

Bedbugs



What are they?

How do you get them?

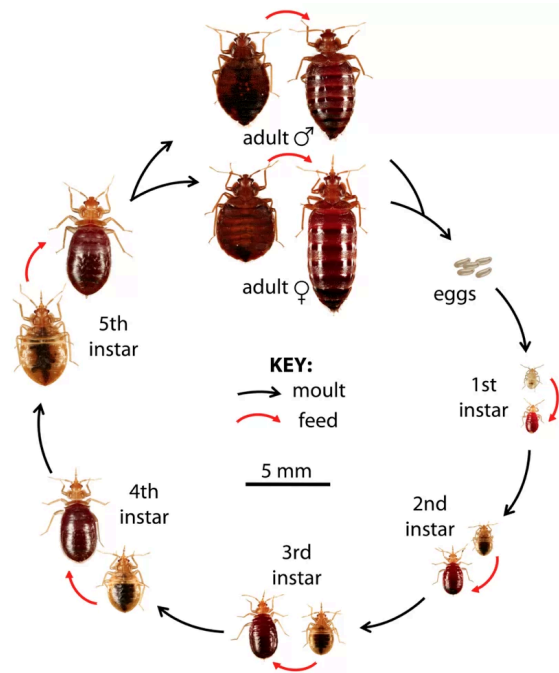
How do you treat them?

What is expected of School?

What are Bedbugs?

Bedbugs are small, flat, parasitic insects that feed solely on the blood of people and animals typically while they, the host, sleep. Bedbugs are reddish-brown in color, wingless, and range from 1mm to 7mm (roughly the size of Lincoln's head on a penny). Bedbugs are a nuisance throughout the world. Bedbugs are not known to spread disease.

Bedbug infection begins with exposure to an actively infested area. After exposure to and transfer of Bedbugs to your environment, adult female Bedbugs lay eggs, between five to seven per week. The eggs take approximately 10 days to hatch. After hatching, Bedbugs go through five nymph (youth) stages before they become adults. In between each stage, they shed (or molt) their exoskeleton. Bedbugs need to feed at least once before each time they molt, but they can feed up to once a day. It takes two to four months for Bedbugs to become adults. Studies indicate that a well-fed adult Bedbug held at room temperature will live between 99 and 300 days in the laboratory. They can live for several months without feeding.



How do you get them?

Bedbugs don't have wings, so they have to crawl to move around on their own and, unlike lice, don't travel directly on people and spread from person to person. However, most Bedbugs spread from place to place when they get onto people's clothes, linens, or furniture and into luggage. In this way, people spread Bedbugs to others, without even knowing it.

Bedbug infestations usually occur around or near the areas where people sleep. These areas include apartments, shelters, hotels, cruise ships, buses, trains, dorm rooms, and even theaters. They hide during the day in places such as seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, inside cracks or crevices, behind wallpaper, or any other clutter or objects around a bed.



A Bedbug bite affects each person differently. Bite responses can range from an absence of any physical signs of the bite to a small bite mark to a serious allergic reaction. Sometimes severe itching of bites can lead to excessive scratching that can increase the chance of a secondary skin infection. Bedbug bites can occur anywhere on exposed body parts and often appear in a linear type pattern, as a series of multiple bites in a row.

Common signs and symptoms of Bedbugs on your body:

- itchy red bug bites on exposed body parts during sleep/rest.

Common signs and symptoms of Bedbugs in your home:

- Bedbugs' exoskeletons after molting,
- Bedbugs 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, and
- a sweet musty odor.

Unless treated quickly and properly once identified, Bedbugs are a very hardy pest and can become difficult to rid your home of.

How do you treat them?

Bedbug Bites:

The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area, apply antiseptic creams or lotions, and take an antihistamine.

How do you treat your home/environment:

Removing Bedbugs often takes time and effort. You may have to try a few different approaches. Certain factors can make Bedbugs harder to remove. You may have a tougher time ridding your home of them if you have a lot of clutter or if you travel often and bring new Bedbugs home in your luggage.

