

Preventing Bed Bugs In The Home

What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are insects that feed on the blood of people. They don't cause disease, but can cause allergic reactions. Bed bugs are flat, brown, oval, and don't have wings. They're a bit smaller than an apple seed.

Why are bed bugs a public health problem?

In recent years, bed bugs have become more common in Southern California. This is due to poor cleaning habits, crowded living spaces, and increased travel.

Where do bed bugs live?

Bed bugs like to hide in dark places, on fabrics, woods, or paper surfaces, and near where people sleep.

How do you know if you've got bed bugs in your home?

- You wake up with small, itchy red bumps on your skin.
- You find dark reddish or brownish spots or streaks on your bed sheets, pillowcases, and mattresses.
- You see live or dead bugs, eggs, and shed skins on or around your bed, furniture, drawers, and other dark places.

How do you treat bed bug bites?

Most bed bug bites don't need medical attention. Anti-itch creams or antihistamines (allergy medicine) can be used to treat allergic reactions. Talk to your doctor if you think a bite is infected.

How do you get rid of bed bugs?

Getting rid of bed bugs requires teamwork.

- **Tenant:** report bed bugs to building manager (landlord) right away.
- **Landlord:** hires a licensed Pest Management Professional (PMP).
- **PMP:** inspects and treats the bed bug infestation.
- **Housing inspector:** works with building manager and the PMP to make sure building is free of bed bugs.

How do you prevent bed bugs?

- Keep your home clean and free of clutter.
- Look for signs of bed bugs along mattress seams, inside drawers, behind headboards, and inside holes in walls.
- Check all new and used furniture, clothes, bags, wallets, and luggage for bed bugs before bringing them home.
- Use a hard suitcase or duffel bag when traveling.
- Unpack, wash, and dry clothes on high heat after returning from travel.



Bed bugs live on or near:

- Clutter
- Mattresses, bedding
- Bed frames, headboards
- Night tables
- Drawers, bookcases
- Clothing, hampers
- Alarm clocks, radios
- Backpacks, luggage
- Picture frames
- Curtains, drapes
- Couches, chairs
- Rugs, carpets
- Peeling paint
- Loose wallpaper
- Outlets, light switches

More information:

Bed bugs questions:
Vector Management Program
(626) 430-5450

Landlord hasn't responded to
your bed bug complaint:
Environmental Health
Emergency Hotline
(888)700-9995