

Let's Beat the Bug!

In Short:

- Bed bugs hide most of their lives close to where people or pets rest.
- Bed bugs feed when they detect that people or pets are resting (Bed bugs are most active at night but can be active during the day).
- After feeding, bed bugs go back to hiding.
- Bed bugs disperse around the bed and resting areas keeping in small groups.
- When bed bug hiding sites become overpopulated, they begin to move from their old hiding places in search of new sites.
- If bed bugs do not feed within 14 days some starved bugs will begin to move away from hiding places in search of a meal.
- Bed bugs hitchhike by moving onto items that people may carry to other areas.

For more information contact the Bed Bug InformationLine at 612-624-2200, 1-855-644-2200 bedbugs@umn.edu, or visit www.bedbugs.umn.edu

Bed Bug Behavior



Bed bugs spend the majority of their lives in hiding. This makes finding and controlling bed bugs difficult. Bed bugs move to new locations by hiding in clothing, luggage, furniture and household goods. Bed bugs are small and flat and able to hide in many areas, making it difficult to find and exterminate them.

Bed bugs are a “nesting parasite” that hide near where people and pets rest and sleep. The bed bug feeds while a person or pet is at rest and or sitting still. Once they have fed, bed bugs will return to hiding. Bed bugs hide in any tight, dark, undisturbed location near sleeping or resting areas. Examples of where bed bugs can be found include; in beds, bed frames, and upholstered furniture, behind peeling wall paper, pictures and clocks and in curtains, in cracks in hard wood floors, under carpeting and behind electrical outlets or switch plates.

Most bed bugs may be found within 8 feet of a person’s resting place. As the infestation grows, bed bugs will spread further.

Bed bugs tend to live in groups, but depending on a number of factors they will move to other areas. Female bed bugs will leave a group if they have been mated multiple times. Bed bugs will move in search of food if they are starved and have been known to leave one apartment and enter another in search of a food source. Bed bugs are also known to hitchhike and are easily transported on furniture, luggage, boxes, clothes, toys and other personal items.

Bed bugs do not like light and they will hide during the day coming out to feed at night.

Bed bugs do not feed on a predictable schedule. Bed bugs mostly feed at night but they will feed during the day if they are hungry and there is a resting person nearby. Human reactions to bed bug bites are unpredictable, varying from no reaction at all to a severe allergic reaction. This can make it difficult to know if you have bed bugs.

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By Amelia Shindelar and Dr. Stephen Kells, 2011

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651/201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-627-3529.

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