



Safe Environments

Healthy Workers

DON'T BRING AN UNINVITED GUEST HOME... TAKE BED BUG PRECAUTIONS

Anyone anywhere can be exposed to bed bugs. Exposure is not tied to your cleanliness. These small bugs are about ¼ inch long and resemble an apple seed in appearance, they do not jump, and they do not have wings. Bed bugs can be found in hotels, schools, rooming houses and hospitals. Acquiring second-hand items also increases your risk of exposure. So if you travel for work, or work in one of these environments don't bring an uninvited guest home... take bed bug precautions.



TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS WHEN STAYING IN A HOTEL

- Keep clothing in a tightly tied plastic bag in your suitcase or hang clothing in the closet
- The bathroom is a good place to keep your luggage or put it on a luggage rack
- Before you unpack
 - Check the headboard and nightstand for bed bugs
 - Next check the mattress and box spring. While mattresses and box springs are frequently changed in hotels, look carefully at these items for evidence of bed bugs which could include blood stains and bed bug droppings. Don't forget to check the seams and mattress tag.
- If you detect signs of bed bugs, request another room and tell hotel management what you found
- If you have bites or find evidence of bed bugs during your trip take extra precautions when you return home
 - Unpack outdoors
 - Launder washables using the hot water setting
 - Place everything in the dryer at the highest temperature for at least 30 minutes
 - Vacuum your luggage

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BED BUGS

Before feeding bed bugs are flat, but after feeding on blood, bed bugs become bloated and turn dark red. The eggs are white, about the size of a pinhead and are found in clusters in cracks and crevices of furniture, linens, clothing, mattresses and box springs, behind baseboards and in chairs. Bed bugs have a one-year lifespan during which time females can lay between 200-400 eggs. Eggs hatch in about ten days.

HOW CAN INFESTATION OCCUR?

Bed bugs prefer to feed off of humans, but they will also bite animals and birds. Bed bugs are making a strong resurgence in North America. The reasons for this include globalization, restrictions on the use of pesticides and resistance to certain pesticides.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

You will not usually feel bites as the insect injects an anaesthetic that is mixed with their saliva. Individual response to bites varies, and some people do not react at all. Bites usually appear as small, raised, red lesions. They may cause itching and scratching which can lead to infection. There is no concrete scientific evidence that they carry blood-borne diseases such as Hepatitis B or C or HIV.

HOW DO I PREVENT BED BUGS FROM ENTERING MY HOME?

Be careful when buying used furniture. Inspect each item carefully and wash or clean before use. When purchasing used clothing wash them with hot water and dry in hot dryer right away. If you find evidence of bed bugs, it is advisable to throw the item out.

CAN I ENCOUNTER BED BUGS AT WORK?

These same precautions can be followed if you work in a client's home or another workplace where bed bugs might be present.

Some workplaces are susceptible to bed bugs, or perhaps you encounter them while working in a client's home. If you suspect bed bugs are present in the workplace, report this to your supervisor. If your concerns are not addressed promptly, you can report the concerns to your joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative.

Confirm if you have bed bugs by consulting your local public health unit or pest control operator. Discuss options that pose the least risk to people and the environment. An integrated pest management system which combines a variety of techniques and products is usually the best option.

OTHER RESOURCES

There are many resources available on the internet. A good place to start is with your local public health unit. For a listing of public health units visit:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>

Health Canada, Bed bugs what are they? <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/pest-control-tips/bedbugs-what-are-they.html>

Health Canada, How do I make sure they don't come back? <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/pest-control-tips/bedbugs-how-do-i-make-sure-they-don-t-come-back.html>

<http://www.bedbugsinfo.ca/>

City of Toronto: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/bed-bugs/>

University Health Network:

http://www.uhn.ca/PatientsFamilies/Health_Information/Health_Topics/Documents/Bed_Bugs.pdf