

Beating Bed Bugs

Prevention information for tenants

What are they and how do they live?

Adult bed bugs are brown, blood-feeding insects, measuring up to $\frac{1}{4}$ -long. Immature ones are tiny, colorless, and are very difficult to detect. Bed bugs are active mainly at night.



Bed bugs hide in crevices in the bed and other furniture, and also behind baseboards, under loose wall-paper, etc. They can survive up to a year without feeding.

Bed bugs may be introduced to a building on second-hand beds or furniture, or on personal possessions. Infestations in the home will spread from room to room.

What problems do they cause?

Bed bug bites cause red, irritating marks, and some people develop an allergic skin reaction. Many people will experience disturbed sleep.

Bed bugs do not spread diseases.

How can I reduce the chances of my home become infested?

Before moving into a unit, check for signs of bed bug infestation. Avoid bringing in used furniture or unwashed used clothing.

Bed bugs can crawl up rough surfaces; consider using metal or furniture with slick surfaces.

Store belongings in containers that would allow for easy inspection and cleaning.

If you have traveled, immediately check your luggage for bugs.

Clean infested clothing and bedding by either:

- Machine washed at a "HOT" setting, or
- Tumble dried at a "HOT" setting for at least 30 minutes, or

- Placed in a bag in a deep freezer for at least three days, or
- Dry cleaned.

Check the label of each garment for laundry advice.

What are the signs of bed bug infestation?

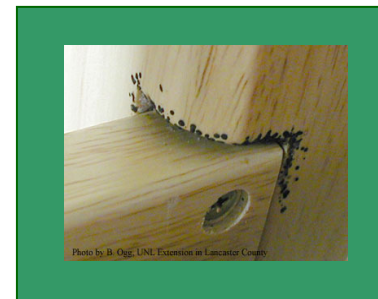
- Red, irritating bites, often in rows, typically on the neck, shoulders or arms (but there may be other reasons for this).

- Small blood-smears on the bed linen or headboard.



- Clusters of dark spots typically on the bed frame or edges on the mattress.

- Finding small, brownish insects on the mattress, headboard, bed frame, other furniture, or walls near the bed.



What should I do if I suspect my home has bed bugs?

Act immediately or problems will worsen. Inform your landlord immediately so that a licensed pest control operator can begin treatment. Self treatment of infestation is unlikely to be successful.

It is essential to carry out any instructions you are given on preparing your home for treatment.

See your medical provider for advice on medication for bites.

Contents adopted from *Beating Bedbugs: Information for residents*; Greater London Pest Liaison Group, 2009