

Bed Bugs

in the NWT



If you would like this information in another official language, call us.

English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

Kĩspin ki nitawih̄tĩn ē nĩhĩyawih̄k ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

Tłjchq̄ yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newq̄ dè, gots'ō gonede.

Tłjchq̄

ʔerih̄tl'ıs Dēne Sųlıné yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theʔą ʔat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóltı.

Chipewyan

Edı gondı dehghá got'je zhatıé k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahıı.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'jne xadā k'é hederı ʔedjhtı'é yerıniwę nıde dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjik vat'atr'ijāhch'uu zhit yinothtan jı', diits'āt ginokhii.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqluta.

Inuvialuktun

Ċ^bdĀ ɪɪ^{sb}bΔ^c Λ^cLJΔ^rc Δ.ɔ^bɪɪ^cɪ^{sb}ɪ^cLɪɪ^b, ɪ^cɪ^cɪ^a.ɔ^c ɪ^cb^cɪ^cɪ^a.ɔ^{sb}ɪ^cɪ^c.

Inuktitut

Hapkua titiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarlutit.

Inuinnaqtun

1-855-846-9601

What are Bed Bugs?

Bed bugs are found all over the world and the number of reported cases in Canada has been increasing rapidly since the year 2000.

Bed bugs are reddish brown insects that have oval-shaped bodies with no wings. Prior to feeding, they are about 5 mm (1/4 inch) long, or about the size of an apple seed, and flat as paper. After feeding, they turn dark red and become bloated. They can live for several months without feeding.

Baby bed bugs are smaller, whiter, and harder to spot. Eggs are whitish, pear-shaped and about the size of a pinhead. Cluster of 10-50 eggs can be found in cracks and crevices. Bed bugs have a one-year life span during which time a female can lay 200-400 eggs. Eggs hatch in about 10 days.

What do bed bugs feed on?

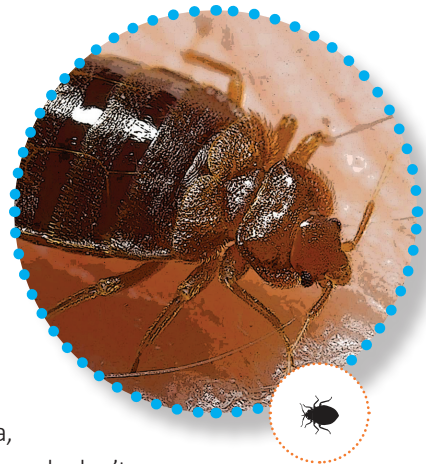
Bed bugs feed on the blood of animals or birds, but they prefer to bite and feed on people. They usually hide during the day and come out at night to feed.

Can I get sick from bed bugs?

Bed bugs are not known to spread any human disease. Some people don't feel the bites, but others can react to them resulting in itching and red welts. Scratching can lead to infection.

What do bed bug bites look like?

When bed bugs bite they inject their saliva into the biting area, causing the skin to become irritated and inflamed, but many people don't react to being bitten and won't have red itchy bites on their body. The bites may go unnoticed, or be mistaken for flea or mosquito bites or other skin conditions. Bed bug bites most commonly occur on exposed areas of the body, including face, neck, hands, arms, lower legs or all over the body.



Actual size:
Approximately
3mm x 5mm



How do I treat bed bug bites?

Most bed bug bites go away by themselves and don't need treatment. Keep the skin clean and try not to scratch. If the bites are very itchy, your doctor may prescribe cream or antihistamines to relieve the itchiness. Oral antibiotics may be prescribed for any secondary skin infection from excessive scratching.

Do I have Bed Bugs?

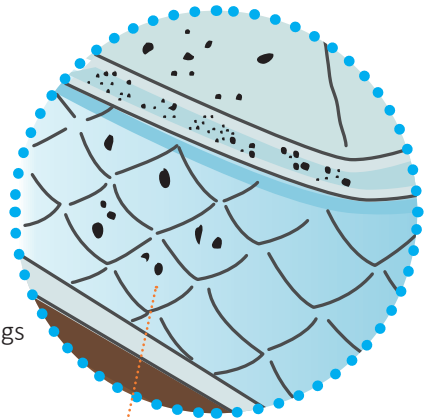
Even the cleanest homes and hotels can have bed bugs. Bed bugs are hard to find! They are very small and usually only come out at night to feed. They hide in the seams of mattresses and box springs, and along the edges of beds and other furniture. Before you find a bed bug, you might find the signs of bed bugs:

