

## DISEASE?

“A common concern with bed bugs is whether they transmit diseases. Transmission to humans is considered highly unlikely. For this reason, they are not considered [by medical professionals as] a serious disease threat. Their medical significance is mainly limited to the itching and inflammation from their bites, [similar to a mosquito or flea bite]. The usual treatment prescribed is topical application of antiseptic or antibiotic creams or lotions to prevent infection.” (Potter 2004)

## PRECAUTIONS

**When traveling?** Take time to check mattresses, box springs, and especially luggage racks. Upon returning wash everything before you put it back into your dresser drawers or closets.

**That old piece of furniture on the side of the road?** Don't even think about it. Furniture may have been discarded because it harbors bed bugs. By picking it up and bringing it into your residence you could be inadvertently contributing to the problem. Best to leave it where you found it.



## What Should You Do If You Get Bed Bugs?

### Don't Panic.

**Contact your property manager or landlord.** Do not use over-the-counter pesticides. Generally, landlords are legally required to contract with a licensed pest control operator.

**Reduce clutter** to limit hiding places for bed bugs.

**Thoroughly clean** the infested rooms as well as others in the residence.

**Wash all sheets and clothing** in warm-hot water; dry clean those items that cannot be washed in a regular machine.

**Mattresses and box springs can be permanently encased within special mattress bags.** Any bugs trapped within these sealed bags will eventually die.

**Pull the bed frame away from the wall;** tuck sheets and blankets so they won't contact the floor to prevent bed bugs from crawling onto a bed.

## Frequently asked questions?

**Should I move?** No. The bugs will likely travel with you. Pest Control experts agree that the best way to combat the Bed Bug is to follow the above steps, repeating them until the situation is resolved. They are a nuisance, but one that can be eliminated if the proper steps are taken.

**I'm a clean person, how did this happen?** Bed Bugs are not picky when it comes to people. They do not discriminate. Anyone can get them, regardless of his/her personal hygiene habits.

All of the information in this pamphlet is taken from the Harvard School of Public Health and The University of Kentucky Department of Entomology. For more information please visit [www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/) or [www.uky.edu/Agriculture/Entomology/entfacts/struct/ef636.htm](http://www.uky.edu/Agriculture/Entomology/entfacts/struct/ef636.htm).

# Bed Bugs: They Can Happen to Anyone



## History:

Bed Bugs, or *Cimex lectularius*, have been with us since the beginning of time. Ancient cultures dealt with them and many modern cultures live with them. They are often referred to as “the bug that nobody knows” because of their cryptic nighttime feeding habits. They have been found on buses, ships, in movie theaters, apartments, residence halls, and high-end hotels.

The United States lived with them through the first half of the 20th Century. In the 1950s it was found that high concentrations of a chemical known as dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (commonly referred to as DDT), could be used to treat the bug. Ultimately, the bug was virtually eradicated except for a few minor cases.

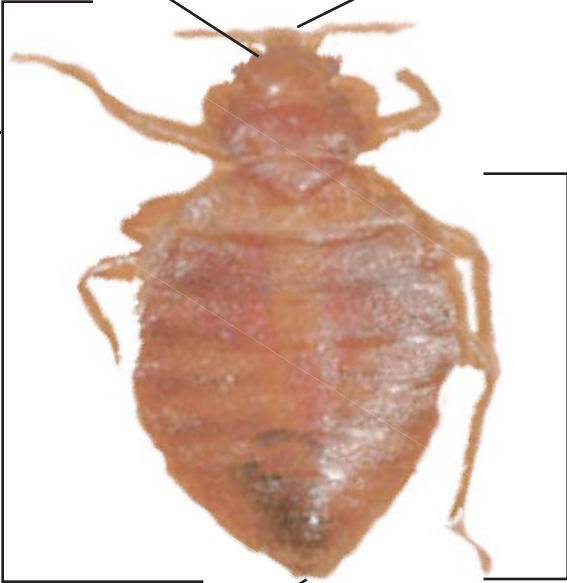
In the past five years, the United States has seen a resurgence of bed bugs. Scientists are attaching the recurrence of the bug to increased international travel. Also, “changes in modern pest control practice - and less effective bed bug pesticides - are other factors suspected for the recurrence.” (Potter 2004)

# Bed Bug Identification

They are nocturnal and are rarely active during the day.

Bites are reddish, inflamed bumps, without pustules; itch and look similar to mosquito bites

1/4 Inch Long



Diamond-Shaped Back

**NOTE: If you have problems identifying the bug:** Specimens suspected of being bed bugs should be collected into small break-resistant containers (such as a plastic pill bottle or a zipper-lock plastic bag). They may also be secured to a sheet of white paper using clear packaging tape. These containers should be packaged carefully to prevent damage/crushing of the sample, and be sent or shown to a knowledgeable expert for positive identification. We provide a form that may be downloaded and printed for this purpose: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/specimen.pdf](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs/specimen.pdf)

Fecal matter appears as black/rust colored spots on sheets and mattresses

They have a tendency to cluster/aggregate in and along mattress seams and box springs, amongst folds in sheets, and in any holes within a bed frame or near a bed (wall crevices, base boards, within carpet near the wall).

