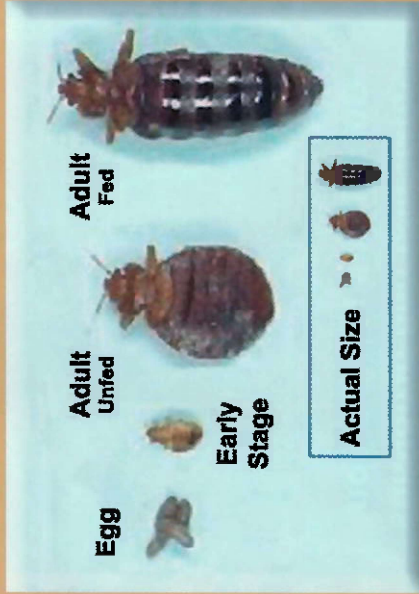


# Bed bugs

Bed bugs are small brownish insects. They're about 4 mm long (1/8 in.) and visible to the naked eye. They're active at night and can usually be seen along the seams of mattresses. They feed on human blood.

## Bed Bug Life Stages



Bed bug infestations may cause irritating, itchy bite reactions, and anxiety. Over the past few years, bed bugs have been spreading in large cities worldwide.

## How to detect them

Itchy skin and insect bites are clues that you may have bed bugs in your home. You'll usually see three or four bites in a straight line or grouped together.

Exposed areas of your arms, legs and back are more susceptible to bites. Also look for small black stains (blood spots) on your sheets, pillows, or mattress seams. Bed bugs may also be hiding in cracks and crevices in your furniture.



Bed bug bites on exposed skin.

## How they spread

Bed bugs are usually brought into your home in suitcases and handbags, and on clothing and furniture, especially previously used mattresses and other items. They can also travel between apartments in a building.

There's no need to be embarrassed if these bugs end up moving in with you. Bed bugs are not necessarily associated with dirty environments, but they flourish in clutter.

## How To Prevent Them

Vacuum your home regularly. If you do have bed bugs, make sure you close the vacuum bag tightly and dispose of it outside your home.

Avoid picking up used mattresses or second-hand upholstered furniture because it's hard to see whether they harbor bed bugs.

Other used furniture must be carefully inspected and cleaned before you bring it home. Scrub furniture with soapy water or a household cleaning product to remove any possible bed bugs or their eggs.

Second-hand clothing should be placed in a sealed, plastic bag and emptied directly into the washing machine. Wash in hot water and dry on high heat setting to kill bed bugs and their eggs.

When visiting hotels inspect the room for signs of bed bugs prior to unpacking luggage.



Blood spots, bed bugs, and cast skins may be found on the mattress seam.

## Important

Avoid bringing home discarded furniture, it may be infested with bed bugs. Also inspect any second hand item for bed bugs before bringing it into your home.

## Pest Management


*The best chances for homeowners, landlords and renters to achieve bed bug control is by acting fast, and working with a qualified, licensed pest management professional. Bed bug control often fails without the cooperation of all parties involved.*


## Preparing your home for the pest management professional

This step is extremely important. Closely follow the pest management professional's guidelines. Below are a few tips to keep in mind.

 Remove clutter as it provides hiding places for bed bugs.

 Place all bedding (sheets, mattress covers, bedspreads) in a sealed, plastic bag. Wash all bedding in hot water.

 Vacuum and dispose of the vacuum bag (outside the home). If a bagless vacuum is used, deposit all contents of the container into a plastic bag, seal and dispose of outside. Rinse collection container outside before re-attaching to vacuum.

 Empty dresser drawers and closets and place contents in a sealed plastic bag. Wash and/or dry clothes on high heat setting.

 Don't bring home new furniture until bed bugs are eliminated.

Consult a pest management professional before disposing of furniture.

After washing, store all clothing in tightly closed plastic bags until all insects have been eliminated, normally after two or more treatments.

### Important

Place bed bug infested clothing in washer or dryer directly from sealed bag to prevent an infestation of the laundry facility. Wash and/or dry on the high heat setting.

### Resident's Responsibility

When you spot bed bugs, immediately call your landlord.

Keep your home clean and clutter-free.

If your landlord doesn't take action, contact your local housing code authority.

Don't try to solve the problem yourself by using foggers or "bug bombs"

Carefully follow the pest management professional's recommendations.

### Landlord's Responsibility

When notified about bed bugs, landlords should immediately make efforts to correct the problem. Avoiding or ignoring the issue will only lead to a more severe infestation.

Landlords should utilize an experienced professional pest manager or a certified staff.

To determine the extent of the infestation and better control the problem, landlords should enable the pest manager to inspect every room

### Pest Management Professional's Responsibility

Pest management professionals must make every effort to detect bed bugs throughout each room and all apartments in a building.

Pest management professionals must make sure to destroy bed bugs at all stages of development (including eggs). This may require them to return at least twice to apply insecticides and check whether the first treatment worked.

Pest management professionals must use insecticides according to label use directions. Effective alternatives to pesticide treatment may be available such as by using heat or steam treatments.

### CAUTION

Total release foggers (bug bombs) are not effective against bed bugs and may harm your health or your family's health. Before you choose to use over the counter pesticides, consult with a qualified pest management professional. Always read and follow the label use directions before using such product(s).

For more information visit:

[www.michigan.gov/bedbugs](http://www.michigan.gov/bedbugs)

All photos courtesy of Stephen Doggett, © The Department of Medical Entomology, ICPMR, Australia.

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Don't let

# Bed Bugs

Bite



Guidelines to help you solve bed bug problems

### WARNING!

Bed bugs are back with a vengeance! Any house, apartment or building can be a haven for bed bugs.

Produced by the Michigan Bed Bug Working Group

Michigan Department of Community Health



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION