

# Let's Beat the Bug!

## *Bed Bug Basics*

- Bed bugs are small insects, about the size of an apple seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, oval and reddish-brown in color. Juvenile bed bugs can be very small and hard to see.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood and can live for over a year without a meal.
- Bed bugs usually hide during the day near where people rest or sleep and then come out at night to feed. Bed bugs do not live on our bodies.
- Some people do not react when bitten by a bed bug.
- Most bed bugs are found within 8 feet of a person's resting place. As the infestation grows, bed bugs will spread further. You can find bed bugs in any of the following places:
  - In mattresses, box springs, bed frames, and bedding
  - In the cracks and crevices of furniture
  - Behind peeling wall paper
  - Behind pictures and clocks
  - In curtains
  - In cracks in hardwood floors
  - Under carpeting
  - Behind electrical outlets or switch plates

For more information contact the **Bed Bug InformationLine** at 612-624-2200, 1-855-644-2200 [bedbugs@umn.edu](mailto:bedbugs@umn.edu), or visit [www.bedbugs.umn.edu](http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu)

## Inspecting Your Hotel Room for Bed Bugs

When staying in a hotel it is a good idea to inspect your room for bed bugs as soon as you arrive. You do not want to unpack or settle in until you have checked to see if there are bed bugs in your room.

Bring a flashlight with you when going to stay at a hotel; this will make it easier to inspect your room. As soon as you arrive put your suitcase and bags on a hard surface or in the bathroom. These areas are less likely to have bed bugs. Never put your suitcase, clothes or personal items on the bed as this is the most common way to get bed bugs in your possessions and transfer them to your home.

### **A Basic Inspection**

Start your inspection with the mattress, as this is the most common area for bed bugs. Gently remove the sheet and mattress pad inspecting the four corners of the mattress and box spring.

Another important place to inspect for bed bugs that is often overlooked is the luggage rack or valet. Inspect carefully, concentrating on cracks and crevices. Bed bugs maybe found on the luggage rack if they have come in on other travelers' luggage.



These are some of the common areas you may find bed bugs in your hotel

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## An In-Depth Inspection

If you want to do a more in-depth inspection of your room we recommend the following.

Inspect along all edging, seams and other small areas of the mattress and box spring. Continue your inspection with the headboard. In most hotels the headboard is attached to the wall. Use your flashlight to look in the crack between the wall and the headboard.

Next inspect the furniture around the bed, and any pictures hanging on the wall. Bed Bugs are known to hide behind framed pictures and around or on furniture. Make sure you inspect all the cracks and crevices of the night stand, including screw holes, joints and in the drawers. Once you have insured that these areas do not have bed bugs move on to other furniture in the room, especially upholstered chairs. As you are inspecting pay special attention to seams.

If you find bed bugs in your hotel room notify the front desk immediately and ask to be moved to a new room, which is not next door to the room where you found bed bugs.

## Precautions

When staying in a hotel it is a good idea to bring along a large plastic bag to put your dirty clothes into. Bed Bugs can smell the chemicals that we leave behind on our clothing and are attracted to this smell. Putting dirty clothing into a plastic bag will reduce the chance that you will get bed bugs on these items, and then bring them home with you.

If you stay in a hotel room and are worried about bed bugs take these precautions when you return home to reduce the risk of bringing bed bugs into your home:

- Immediately launder all the clothing you brought with you, or seal inside a plastic bag until it can be laundered. See the factsheet "*Laundering Items to Kill Bed Bugs*" for more information.
- Vacuum your suitcase, inside and out. Once you have finished vacuuming your suitcase immediately discard the contents of the vacuum in a plastic bag which can be sealed tightly shut and then put in the trash. The suitcase can then be sealed inside a large plastic bag or box to insure, in the unlikely event that bed bugs did hitchhike, they cannot move from your suitcase into your home.
- Shoes can be wiped down with a damp cloth and hot water to reduce the risk of them being infested with bed bugs.

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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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