

## What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping. Adult bed bugs have flat, rusty-red-colored oval bodies. About the size of an apple seed, they are big enough to be easily seen, but often hide in cracks in furniture, floors, or walls. When bed bugs feed, their bodies swell and become brighter red. They can live up to one year without food or water.

Bed bugs are making a comeback, big-time, and can be found just about anywhere; from warming shelters to four star hotel rooms. No one really knows why they have returned, but these little bugs are determined to stick around. Although bed bugs are tiny they can cause major headaches because they're so difficult to find.

### BIOLOGY

- Adult bed bugs are flat, small, oval-shaped and wingless. Before feeding they are amber colored, after they are a rusty red color.
- They feed on blood and attach themselves to their favorite meal: humans and animals. Bed bugs need blood to grow and can live up to one year on a single feeding.
- Bed bugs are nocturnal. They look for their meal at night while people are asleep.
- Bed bugs move around by hitching rides on clothing, furniture, bedding, and baggage. Bed bugs will live in any crack or crevice in or around your sleeping areas.

### HEALTHISSUES

- Not known disease carriers.
- Bites can cause an allergic reaction with swelling, redness, and itching.
- Skin infection and scarring can result from scratching.
- The majority of people do not react to bed bug bites.
- Lack of sleep is a serious side-effect causing reduced alertness, loss of productivity and mood problems.

### References

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