

Bed Bugs Fact Sheet



What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small, flat, reddish-brown parasitic insects that feed on blood, can live months without feeding, and are nocturnal, feeding at night in as little as a total of 3 minutes and hiding afterwards.

What are signs you have bed bugs?

Most bed bug bites are initially painless but develop into large, itchy welts after one to several days, often appearing in random clusters or straight lines. Infestations are typically identified by these bite marks, but additional signs include: exoskeletons shed by bed bugs; bed bugs found in mattress and sheet folds; rusty-colored blood spots from their fecal material on mattresses or furniture; a sweet, musty odor.

How are bed bug bites treated?

If you suspect bed bug bites, wash the bites with soap and water. Calamine lotion, an anti-itch cream, or cool compresses can help itching. In some cases, an antihistamine by mouth can ease itching. Bites clear up in 1–2 weeks. Tell kids not to scratch a bedbug bite because doing so can cause a skin infection.

How can I get rid of bed bugs in my home?

If your home is infested with bedbugs, reach out to a professional exterminator. They have the expertise to eliminate bedbugs using both chemical and non-chemical methods. Although it requires time and patience, controlling bedbugs is achievable.

How can I prevent bed bugs from getting into my home?

Check secondhand furniture for signs of bedbugs before bringing it home. Cover your mattress and box spring with a plastic protective cover. Reduce clutter in your home, and vacuum often.

What should I do if I find bed bugs?

If you think you have found bed bugs in your home or on your property, you should call a licensed pest control operator to inspect your property and treat the area to get rid of the bed bugs. If you are renting a space, such as an apartment or rental home, a written notice should be given to the property owner so they can schedule an inspection.

How soon do symptoms of bed bugs appear after exposure?

Bite marks may take as long as 14 days to develop.

How do bed bugs spread?

They can easily be transported from place to place by people. They can hide in the seams of luggage, overnight bags, bedding, and in the folds of clothing. They can also be transported in furniture.

How long can a person carry bed bugs?

Bed bugs can continue to live in areas of infestation as long as they are reproducing and are able to feed periodically on humans. Unless the source is excluded from the property the bed bugs will continually replenish and the life cycle will continue.

Are there any restrictions for people with bed bugs?

Bed bugs usually feed at night and then drop off the host. People who live in an area infested with bed bugs do not have to be excluded from work or school, but they should not bring items outside the home which could spread bed bugs to other places. **Be sure to check with your child's school to ensure you follow their policies and procedures regarding bed bugs.**

Can any complications result?

Bed bugs are not a health hazard as they do not spread disease. They can cause itching and loss of sleep, potentially leading to skin infections from excessive scratching. While not dangerous, allergic reactions may require medical attention.

Sources

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Bites



Eggs



Unfed
Adult



Fed Adult