- Itchy red bumps on your body
- Black dots (bed bug poop) on your sheets, blanket, pillow cases and mattress
- Blood stains on sheets, backrest, pillow cases
- Dried remains of shed bed bug skin on your bedding
- Dead bugs in your bed or bedroom

Check for live bed bugs or shells in the following areas:

- Seams, creases, and folds of mattresses and box springs
- Cracks in the bed frame and head board
- Under chairs, couches, beds, dust covers
- Between the cushions of couches and chairs
- Under area rugs and the edges of carpets
- Between the folds of curtains
- In drawers
- Behind baseboards, and around window and door casings
- Behind electrical plates and under loose wallpaper, paintings and posters
- Cracks in walls
- In telephones, radios, and clocks

If the infestation is heavy, a sweet smell may be noticed in the room.



Check for black dots on your sheets, blankets, pillow cases and mattress.





How does a home become infested with bed bugs?

In most cases, people carry bed bugs from an infested building or room into their homes in luggage, furniture, bedding, or clothing. Bed bugs may also travel between apartments through small crevices and cracks in walls and floors and along pipes, electrical wiring and other openings.

Who can help?

An **Environmental Health Officer** (EHO) can provide information over the phone about bed bug identification and what is needed to treat the infestation and prevent it from coming back.

If you rent your home, your landlord can provide information and make arrangements to eliminate the infestation.

You can also check the Yellow Pages of your phone book under Pest Control- Exterminating & Fumigating.



What can I do if I have bed bugs in my home?

The best method to deal with bed bugs combines a variety of methods and products but pose the least risk to human health and the environment.

- Clean up clutter to help reduce the number of places bed bugs can hide.
- Vacuum carpets, floors, bed frames, furniture, cracks and crevices daily, using the nozzle attachment. Empty the vacuum and seal and dispose of its bag.
- Seal cracks and crevices between baseboards, on wood bed frames, floors and walls with caulking. Repair or remove peeling wallpaper, tighten loose light switch covers, and seal any openings where pipes, wires or other utilities come into your home (pay special attention to walls that are shared between apartments).
- Cover mattress, box spring and pillows in a cover that is labelled allergen rated, for dust mites or for bed bugs for at least a full year.
- Sticky glue paper can be used to monitor for bedbugs. Place these around walls, bed legs, and wherever bedbug activity is suspected. Carpet tape (double-sided sticky tape) can also be used.
- Prevent bedbugs from moving onto furniture by coating the legs of the furniture with petroleum jelly or by wrapping the legs with double sided tape.



Heat will kill all life stages of bed bugs, including eggs.

The temperature must reach 49 C (120°F) or hotter to kill bed bugs.

- Wash sheets, bedding and clothes in hot wash water and dry in a clothes dryer set on high heat. The dryer can also be used for stuffed toys, shoes, other personal items that can't be washed.
- Steam from home use steamers will kill bed bugs if the steam that comes in contact with the bed bugs is hot enough. Be careful not to blow the bed bugs away with the steam. Use a steam cleaner for cracks, crevices, and mattresses.
- Hair dryers set to high can be also be used to kill bed bugs. As with steam cleaners, be careful not to blow the bed bugs away.



Freezing will also kill all life stages of bed bugs.

- Freeze bedding, chairs, etc. at minus 15°C (5°F) or colder for three days to kill bed bugs and eggs. A household freezer can be used, or if the outside temperature is cold enough, household items and furniture can be put outdoors to kill bed bugs.



