

Bristol Burlington  
Health District  
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# DON'T LET THE

# BED BUGS

# BITE

## **DESCRIPTION AND HABITS:**

- Small, wingless, brown to reddish brown (adult), flat from top to bottom
- Feeds solely on the blood of warm-blooded animals
- Adult bed bugs are ¼ inch in length, from above oval in shape
- Bed bugs shed their skins
- Active at night, mostly feeding just before dawn
- Bed bugs prefer to hide close to where they feed, however they will travel more than 100 feet to feed
- Feeding is quick, usually 3 – 15 minutes
- Bed bugs do not like extreme cold or extreme hot temperatures

## **SIGNS OF BED BUG INFESTATION:**

- Fecal brown spots on sheets, mattress or adjacent objects
- A sweet musty odor
- Bite sights either clustered or in rows on human exposed skin
- Dead bed bugs or their shed skins in nearby hiding places

## **BITES AND CONCERNS:**

- Bed bugs usually bite people at night while they are sleeping
- Bed bugs feed by piercing the skin which they withdraw blood
- This feeding takes approximately 3 – 15 minutes, the person seldom is not aware this is taking place
- Symptoms vary with the individual
  - itchy welts or localized swelling (similar to mosquito bite)
  - little or no reaction
- Disease pathogen transmission to humans is highly unlikely
- Major human health viruses (HIV, Hep C) do not appear to be transmitted from human to human by the bed bug

## **MANAGING BED BUGS:**

- Remove all clutter
- Vacuum all cracks and crevices and clean thoroughly, repeat frequently (remove vacuum bag in tightly sealed plastic bag and discard in outdoor container)
- Seal mattress and box spring in plastic protective encasement
- Wash sheets and clothing in hot water and dry in hot dryer for 30 min or more
- Pull bed at least 6" away from the wall and wrap legs with clear 2" wide sticky tape (facing out), or place legs in cups of mineral oil
- Keep bedroom cool at night to slow down bug activity
- Steam clean carpets and area rugs
- CALL A PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROL OPERATOR

**SOURCES OF BED BUG ENTRY:**

- Purchased used furniture, TV's, linens, clothing, etc
- Furniture including mattresses, clothes, etc picked up off the street
- Gifted or donated furniture, clothing, luggage, mattresses, etc
- House guests (or yourselves) who have traveled or visited hotels, dormitories, long term care facilities, cruise ships, etc
- Items from self storage facilities
- Items carried in a rental, delivery or moving truck
- Rented furniture

**WHERE DO BED BUGS HIDE?:**

- Bed frame and headboard
- Seams, tufts and crevices of mattresses, box springs, sofa's & chairs
- Within items stored under the bed
- Nightstands and dressers
- Electrical outlets, switch plates
- Light fixtures, lamps
- Wall hangings
- Along and under the edge of wall-to-wall carpeting
- Under loose wallpaper
- Inside clocks, phones, TV's & smoke detectors

**LANDLORD'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Landlord's and property owners have specific legal obligation to provide safe and habitable accommodations for tenants. Infestations, including bed bugs, may constitute an unacceptable living condition as perceived by the law.

**TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Tenants have an obligation to cooperate with landlords and owners to allow access for inspection or abatement. This includes clutter removal, cleaning maintenance and properly preparing the apartment so that pest control operators can easily inspect and treat as necessary.

**TRAVEL TIPS:**

- Select clothes which can be laundered in hot water and withstand hot drying
- Select hard smooth luggage over fabric luggage
- Pack plastic bags to seal up purchased items and clothing
- Keep luggage off the floor and beds at your vacation destination
- Do not unpack clothes, keep luggage closed when not in use
- Hang business suites or dresses on the shower rail
- Inspect bed area for brown spotting and bugs on the mattress seams, headboards furniture and objects adjacent to the bed
- Thoroughly inspect all items prior to checking out and pack clothing and souvenirs in sealable plastic bags, thoroughly inspect your luggage
- On arrival at home, take clothing in plastic bags directly to the washing machine and wash immediately with hot water and dry in hot dryer

**DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE, TAKE PRECAUTIONS !!!**