

Things you can do:

- Vacuuming can help remove dead and live bed bugs. After each use: remove the vacuum bag or debris in canister, seal it in a plastic bag, and dispose of it in an outdoor receptacle.
- Heat will kill bed bugs. Washing alone does not. Thoroughly wash infested or suspect clothing and bedding and dry in a dryer on a high heat setting, for at least 40 minutes after the items are dry. Place laundered items in an airtight plastic bag or a plastic storage container that can be sealed until the infestation is controlled.
- Clear out as much clutter as possible.
- Consider placing bed bug monitoring devices such as interceptor traps under bed legs. There are a number of bed bug traps available, and the simplest, relatively inexpensive ones work very well.



- Eliminate harborage opportunities by sealing cracks and crevices with a silicone-based sealant; glue down loosened wallpaper edges.

Retail insecticide products are not effective against bed bugs. Improper use of them can injure you, your family, your pets, and may make the infestation worse.

What if I find bed bugs?

Early detection and immediate involvement of an experienced Pest Management Professional can help to minimize costs, uncomfortable bites, and stress.



www.tchd.org

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Aurora, CO 80011
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Castle Rock

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Commerce City

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Greenwood Village

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Tri-County Health Department services are provided without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or disability.

Eleven offices along the front range serving the residents of Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties
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Preventing and Treating BED BUGS



What you NEED TO KNOW

Tri-County Health Department

www.tchd.org

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small, flat reddish-brown insects that feed on the blood of humans and other warm-blooded animals. Adult bed bugs are about ¼ inch in length with a flat oval shape and are about the size of an apple seed after feeding. They do not jump or fly, and are not known to transmit disease-causing organisms. They crawl quickly and hide in dark cracks and crevices to digest a blood meal.

Bed bugs are found in homes, apartments, hotels, dormitories, and places where people sleep or are stationary for long periods of time.

Bed bugs feed when people are sleeping or sitting quietly, usually at night. They are attracted by warmth and the presence of exhaled breath. They are most active between midnight and 3 am, but they may feed at other times. They insert a needle-like mouthpiece to feed, but cannot burrow into your skin.



Where are bed bugs found?

Generally, bed bugs are first introduced into bedrooms. As their numbers increase they can be found almost anywhere in your home. Eggs, immature stages, and adult bed bugs can all be found clustered together. Their flat bodies allow them to hide in hundreds of cracks and crevices in a structure.

Places to look for bed bugs include:

- In seams and creases of mattresses and box springs, in the corners of box springs, and under dust covers.
- On or in bed frames and behind headboards.
- Along and under the edge of carpeting.
- In crevices of hardwood floors; especially in corners and cracks.
- Behind moldings and baseboards.
- Behind picture frames and wall hangings.
- Behind light switch plates and electrical outlet covers.
- Under loose wallpaper and paneling.
- In clothing stored in closets and drawers near beds.
- Inside and under dressers, nightstands, and other furniture.
- Inside clocks, phones, TVs, remote controls, smoke detectors, and other electronic devices.
- In upholstered furniture.
- In folds of curtains, bed skirts, and bedding.

Do I have bed bugs?

An early sign of bed bugs is the appearance of small dark spots on your mattress and bed linens. These are bug droppings and blood spots. Closer examination of these areas may reveal one or more bugs.



Another sign is unexplained red marks on arms, face, neck, or feet. Very few people can feel bed bugs feeding. The bug's saliva contains an anticoagulant that promotes blood flow. People experience a range of reactions to bites. Some have no reaction at all, while others develop red itchy welts. Very few people have severe reactions, but the most severely affected may need medical attention. Bites can occur singly, in clusters, or in lines. Reaction to bites may show up within hours, or as long as two weeks later.



Bed bugs feed up to fifteen minutes and then retreat to a hiding place. Although bed bugs can survive several months when a host is not present, they prefer to take a blood-meal every three to five days.

How do I prevent bed bugs?

Bed bug infestations can happen to anyone. Inspect your beds for bed bugs and signs of their activity weekly. A good time is when you change sheets. Use a flashlight and a magnifying glass and check the places listed in this brochure. If you find what you believe is a bed bug, take a specimen to your building management staff, or contact a Pest Management Professional.

Do not bring used beds home. Inspect second-hand or rented furniture carefully before bringing it into your home. Encase mattresses and box springs in bed bug-proof encasements.

When traveling, check hotel beds for bed bugs and fecal spots before settling into the room. Follow the same methods used to check your home.

Reduce clutter in your home.

If you live in multi-family housing, know what is happening in your building by talking with neighbors and attending community meetings. Bed bugs can move between apartments.

Don't panic! Bed bug infestations can be eliminated successfully when the appropriate pest management steps are followed.