

BED BUGS

Resident's Information Guide

What they look like: Bed bugs are wingless, flat, somewhat oval-shaped insects with a typical lifespan of 6 to 12 months. An adult bed bug is about one eighth to one quarter inch long and very flat. They are capable of reaching the size of an apple seed at full growth. Bed bugs are distinguishable by their reddish-brown color, although after feeding on the blood of humans and warm-blooded animals - their sole food source - the bugs assume a distinctly blood-red hue until digestion is complete. You may also see bed bugs that have recently hatched and are similar in shape to adults but are whitish and almost translucent. Eggs are very small, white, and sticky. The excrement of adult bugs is black, dark red, brown, or rust colored spotting or staining and may be seen around the seams of mattresses or bedding. The scientific name for bed bugs is *cimex lectularius*.

How to spot them: Bed bugs can be hard to spot but they can be found in, around and between bedding, bed frames, mattress seams, upholstered furniture, around, behind and under wood furniture, curtains and draperies, along window and door frames, ceiling and wall junctions, crown moldings, behind and around wall hangings and loose wallpaper, between carpeting and walls, cracks and crevices in walls and floors, and in electronic devices, such as smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Bed bugs are nocturnal, meaning that they come out at night.

About their lifespan: Female bed bugs lay eggs on a daily basis. They take between six and seventeen days to hatch from eggs. They go through a repetitive molting process as they grow and mature.

Their eating habits: Bed bugs reach the peak of nighttime activity just before dawn. They are drawn to warm blooded animals and people by carbon dioxide and warmth. A bed bug bite may not be noticeable at the time of the bite and usually begins to feel irritated several hours later. The bite may produce a welt or bump that is like a flea or mosquito bite. Sometimes there appears to be three bites in a row, but there is not always a pattern. Bites usually are found on the face, neck, or arms.

Controlling bed bugs: False claims that associate the presence of bed bugs with poor hygiene and uncleanliness have caused apartment residents, out of shame, to avoid notifying landlords of their presence. This serves only to enable the spread of bed bugs. The earlier bed bugs are detected, the earlier treatments can begin and the easier it will be to control them.

But it is important that you use good housekeeping practices, as this will help all efforts to control them by controlling their hiding places. Clean and vacuum on a regular weekly basis. While bed bugs are, by their very nature, more attracted to clutter, they're certainly not discouraged by cleanliness. Bottom line: bed bugs know no social and economic bounds; claims to the contrary are false. Everyone's cooperation is needed to detect and control the spread of bed bugs as soon as possible.

Bed bugs don't transmit disease. There exists no scientific evidence that bed bugs carry disease. In fact, federal agencies tasked with addressing pests of public health concern, namely the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, have refused to elevate bed bugs to the threat level posed by disease carrying pests. Again claims associating bed bugs with disease are false.

Preventing bed bug encounters when traveling. Because humans serve as bed bugs' main mode of transportation, it is extremely important to be mindful of bed bugs when away from home. Experts agree that the spread of bed bugs across all regions of the United States is largely attributed to an increase in international travel and trade. Travelers are therefore encouraged to take a few minutes upon arriving at their temporary destination to thoroughly inspect their accommodations, so as to ensure that any uninvited guests are detected before the decision is made to unpack.

Because bed bugs can easily travel from one room to another, it is also recommended that travelers thoroughly inspect their luggage and belongings for bed bugs before departing for home.

Bed Bug Do's and Don'ts:

***Do not bring used furniture from unknown sources into your apartment.** Countless bed bug infestations have come directly from second-hand and abandoned furniture. Unless you can be absolutely certain that a piece of second-hand furniture is bed bug free, don't bring it in to your apartment. It's more than likely the reason a

seemingly nice looking leather couch, for example, is sitting curbside, waiting to be hauled off to the landfill, may very well be due to the fact that it's teeming with bed bugs.

***Do address bed bug sightings immediately.** Apartment residents who suspect the presence of bed bugs in their unit must immediately notify the Owner and cooperate in providing access for inspection and treatment.

***Do not attempt to treat bed bug infestations.** Under no circumstance should you attempt to eradicate bed bugs. Health hazards associated with the misapplication of traditional and non-traditional, chemical-based insecticides and pesticides poses too great a risk to you and your neighbors.

***Do comply with eradication protocol.** If the determination is made that your unit is indeed playing host to bed bugs, you must comply with the bed bug eradication protocol set forth by both your Owner and their designated pest control professional.