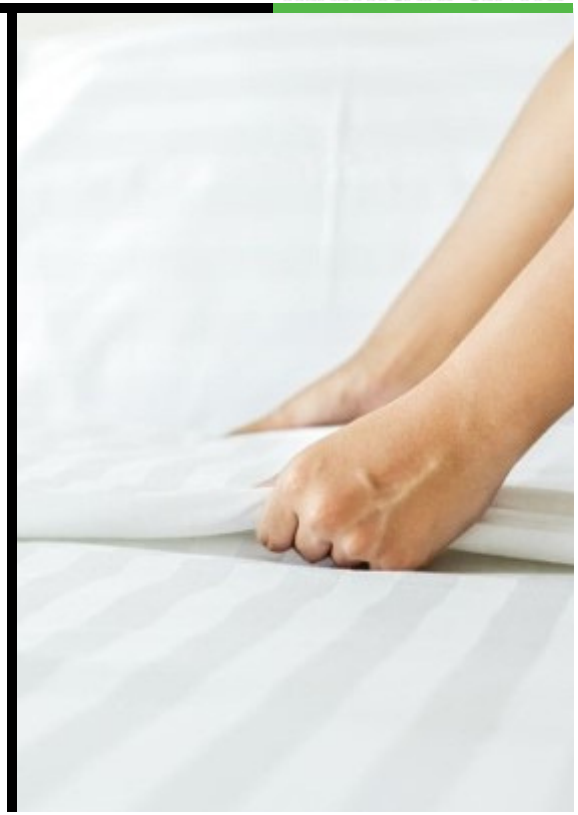


Bedbugs
(Cimex lectularius)

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
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Runnymede Healthcare Centre receives funding from Ontario Health. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of Ontario Health.

RUNNYMEDE HEALTHCARE CENTRE

Preventing Bedbug Infestations

WHAT ARE BEDBUGS?

A BEDBUG is a fast-moving, nocturnal, wingless insect that feeds on blood. They are dark red or brown in colour, roughly the size of an apple seed, and most active during night hours.

In the last decade, there has been an 80% increase in bedbug extermination calls as bedbug infestations have become more common.



CAN I GET SICK FROM BEDBUGS?

There is no evidence that bedbugs spread disease to humans. However, bedbug bites can cause itching, allergic reactions, and skin infections.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A BEDBUG BITE?

Bedbug bites are typically itchy, red welts that appear in a linear pattern. The bites may become swollen, especially if scratched, and some people may experience a burning sensation around the bite area. Symptoms can appear within a few hours to several days.

WHERE CAN BED BUGS BE FOUND?

Bedbugs are most commonly found in the following places:

- Mattresses, bed seams, box springs, headboards, and frames
- Furniture: couches, chairs, especially along seams and cushions
- Ceilings and fixtures
- Floorboards and carpets
- They hitchhike on bags, clothes, and shoes after travel
- Cracks and crevices
- Seats on buses, trains and, airplanes
- Inside books

WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN IF BED BUGS ARE DISCOVERED AT HOME?

- If you think you have bedbugs at home, consult your local health department or a professional pest control operator for confirmation
- Stop visiting a patient until bed bugs are eradicated from your home

HOW CAN I PREVENT A BEDBUG INFESTATION?

The following are some useful practices that will prevent bedbug infestation:

- When travelling, check mattress seams, headboards, and furniture before settling in
- Use a sealed garbage bag to protect your luggage when staying in hotels
- After travelling, wash and dry clothes using high heat to kill any hitchhikers
- Use caution when bringing home used furniture or clothes, and make sure to inspect these items carefully for rust-coloured spots, which are a warning sign

ALWAYS REMEMBER

- Bedbugs do not spread disease, but they can cause discomfort, stress, and allergic reactions
- Early detection is key; regular inspections help prevent major infestations
- Be cautious when travelling or bringing secondhand items into your home
- If an infestation is identified, professional pest control may be necessary

HOW CAN THE SPREAD OF BED BUGS BE PREVENTED IN HOSPITALS?

- Placing the affected patient on contact precautions until the full course of treatment has been completed
- Removing all patient's clothing and personal belongings in sealed double bags. Clothes will be hot washed separately in the hospital
- Showering the patient and providing a clean hospital gown
- Cleaning/disinfection and hot steam vacuuming of the patient environment
- The patient and patients environment will be monitored for possible new signs of infestation