

Bed Bugs

Common Questions Answered

What Are Bed Bugs?



Close up of a bed bug



Bed bug on thumb for scale



Bed bugs on seam of mattress

Once only found in the bedding of homes and apartment complexes, bed bugs can now be found throughout your community. This handout includes several commonly asked questions and answers regarding bed bugs and how to identify, inspect, and treat for an infestation.

- Bed bugs are small, flat, oval, reddish-brown, wingless insects that feed on the blood of humans and other mammals.
- Adult bed bugs are approximately ¼ inch long, about the size of an apple seed. Young (nymph) bed bugs are quite small and when unfed they appear lighter and almost clear in color.
- Bed bugs do not fly or jump, but they move quickly over floors, walls, ceilings, and furniture.
- Female bed bugs can lay up to five eggs daily and five hundred in a lifetime.
- Bed bugs are excellent hitchhikers and are easily spread by moving furniture and possessions from one location to another.
- Anyone who comes in direct contact with bed bugs or their eggs can unknowingly carry them into their house or workplace.

Are Bed Bugs Dangerous To My Health?

- Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease and are primarily considered a nuisance.
- Bites can cause welts which may become infected by excessive scratching.
- It may take up to 14 days for a welt from a bed bug bite to appear.
- Bed bug infestations can cause anxiety as well as psychological and emotional stress.



Bed bug bites



If you have any questions or concerns regarding bed bugs please contact the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department Environmental Health Division at 419-213-4100 ext. 3



MAIN OFFICE
635 North Erie Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
419.213.4100

WESTERN CLINIC SITE
330 Oak Terrace Blvd.
Holland, Ohio 43528
419.213.6255

Bed Bugs

Common Questions Answered

How Do I Know If I Have Bed Bugs?

- The first signs of a bed bug infestation are the appearance of red itchy welts.
- These welts appear on areas of skin that are exposed while sleeping.

Be aware that not every welt or bite is due to bed bugs. Consult a medical provider with questions about unexplained bites or red welts.



Fecal spots on a mattress



Bed bug eggs and cast skins



Fecal spots by outlet cover

You may also look for live bed bugs, eggs, and cast skins. Small black or rusty colored spots (blood and fecal spots) found on bed linens, pillows, or mattresses are another sign of an infestation.

How Do I Get Rid Of An Infestation?

Complete elimination of bed bugs can be achieved through the services of a Certified Pest Management company. Getting rid of bed bugs is a cooperative effort, so following guidelines set by the pest management professional is important.

- Reduce and eliminate clutter.
- Heat kills bed bugs. Wash clothes at the hottest recommended setting. Tumble dry the clothes on high heat for at least 30 minutes (120 °F or above).
- Place freshly laundered clothing in plastic bags or containers that can be tightly sealed. Be sure to keep clean and dirty clothing separate.
- Encase an infested mattress and box spring in a zippered cover that is labeled and certified as “bed bug proof”. Leave the covers on for at least one full year.
- Vacuum your home thoroughly and often. Place the vacuum cleaner bag or contents in a sealable plastic bag and discard it in the trash outside.
- **DO NOT USE “bug bombs”.** These products may kill on contact but are mostly ineffective against hidden bed bugs. They may make the infestation worse by scattering the bugs throughout the home or apartment.



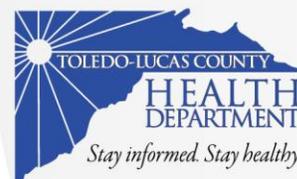
Wash bedding and clothing on high heat for 30 minutes



DO NOT USE “Bug Bombs”



If you have any questions or concerns regarding bed bugs please contact the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department Environmental Health Division at 419-213-4100 ext. 3



MAIN OFFICE
635 North Erie Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
419.213.4100

WESTERN CLINIC SITE
330 Oak Terrace Blvd.
Holland, Ohio 43528
419.213.6255

Bed Bugs

Common Questions Answered

How Can I Prevent An Infestation?

- Do not bring bed frames, mattresses, box springs, or upholstered furniture found on the street into the home.
- Carefully inspect used or rented furniture prior to bringing it into the home.
- Place any recently purchased secondhand clothing into the dryer on a hot setting for at least 30 minutes (120°F or above).
- When traveling, inspect the room prior to bringing in your luggage. Keep suitcases off the floor and bed and inspect them before leaving.
- Wash and dry all clothing, per the above recommendations, after returning home.
- Caulk and seal cracks and crevices throughout the home, especially in places where people sleep.
- Be mindful of guests entering your home, as well as being a guest in another home.
- When in public locations, consider sitting on non-upholstered furniture. Keep your belongings away from walls and off the floors.



Do not bring discarded furniture into your home



Inspect all luggage and backpacks after returning from another location



If you have any questions or concerns regarding bed bugs please contact the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department Environmental Health Division at 419-213-4100 ext. 3

Where Do Bed Bugs Hide?

Bed bugs prefer to hide close to where people sleep.

- **Mattresses, box springs, headboards, couches, etc.**

They prefer fabric, wood, and paper surfaces over metal or plastic. Look for live bed bugs, eggs, cast skins, and blood or fecal spots in these locations.

- **Upholstered furniture, back packs, stuffed animals, curtains, door frames, base boards, etc.**

These locations are not the only places that bed bugs can be found. Bed bugs can live in many areas throughout your home, so a thorough inspection is important.

Note: These guidelines include recommendations of the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force and the Cuyahoga County Bed Bug Task Force



MAIN OFFICE
635 North Erie Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
419.213.4100

WESTERN CLINIC SITE
330 Oak Terrace Blvd.
Holland, Ohio 43528
419.213.6255