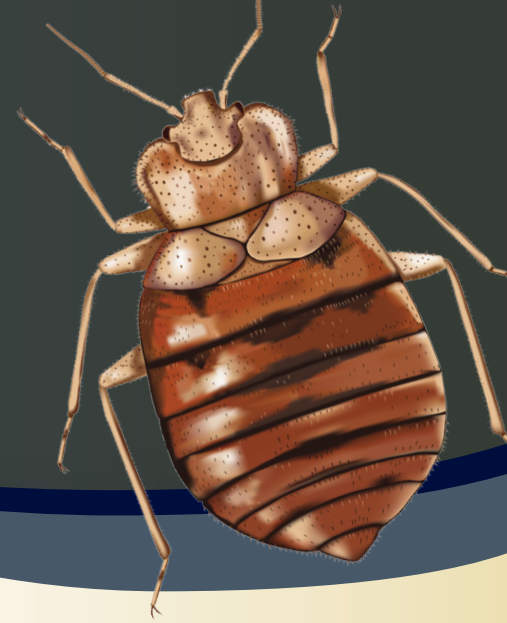


BED BUGS

fact sheet



WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

Bed bugs are small, brown insects about the size of an apple seed at adult stage, that feed on human blood. After a feeding, they swell in size and can become bright or dark red. Bed bugs are wingless and cannot fly or jump. They are usually found near areas where people sleep.

HOW DO BED BUGS AFFECT MY HEALTH?

There's no evidence bed bugs spread diseases to humans. There is a wide range of reactions to bed bug bites, from no reaction at all to itchy red bumps. If a bed bug is disturbed during feeding, they may bite more than once in the same general area causing several bite marks close to each other. The bites are painless but may become itchy after a day or two. Scratching at the bites may cause infection. Many people get anxious and distressed when exposed to bed bugs.



ACTUAL SIZE
(UNFED ADULT)

WHAT IS THE LIFE CYCLE OF BED BUGS?

There are three stages in the life of a bed bug: eggs, nymphs (or juveniles) and adults. The eggs have a coating that helps them stick to objects and they usually hatch in six to 17 days. Hatched nymphs start to feed right away. Adult bed bugs can live for more than 12 months, depending on the location or environmental conditions, because they can become inactive when there is no host to feed on.

HOW DO BED BUGS SURVIVE?

Adult bed bugs feed mainly on human blood which they use to produce eggs. Nymphs need blood to grow into adult bed bugs. Bed bugs usually feed for three to 15 minutes, depending on the stage. After feeding, bed bugs return to their hiding places which are usually close to where people sleep.

HOW DO BED BUGS GET INTO MY HOME?

Having bed bugs does not mean your home isn't clean and well kept. Bed bugs can travel on things such as luggage and furniture or household goods that are moved from one place to another. The most common are mattresses, box springs, upholstered furniture, household goods, electronics, books or pictures.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE BED BUGS?

Potential signs of bed bugs include:

- Unexplained bite marks or red bumps on your skin.
- Black or dark red spots on bed linens, mattresses or box springs.
- Cast off skins from nymphs.
- Live or dead bed bugs.

If there are a lot of bed bugs, a musty or sweet odour, like coriander, may be present.

HOW DO I PREVENT BED BUGS FROM ENTERING MY HOME?

The best way to deal with bed bugs is to avoid bringing them into your home.

- Check all used goods closely for bed bugs and bed bug eggs.
- When travelling, make a detailed inspection of your room, especially the mattress, box spring and headboard. Look for live bed bugs, bed bug eggs, and dark spotting or pepper like material.
- Put your luggage on a luggage rack away from the bed, inside the bathtub or inside a plastic bag.

WHEN YOU RETURN HOME, IF POSSIBLE:

- Vacuum your luggage and put the vacuum bag into a plastic trash bag, seal it and put it outside for pick up.
- Wash all your dirty clothes in hot water and dry using a hot dryer.
- Put all of your clean clothes into a hot dryer. A normal dryer load run for at least 15 to 20 minutes on medium to high heat should kill all stages of bed bugs.
- Freezing may slow down bed bugs, but it is not an effective way to kill bed bug eggs.





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HOW DO I GET RID OF BED BUGS?

Getting rid of bed bugs can be difficult for a homeowner. If you think you have bed bugs, place double sided tape around the legs of a bed or on the floor around the bed.

IF BED BUGS ARE FOUND:

- Vacuum or steam clean floors, cracks, crevices, baseboards and carpets.
- Put clothing and bedding in a medium to hot dryer for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Seal clean items in plastic bags until treatment is complete.
- Put bed bug proof covers over mattresses and do not remove them.
- Use chemical sprays, dusts or powders from retail stores that are registered for bed bug use. Read the label and follow the instructions carefully. More product is not necessarily better.
- Call an exterminator. Many now use heat treatment in combination with chemical treatment. A professional will know how to use different products and methods available to get the best results.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BED BUG CONTROL?

If you own your home, you are responsible for getting rid of bed bugs. If you rent, the landlord must take care of an infestation of bed bugs. In order to get rid of bed bugs, the landlord and tenant must work together. The landlord will arrange for an exterminator and tell the tenant when the exterminator is coming and how to prepare the rental unit for extermination. It is very important that tenants follow the landlord's instructions on how to prepare their unit before and after the treatment. Tenants must allow the exterminator into their rental unit to complete the extermination.

For instructions on how to prepare your apartment see the Government of Manitoba's website below for detailed information.

LINKS:

WINNIPEG REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY
www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/a-z/files/BedBugs.pdf

CITY OF WINNIPEG:

www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/bugline/insect_information/bedbugs.stm

MANITOBA GOVERNMENT:

www.manitoba.ca/bedbugs