

# Let's Beat the Bug!

## Bed Bug Basics

- Bed bugs are a small insect, about the size of an apple seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, oval and reddish-brown in color.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood and can live for up to a year without a meal. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping.
- Some people do not react when bitten by a bed bug.
- If you think you have bed bugs check for the bugs, blood stains, droppings, eggs and shed skins
  - Where you sit and where you sleep
  - In mattresses, box springs, bed frames and bedding
  - In cracks and crevices in bedroom furniture, floor boards, base boards, windows, door frames and electrical outlets

Remember, bed bugs are very small, flat and fast.

For more information contact the bed bug hotline at 612-624-2200, 1-855-644-2200

bedbugs@umn.edu, or visit [www.bedbugs.umn.edu](http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu)

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## How to Prevent Bed Bugs from Entering your Home

Bed bugs can enter your home; in used clothing, furniture or bedding; by traveling along pipes and wiring; and as "hitch-hikers" on you or your visitors clothing, shoes and bags.

To prevent bed bugs from entering your home:

- Do not bring furniture, mattresses, box springs, or bed frames found on the street into your home.
- Check all used or rented furniture for bed bugs. Only get used or rented furniture from a place with a bed bug prevention policy. See the factsheet titled "*Have I found a bed bug*" for information on identifying bed bugs.
- Do not place backpacks, purses or bags on beds, couches, or other areas where you rest.



- When traveling check for bed bugs in your hotel room. Check the bedding, furniture and luggage valet. Keep your suitcases off the bed and check them for bed bugs when departing. See "*Inspecting your Hotel Room for Bed Bugs*" for more information
- For apartments, seal cracks and crevices around plumbing and wiring, this will help prevent bed bugs traveling from next door apartments.
- If you think you have come into contact with bed bugs, immediately wash and dry your clothing on the hottest setting the fabric can withstand, or store them in a sealed plastic bag until you are able to do so. Shoes, bags and other objects can be put in the dryer for 20 min; at medium-high temperature or the highest temperature the material can tolerate, to kill bed bugs. For more information see "*Laundering Items to Kill Bed Bugs.*"

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By Amelia Shindelar and Dr. Stephen Kells, 2011

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651/201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-627-3529.

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