

# Bed Bugs

## QUICK STATS:



**Color:**

Mahogany to red-brown



**Shape:**

Flat, broad oval when unfed; swollen and elongated when fed



**Size:**

¼ inch long



**Region:**

Found throughout the U.S. and the world



# Bed Bugs

*Cimex lectularius* Linnaeus



## OVERVIEW:

Bed bugs get their name from their habit of hiding near beds, which allows them to feed on human hosts while they sleep. Bed bugs were mostly eradicated in the developed world for many years. Several factors led to their resurgence in the 1990s, including increased international travel and a lack of public awareness about prevention. Today, one out five Americans has had an infestation or knows someone who has encountered bed bugs.

## HABITS:

Bed bugs are excellent hitchhikers. They will hide in luggage, purses, laptop cases and other personal belongings in an effort to find a human food supply. They are elusive creatures. They can hide in bedding and mattresses. Bed bugs can also hide behind baseboards, in electrical switch plates and picture frames, behind wallpaper and nearly anywhere inside a home, car, bus, hotel, college dorm, etc.

## THREATS:

Bed bugs are not known to transmit diseases, but their bites can become red, itchy welts. People with infestations may experience sleeplessness, anxiety and social isolation.

## PREVENTION:

- Change your bed linens often. Inspect bedding for shed bed bug skins and blood spots.
- Inspect hotel rooms before you settle in. Set your luggage away from walls and furniture, including the bed.
- When you get home from traveling, inspect your suitcase. Store clothes in a sealed plastic bag until they can be washed and dried on high heat.
- Examine secondhand furniture before bringing it home.
- If you suspect you have bed bugs, don't just sleep in a different room. This just expands their territory.
- It is imperative to seek professional pest control to address a bed bug infestation.

## DID YOU KNOW? Bed bugs...

- lay 1-5 eggs in a day and up to 500 eggs in a lifetime.
- live for several months without eating.
- withstand temperatures from nearly freezing to 122° F.
- ingest seven times their weight in blood, equivalent to an average male drinking 120 gallons of liquid.

For more information, visit [PESTWORLD.org](http://PESTWORLD.org)

