

B E D B U G S

Cimex lectularius (Cimicidae)



Enlarged picture

Actual size 

What is a bedbug?

A bedbug is a small (about the size of a pencil eraser), flat, reddish-brown bug. It is found in homes all over the world. It hides during the day and comes out during the night to look for blood. Bedbugs may enter the home on used mattresses and box springs or other furniture, luggage and clothing after a trip, pets, or through cracks in walls and floors next to other infested areas.

What is a bedbug bite like?

Bedbug bites look like little red bumps usually in a line and can feel itchy.

What is the best treatment for bedbug bites?

Wash bedbug bites with soap and water and put on an anti-itch cream or lotion to relieve itching. Try not to scratch so you won't get an infection. If you get an infection or allergic reaction to the bites, see a doctor for a prescription.

How do I know if my bites are from bedbugs?

Look for signs of bedbugs. They leave spots of blood on mattresses as well as the skin that they shed. Because they hide during the day and come out at night, look for them at night. Rooms with bedbugs often have an intense sweet odor.



Where do bedbugs live?

Bedbugs live all over the world in people's mattresses and in hiding places like cracks in headboards and footboards. They live in tiny spaces in furniture, crevices in the floor, under loose carpet, under baseboards and wall moldings, and behind loose wallpaper or pictures hanging on the wall.

What is the best way to get rid of bedbugs?

It is recommended that a Certified Pesticide Applicator be hired to treat the problem. Three to four applications will be necessary within one month to be sure all bedbugs and their eggs are destroyed. In addition, mattresses and box springs should be destroyed. However, if that is not possible, mattresses and box springs may be sprayed, air dried for at least 4 hours and wrapped in plastic. Repeat spraying and wrapping with each application.

If a Certified Pesticide Applicator is not available, property owners may contact their local health department for additional information. Renters, who have bedbugs, should request that their landlord hire a Certified Pesticide Applicator to treat the problem or should contact their local health department.

For more information visit the following websites:

Bergen County Dept. of Health Services- www.bergenhealth.org

The Mayo Clinic - www.mayoclinic.com/health/bedbugs;

National Pest Management Assoc. Inc. - www.pestworld.org

Harvard University – www.hsph.harvard.edu/bedbugs

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