning from a trip, check luggage, bags and other items for signs of bed bugs. Do not put luggage on your bed.
- Wash clothing and bedding immediately after returning from a trip.
- **Never bring discarded** bed frames, mattresses, box springs, or upholstered furniture into your home.
- Inspect used furniture for bed bugs before bringing it into your home.

In addition:

- Never resell or donate infested furniture from your home.
- If you throw infested furniture away, make it undesirable to others by cutting or poking holes in the upholstery, making it unusable.

At work:

- Reduce clutter in your workplace or classroom to reduce hiding places for bed bugs.
- Store your coats, briefcases and shoes in sealed plastic bins or bags.
- Do not bring a lot of personal items from home into the workplace that will be returning home with you at the end of the day.
- Replace fabric area rugs with rubber mats.
- If you work in a classroom, monitor your students' behavior for excessive scratching or itching.
- If you notice unusual sightings (such as bed bug casings) or unusual student behavior, report it to a principle or school official to ensure that proper measures are taken.
- Do not self-treat suspect areas with over the counter pesticides.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you see bed bugs in your home or workplace, do not panic!

[Learn more about bed bugs:](#)

Connecticut Department of Public Health
www.ct.gov/dph

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
(New Haven laboratories)
www.ct.gov/caes
1-877-855-2237 (toll free)

[Getting rid of bed bugs in your home:](#)

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP)
Pesticide Management Program
www.ct.gov/dep
1-860-424-3369

National Pesticides Information Center
1-800-858-7378
<http://npic.orst.edu/pest/bedbug.html>

Remember:

The risk of getting bed bugs from casual human contact is very low.

Bed bugs live in *places*, not on people!

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