



# Bed Bugs

What you need to know...

Bed bugs are a problem worldwide and are resurging, causing property loss, expense, and inconvenience. The good news is that **bed bugs do not transmit disease**. The best way to prevent bed bugs is regular inspection for signs of an infestation.

“Bed bugs are reddish-brown in color, wingless, range from 1mm to 7mm (roughly the size of Lincoln’s head on a penny), and can live several months without a blood meal.” – CDC



## MORE INFORMATION

- For more information on bed bugs, visit, [www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs)
- or call CDHD at 208.327.7499



[www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov)

Information adapted from Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q: What are bed bugs?

**A:** Bed bugs (*Cimex lectularius*) are small, flat, parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals while they sleep.

### Q: Where are bed bugs found?

**A:** Bed bugs are experts at hiding. Their slim flat bodies allow them to fit into the smallest of spaces and stay there for long periods of time, even without a blood meal. Bed bugs are usually transported from place to place as people travel.

The bed bugs travel in the seams and folds of luggage, overnight bags, folded clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere else where they can hide. Most people do not realize they are transporting stow-away bed bugs as they travel from location to location, infecting areas as they travel.

### Q: What health risks do bed bugs pose?

**A:** A bed bug bite affects each person differently. Bite responses can range from an absence of any physical signs of the bite, to a small bite mark, to a serious allergic reaction. Bed bugs are not considered to be dangerous; however, an allergic reaction to several bites may need medical attention.

### Q: What are the signs and symptoms of a bed bug infestation?

**A:** One of the easiest ways to identify a bed bug infestation is by the tell-tale bite marks on the face, neck, arms, hands, or any other body parts while sleeping. However, these bite marks may take as long as 14 days to develop in some people so it is important to look for other clues when determining if bed bugs have infested an area.

These signs include:

- the bed bugs’ exoskeletons after molting,
- bed bugs in the fold of mattresses and sheets,
- rusty-colored blood spots due to their blood-filled fecal material that they excrete on the mattress or nearby furniture, and sweet musty odor.

Continued ►

## Frequently Asked Questions, Continued...



“ Bed bug infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep.

These areas include apartments, shelters, rooming houses, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, and dorm rooms.

They hide during the day in places such as seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, inside cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, or any other clutter or objects around a bed. ”

– CDC

### **Q: Who is at risk for getting bed bugs?**

**A:** Everyone is at risk for getting bed bugs when visiting an infected area. However, anyone who travels frequently and shares living and sleeping quarters where other people have previously slept has a higher risk of being bitten and or spreading a bed bug infestation.

### **Q: How are bed bugs treated and prevented?**

**A:** Bed bug bites usually do not pose a serious medical threat. The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area and apply antiseptic creams or lotions and take an antihistamine. Bed bug infestations are commonly treated by insecticide spraying.

If you suspect that you have an infestation, contact your landlord or professional pest control company that is experienced with treating bed bugs.

The best way to prevent bed bugs is regular inspection for the signs of an infestation.