

- **Request a written integrated pest management (IPM) plan** from the pest control operator. This plan should detail the methods and insecticides to be used by the pest control operator, and describe the efforts expected by the building manager as well as by the tenants.
- **Dispose of infested furniture properly.** Placing infested furniture (particularly mattresses) into common areas or on the street may simply help spread bed bugs to the homes of other people. Infested furniture intended for disposal should be defaced to make it less attractive. To reduce opportunities of infested furniture re-entering their building, building managers should ensure that any disposed furniture is immediately carted away to a landfill or waste facility.

Bed bugs may also be behind baseboards, pictures, frames, windows, door casings, loosened wall paper, curtains, cracks in plaster, and behind electrical wall plates.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BED BUGS



## BED BUGS, A GROWING CONCERN

You have probably heard the old saying, “**Sleep tight don’t let the bed bugs bite**”, well; bed bugs have made a big comeback in the U.S. Their name comes from their tendency to live between mattresses and feed on the occupants at night. Bed bugs do not fly or jump, but move quickly over floors, walls, ceilings, and furniture.



Bed bugs are wingless, approximately ¼ inch in length with a flattened oval shape and rusty brown in color. Female bed bugs lay up to five eggs a day and five hundred during a lifetime. A bed bug can live up to 18 months without a blood meal and the adults normally live about 10 months. Since bed bugs are only active at night, any daytime sightings may indicate a heavy infestation.

Usually the first sign of a bed bug infestation is the appearance of small rusty spots on your mattresses and bed linens. These are bed bug droppings and blood spots.

Bed bugs feed on any bare skin exposed while sleeping. Red itchy welts are an indication of an infestation. Bed bug “bites” occur when the bed bug is actually drawing blood. It may take as long as fourteen days for a welt to appear from a bed bug “bite”.

The infected person should resist the urge to scratch the “bites”, as this may intensify the itching and cause an infection. Some people have a reaction to bed bug “bites” and may need to seek medical assistance. A common concern is whether bed bugs transmit diseases. Although bed bugs can harbor pathogens in their bodies, transmission to humans is highly unlikely.

## TIPS ON BED BUG CONTROL

Managing bed bugs requires a multi-faceted approach that includes cleaning, room modifications and several insecticidal treatments to the affected areas may be needed to gain control of the infestation.

- **Search for signs of bed bugs.** Carefully inspect the bed frame, mattress, headboard and other furniture for signs of bed bugs and their eggs. Search for live (crawling) bugs and ensure they are bed bugs before considering treating.
- **Thoroughly clean** the infested rooms in the residence. Scrub infested surfaces with a stiff brush to dislodge eggs, and use a strong vacuum to remove bed bugs from cracks and crevices. Dismantling bed frames and headboards will expose additional bug hiding sites. Remove drawers from desks and dressers and turn furniture over to inspect and clean all hiding spots. Wash bedding and garments in hot (120°F) water. Put clothing in a dryer for at least 5 minutes to kill bed bugs.

- **Mattresses** and box springs can be permanently encased within sealed mattress bags. Any bugs trapped within these sealed bags will eventually die over a period of a year.
- **To prevent bed bugs from crawling onto a bed**, pull the bed frame away from the wall, tuck sheets and blankets so they won’t contact the floor, and coat the base of the frame legs with Vaseline.
- **If you own your residence**, we suggest you contact a licensed pest control operator who is knowledgeable and experienced in managing bed bug infestations.
- **If you are a tenant**, contact your property manager or landlord to discuss your respective obligations, and to agree on a plan to manage the infestation.



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