



## DISEASE



Bed bugs are not usually considered to be carriers of disease. They suck blood from their hosts and inject saliva that can produce large swellings on the skin that itch. These swellings may become irritated and infected as a result of excessive scratching.

### WHO'S SLEEPING WITH YOU?

If you suspect an infestation, collect the bug(s) for identification. Bed bugs cannot climb up slippery or adhesive surfaces so coating the bed legs with petroleum jelly or double-sided tape are measures to help catch and keep the insects out of the bed. Also, contact your local professional pesticide applicator for chemical control and follow all guidelines listed under prevention.



If you think you may have a bed bug infestation or would like additional information about how to control bed bugs, please contact the Vector-borne Illness Prevention Program in the City of Alexandria Health Department's Environmental Health Division at 703-746-4910.

Alexandria Health Department  
Environmental Health Division  
Vector-borne Illness Prevention Program  
4480 King Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
703-746-4910

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## DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE!

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*Cimex lectularius*

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### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BEDBUGS

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## WHAT EXACTLY ARE BED BUG



*Cimex lectularius* is the species of bed bug most frequently found in the northern temperate climates of North America.

Adult bed bugs are oval, wingless, approximately 1/5" in length and have a flat rust colored body. Actual size can be compared to an appleseed. Bed bugs have stink glands that leave odors and they also leave fecal spots on bed sheets and around their hiding places.

Bed bugs are nocturnal insects which feed on the blood of humans and other animals. Even when a property is vacant, bed bugs are known to survive for over a year without a blood meal.



*Picture is not to scale*












## WHERE DO BED BUGS COME FROM?



Since the 1980's, bed bugs were thought to be almost non-existent. However, infestations are now on the rise again. Bed bugs can be transported or "picked up" in many places, including hotels, hostels, theaters, buses, trains, cruise ships, and aircraft. There are also numerous ways bed bugs can be carried into the home including in clothing, bedding, luggage, and firewood.

Bed bugs can be a problem in areas where people sit or lie down. They are more common in places with poor sanitary conditions. Some common hiding places for bed bugs in the home are:












-  Seams in mattresses and box springs
-  Cracks in bed frames
-  Behind headboards
-  Mouldings, floorboards, and other crevices
-  Where the carpet meets the wall
-  Under loose wallpaper
-  Behind picture frames
-  Inside furniture and upholstery
-  Inside electrical equipment



## HOW YOU CAN PREVENT BED BUG INFESTATIONS



There are several things you can do to prevent an infestation of bed bugs in your home:

-  Check bed sheets and mattresses for tell-tale signs of small blood spots
-  Clean furnishings
-  Launder bedding and mattress pads
-  Steam-clean mattresses
-  Remove debris from around your home
-  Repair cracks in the walls
-  Caulk windows and doors
-  Vacuum on a regular basis and discard vacuum bags after use
-  Vacuum suitcases after returning from a vacation
-  Be observant when checking into a hotel, hostel, or unfamiliar setting
-  Eliminate places of bat and bird roosting in attics, vents, chimneys, or other parts of your house