

Know thine enemy: the common bed bug.

Bed bugs? Really?

Yes - while bed bugs were once a common nuisance throughout human history, they were largely eliminated from developed nations during the second half of the 20th century. Unfortunately, they are currently making a comeback worldwide, and residents of Cincinnati are not immune to their attack.

That's gross.

Agreed - bed bugs are definitely not a welcome addition to our most private space. From night-time bites and "buggy-doo" to the thought of a mattress full of creepy-crawlers, it's easy to see how even the mention of bed bugs can be cause for alarm for many.

Well, I'm clean, so I don't have anything to worry about.

Actually, bed bugs can be found everywhere, including in the cleanest of homes, hotels, and other buildings. This means that nobody is immune from a bed bug attack, and there are no barriers to infestation based upon income, social standing, race/ethnicity, or personal cleanliness.

How do I know that I don't have bed bugs right now?

Luckily, there are a number of easy ways to find out if you have bed bugs living in your home. The inside of this brochure contains information about:

- How to prevent bed bugs;
- How to spot bed bugs; and
- How to treat bed bug infestations.

Using a few simple steps, you can ensure that your family doesn't fall victim to this six-legged menace.

Read inside to learn more!



Don't Bring Home Stow-aways! Easy steps to prevent home infestation after staying in hotels...

Many individuals worry about bringing bed bugs home following their travels. Although it is not as easy to transport bed bugs as one might expect, there are special considerations that you should follow to minimize the probability of accidentally introducing bed bugs into your home or apartment building.

1. During travel, before you check into a hotel, check into the mattress. Carefully remove the sheets and examine the head section of the bed, look at the seams of the mattress as well as both sides of the head board. If you see any small insects in either of these locations, they are probably bed bugs.
2. Bringing your favorite pillow along on your travels may increase the chances of this pillow becoming infested with bed bugs and the transport of these bed bugs back to your home. If you have a favorite pillow, make sure it is encased in a bed bug proof sealed pillow case.
3. Remember not to place your luggage next to the bed. Find a location as far from the head of the bed as possible, and store your luggage in this location. This same principle applies to portable radios and other items that could conceal bed bugs.
4. If you do see bed bugs or think you have been bitten by bed bugs during your travel, it is extremely important to report this incident to the hotel management or else other unsuspecting travelers may meet the same fate.

DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE!

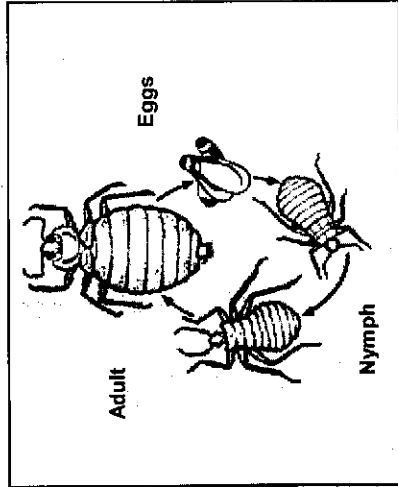


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**Want to learn more about bed bugs?
Read more online at the Ohio State
University Web site:**

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/pdf/2105.pdf>



Above: Life cycle of the common bed bug.

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small, wingless insects that feed solely upon the blood of warm-blooded animals and humans. They are sometimes mistaken for ticks or cockroaches.

What do bed bugs look like?

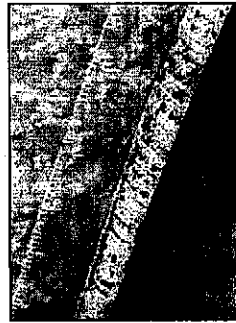
A mature bed bug is oval-bodied, brown to red-brown in color, wingless, and flattened top to bottom. Unfed bugs are 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch long. Bugs that have recently fed will be engorged with blood, dull red in color, and elongated/swollen. Their eggs are white and are about 1/25 inch long—newly-hatched eggs are nearly colorless or can appear straw-colored.