Inspect your home for Bedbugs. Bedbugs' small and narrow bodies enable them to squeeze into tiny spots, like the seams of a mattress or couch and the folds of curtains. Also, look:

- near the tags of the mattress and box spring
- in cracks in the bed frame and headboard
- in baseboards
- between couch cushions
- in furniture joints
- inside electrical outlets
- under loose wallpaper
- underneath paintings and posters on the walls
- in the seam where the wallpaper and ceiling meet

Use a flashlight and magnifying glass to go over all of these areas. You can spot signs of Bedbugs by the following:

- live Bedbugs, which are reddish and about 1/4-inch long
- dark spots about the size of a period — these are Bedbug droppings
- reddish stains on your mattress from bugs that have been crushed
- small and pale yellow eggs, egg shells, and yellowish skins that young Bedbugs shed

Once you find a Bedbug, put it in a sealed jar along with 1 teaspoon of rubbing alcohol. Other types of bugs can look a lot like Bedbugs. If you're not sure what type of bug you've found, take it to a professional to identify it.

Once you know you have Bedbugs, you need to keep them contained so you can get rid of them. A quick and easy way to trap Bedbugs is with your vacuum. Run the vacuum over any possible hiding places. This includes your:

- bed
- dresser
- carpets
- electronics, like TVs

Seal up the vacuumed contents into a plastic bag and throw it away. Then thoroughly clean out the vacuum. Seal up all your linens and affected clothes in plastic bags until you can wash them. Then put them on the highest possible temperature setting in a washer and dryer. If an item cannot be washed, put it in the dryer for 30 minutes at the highest heat setting. Anything that cannot be treated in the washer and dryer should be placed in a plastic bag. Leave it there for a few months, if possible, to make sure all the bugs die. Make sure all your linens, carpets, drapes, clothing, and other hiding places have been cleaned or thrown out.

Next, get rid of Bedbug hiding places: Pick up books, magazines, clothes, and anything else that's lying on your floor and under your bed. Do not move items from an infested room to a clean one — you could spread the bugs. Seal up any open areas: Glue down loose wallpaper. Caulk cracks in furniture and around baseboards. Tape up open electrical outlets. Finally, move your bed at least 6 inches away from the wall so Bedbugs cannot climb on.

You can first try to remove Bedbugs without chemicals. These bugs can be killed with high heat at 115°F (46.11°C) or intense cold at 32°F (0°C). Here are a few ways to treat Bedbugs using these methods:

- High Heat Washer and Dryer cycles.
- Use a steamer on mattresses, couches, and other places where Bedbugs hide.
- Pack up infested items in black bags and leave them outside on a hot day that reaches 95°F (35°C) or in a closed car. In cooler temperatures, it can take 2 to 5 months to kill sealed-up bugs.
- Put bags containing Bedbugs in the freezer at 0°F (-17.78°C). Use a thermometer to check the temperature. Leave them in there for at least 4 days.

- Once you've cleaned all visible Bedbugs, make the area inhospitable for the rest of them. Place Bedbug-proof covers over your mattress and box spring. Zip these covers up all the way. Bugs that are trapped inside will die, and new bugs will not be able to get in.

If these methods do not wipe out all the bugs, you may need to try an insecticide. Insecticides can help rid your home of Bedbugs. Look for products that are specifically marked for use on Bedbugs.

Bedbugs can take some time to exterminate; Check the infested areas about once every 7 days for signs of activity for at least 3 months. You may have to try a few different treatment methods to control the infestation. If they still do not go away, you may need to call in a professional exterminator. If you cannot clean furniture, best practice is to throw it away. Tear it up first or spray paint the word "Bedbugs" on it so no one else tries to take it home.

What is expected of school?

If Bedbugs are suspected, DCSD employees will screen the student and the student's belongings for Bedbugs. If bugs are found, staff will attempt to collect a sample bug to be correctly identified. Belongings will then be placed in a plastic bag and sealed until the end of the school day or when the parent/guardian takes the student home. Siblings, or others who share the home environment, may be screened. Staff will contact the parent/guardian and the student(s) will go with the parent/guardian for treatment. The student may return to school in 24 hours after treatment has begun if, upon screening, there are no Bedbugs and the parent/guardian reports the treatment procedures have been properly followed. If, after 24 hours there are still Bedbugs the student is to remain home until there are no visible Bedbugs.

The student will present to the office for Bedbug screening prior to the beginning of the school day for daily screenings generally 2 -3 weeks at the minimum, as Bedbugs can re-infect quickly.

Sources:

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