

Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are small, flat, insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals usually at night while they sleep. Bed bugs are reddish-brown in color, wingless, range from 1mm to 7mm (roughly the size of Lincoln's head on a penny). Bed bugs do not fly and either crawl or are carried from place to place. Infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep and are found across the globe from North and South America, to Africa, Asia and Europe. Bed bugs are not known to spread disease. However, bed bug bites can cause large itchy welts on the skin.



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, or may even look like other insect bites, 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 or from being crushed, and
- A sweet musty odor.

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.