

Bedbugs

What are bedbugs?

- Bedbugs are small, wingless insects that feed on the blood of people.

When do bedbugs bite?

- Bedbugs usually feed in the middle of the night when people are sleeping. They feed for less than 10 minutes and the bite is painless.

What health problems do bedbugs pose?

- While bedbugs are not known to spread disease, their presence is unwelcome and may cause distress.
- Areas around bites may redden, swell, and itch. Some people have no reaction.
- Forceful scratching of bedbug bites may lead to secondary skin infection.

Where do bedbug infestations occur?

- Bedbug infestations have been reported from apartments, shelters, rooming houses, hotels, nursing homes, hospitals, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms.
- Bedbugs hide during the day in places such as seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, and under any clutter or objects around a bed.
- Bedbugs can be transported from place to place as people travel. Bedbugs travel in the seams and folds of luggage, overnight bags, folded clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere else where they can hide.

How to detect bedbug infestations when cleaning or changing bedding or staying in places away from home—look for

- Dark spots (about this size: •) which is bedbug fecal matter.
- Eggs and eggshells, which are tiny (about 1mm) and white.
- Skins of young bedbugs that they shed after molting.
- Rusty or reddish stains caused by bedbugs being crushed.
- Focus on mattresses, box springs, bed frames, and areas around the bed.

How to remove bedbugs

- Remove or treat all infested materials as soon as you detect bedbugs.
- Vacuum along mattress seams, baseboards, and other areas.
- Wash all bedding and clothing in hot (120°F) water and dry in a hot dryer.
- Consider steam cleaning.
- If possible, replace infested mattresses.

Serious infestations may require insecticide treatment

- Hire an experienced pest control professional. They have access to the most effective products.
- Chemical insecticides should be used carefully and sparingly. Apply insecticides to cracks, crevices, baseboards, and bed frames but not directly to mattresses or bedding. Follow instructions and warnings on product labels.
- Insecticides alone will not control bedbugs. Remove infested materials, and seal hiding spots.

Resources

City, town or municipal governments may or may not have resources to address a bedbug problem. If you live in the city of Colorado Springs and your complaint is related to a hotel/motel or a rental apartment, contact the Colorado Springs Code Enforcement Office. If you live in another city or town in El Paso County, Colorado, contact your city or town government.

More information: www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Topics/bedbugs.htm

8/26/11