Diatomaceous Earth

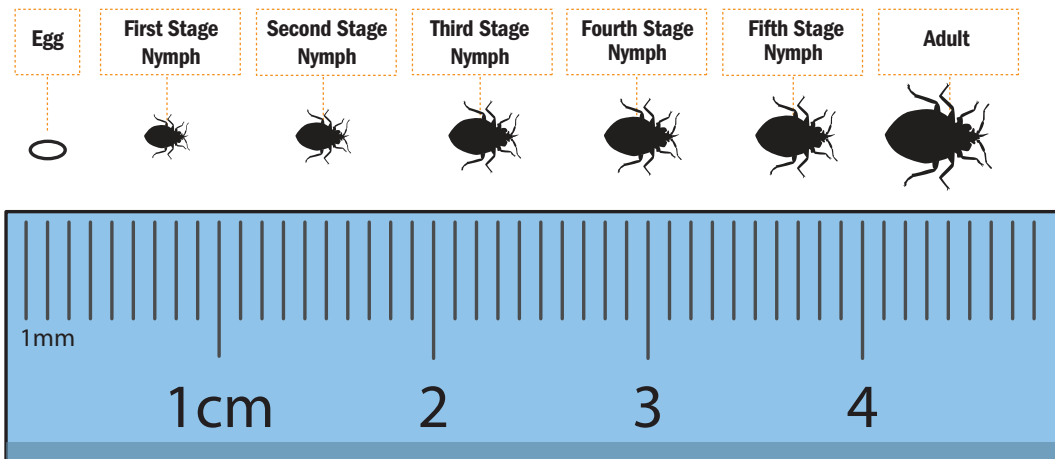
- Diatomaceous earth is a dust made of the skeletons of microorganisms called diatoms. It will kill bed bugs by sticking to the outside of their bodies and absorbing the wax layer that keeps them from losing their body moisture. The bed bugs dry up and die within a couple of days.



Should I use a pesticide?

Be very cautious about using pesticides yourself. Domestic class products available to homeowners will generally contain the active ingredient pyrethrin. Pesticides can be hazardous to people and pets. If you choose to use a pesticide, consult with an Environmental Health Officer or licensed professional pest control service for more information. Use the least toxic product available and follow these precautions:

- Only use pesticides clearly labelled to kill bed bugs. Never use a cockroach spray, ant spray or any other pesticide that does not list bed bugs on the label.
- Follow label instructions exactly.
- Never spray pesticides on top of mattresses or sofas, or in areas where children or pets are present.
- Never purchase or use a product without a manufacturer's label.
- Do not use "insecticide bombs" or "foggers" in your home. These products can spread hazardous chemicals throughout your home and are not effective against bed bugs.

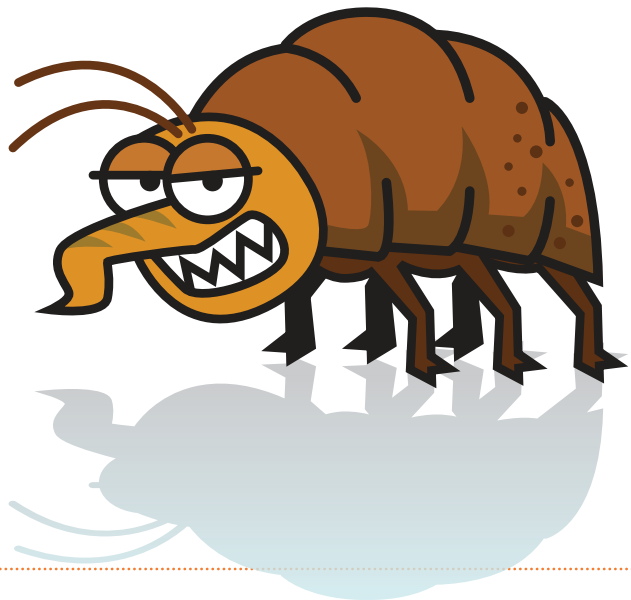


How do I prevent bed bugs from entering my home?

Regular house cleaning, including vacuuming your mattress and other places bed bugs can hide, can help to prevent an infestation. Clean up clutter to help reduce the number of places bed bugs can hide. Be careful when buying used furniture or clothes.

Make sure to inspect them for bed bugs before bringing them into your home and feel free to ask the retailer if the items were checked for bed bugs. When you are travelling:

- **Inspect the room and furniture:** inspect all cracks and crevices of the mattress and box spring and look for blood spots or live insects. Request a different room if you find evidence of bed bugs.
- **Protect your luggage:** keep luggage on the shelf or away from the floor.
- **Protect the bed:** move the bed away from the wall, tuck in all bed sheets and keep blankets from touching the floor.
- **Upon returning home:** keep your luggage in an isolated area of your home, such as the garage. Inspect the luggage. Wash all your clothes in the hottest water possible and put them in a hot dryer for 20 minutes.



Who to Contact?

Environmental Health Services
Health and Social Services
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320, #102, 5204 50th Avenue
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9

Telephone: Yellowknife (867) 767-9066 ext. 49262
 Inuvik (867) 777-4841
 Hay River (867) 874-6596

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