What do bed bugs eat?

Bed bugs usually feed on our blood by biting the exposed skin of the arms, shoulders, hands, neck, and face. Bites often result in large and itchy welts.

Where should I look for bed bugs?

Check for bed bugs under folds in mattresses, along seams in-between bed posts and bed slats, and behind headboards. Any nearby crack or crevice can serve as a daytime refuge for bed bugs—and is often the best place to catch females laying their eggs.



Above: Insect droppings on mattress seams are one easy way to detect the presence of bed bugs.

OK, I found bed bugs. Now what?

Thoroughly clean the infested rooms with soap and water and scrub surfaces with a stiff brush to dislodge eggs. Use a strong vacuum to remove bed bugs from cracks and crevices, and dismantle any bed frames and head boards to make sure that all surfaces (and potential hiding places) are exposed and cleaned. Remove drawers from desks and dressers and turn furniture over to inspect and clean all hiding spots.

What about my mattress and box spring?

Mattresses and box springs can be permanently encased within sealed mattress bags. Once they are installed, inspect the bags to ensure they are undamaged - if any holes or tears are found, seal these completely with permanent tape. Any bugs trapped within these sealed bags will eventually die over the period of one year.

Wouldn't it be easier to just get rid of everything and start over?

Not really - infested furniture can be cleaned and treated, and keeping your existing furniture will save money. In fact, placing infested furniture (particularly mattresses) into common areas (like apartment building hallways) or on the street may simply help spread bed bugs to the homes of other people. In multi-family buildings, this will allow re-infestation to occur, and will defeat the purpose altogether.

If you do decide to get rid of one or several pieces of furniture, be sure to deface them so as to make them less attractive for those who may pick it up from the curb or near dumpsters. To reduce opportunities of infested furniture re-entering multi-family buildings, contact your building manager to ensure that infested furniture is immediately carted away to a landfill or waste facility.

Should I use insecticides or other harsh chemicals?

Experts advise against the non-professional use of harsh chemicals and insecticides because of the public health risk to humans following improper use. Furthermore, chemicals dispersed by aerosol cans will actually have the negative effect of scattering bed bugs throughout the room—making re-infestation more likely. Additionally, "bug bombs" have no effect on bed bugs and will not solve a bed bug infestation.

What else should I do to get rid of bed bugs?

Generally, pesticides will need to be applied along with non-chemical control to get rid of any eggs or straggling insects that are not caught with general cleaning techniques. Professional pest management companies should be contacted to ensure that all chemical-related pest removal activity is both safe and effective.

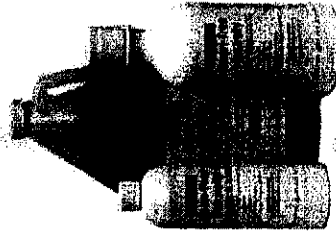
In addition to these practices, you should:

- Launder your bedding/linens and dry them at the hottest dryer setting to kill all stages of bed bugs.
- Thoroughly vacuum all infested areas. This includes:
 - Mattresses
 - Box springs*
 - Furniture
 - Beds and headboards
 - Sofas and armchairs
 - Carpets and rugs

*Be sure you don't forget the empty area underneath your box spring—tear away the thin fabric underneath and thoroughly clean all cracks and crevices.

When you're finished, seal the vacuum cleaner bag in a plastic bag and take it outside to your trash can or dumpster.

- Eliminate clutter in infested areas to reduce bed bug hiding places and make treatments more effective.
- Repair cracks and crevices with sealants and repair torn wallpaper.
- Check the room perimeter (i.e., baseboards and moldings) to make sure no bed bugs are seen.
- Look behind switch plates and outlet covers, as well as in closets and storage chests to ensure that no bed bugs have taken refuge in these dark places.



Important: Leave the use of harsh chemicals and insecticides to the professionals! Improper use and disposal of these substances can end up doing more harm than good if humans are poisoned or otherwise put at risk by an inexperienced user.