

## What is a bed bug?

- Two species of bed bugs feed on humans
  - Common bed bug *Cimex lectularius* L.
  - Tropical bed bug *Cimex hemipterus* Fabr.
- Blood feeders on humans and pets
- Adults are apple seed in size, nymphs and eggs are much smaller
- Brown colored, flat, oval, with six legs and two antennae. They do not fly (no wings) or jump
- They feed at night and hide by day
- Development 5 to 8 weeks from egg to adult

## Do you have bed bugs?

- Unexplained, often itchy red spots appearing on skin usually in rows or clusters (skin reactions may be more severe). Drugs, medical, mental conditions, and allergies may mimic insect feeding
- Look for scattered brown spots on bed linen and/or mattress seams, or favorite seats
- Look for small oval brown insects on beds or chairs
- Get expert to identify insects if found; carpet beetles, fleas, ticks, and small cockroaches can be mistaken for bed bugs

## What to do if you have bed bugs

- Don't panic; feelings of violation, disgust and stigma are common
- If bed bugs are confirmed, tenants should notify landlords; property owners should contact pest control professionals with experience. Delays in treatment can make control harder
  - Self treatments don't work
- Cooperate with your service professional. This may mean cleaning (clutter) ahead of treatment
- Educate yourself. Be careful surfing the web. University ("edu") and government sites are preferable, because information has been reviewed

## Bed protection during infestation

- Move bed 4"-6" away from wall
- Put bed feet into insect interceptors or wrap legs with packing tape, sticky side out
- Put mattress and box spring in encasements
- Vacuum cracks of bed (not a perfect remedy, but it will offer some relief)
- Wash linen, remake bed; have nothing touch the floor

## Identifying bed bugs

Photos enlarged, not actual size

Bed bugs with a pin



Female (left), male (right)



Nymphs



Bed bug (top) carpet beetle larva (bottom)  
Correct identification is important



Bed bugs actual size

## Preventing bed bugs

Bed bugs may be found on:

- Discarded furniture, beds, appliances or other abandoned articles. **Never** bring home items found on the street
- Purchased used furniture, TV's, linens, cloths, boxes etc.
- Items from self-storage facilities
- Rental furniture
- Items carried by rental, moving or delivery trucks
- Belongings of visitors, friends, or family members who have traveled or stayed in long-term care, hostels, universities, colleges, cruise ships etc.
- Used gifted items from friends or family
- Also, self infesting by bed bugs themselves, moving from room to room, apartment to apartment

## Travel precautions

When you travel:

- Select hot drier and wash tolerant travel clothes
- Use hard smooth luggage over fabric luggage
- Pack plastic bags to seal purchases and/or items that may have become infested
- At destination, inspect bed area for bed bug signs on headboards, mattress seams, adjacent furniture, and objects near to the bed
- At destination, keep luggage off floors and beds, place them on high luggage racks
- Do not unpack clothes
- Always keep luggage closed
- Place hanging items on shower rail
- Keep shoes away from bed
- Before checking out, seal suspicious items in plastic bags
- On arriving home, unpack materials outside residence and take laundry etc. directly to washer and/or drier for immediate cleaning
- Delicate items or objects can be frozen in a freezer for 5 days to kill all stages of bed bugs

# Resources

## Local health departments

[https://www.han.ct.gov/local\\_health/localmap.asp](https://www.han.ct.gov/local_health/localmap.asp)

## Connecticut Department of Public Health, local health administration

Hartford, CT (860) 509-7660

webmaster.dph@ct.gov (please write bed bug in the subject box)

## Identification with specimens

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

New Haven, CT (203) 974-8600

Windsor, CT (860) 683-4977

E-mail: [gale.ridge@ct.gov](mailto:gale.ridge@ct.gov) (please write bed bug in the subject box)

University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Services, Statewide

## Enforcement, Certification

### DEP pesticide management division

Hartford CT (860) 424-3369

E-mail: [diane.jorsey@ct.gov](mailto:diane.jorsey@ct.gov) (please write bed bug in the subject box)

## Legal

### State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice Housing Session

New Haven, (203) 773-6755

Bridgeport, (203) 579-7237

Hartford,, (860) 756-7810

New London, (860) 443-8444

E-mail: [judith.dicine@po.state.ct.us](mailto:judith.dicine@po.state.ct.us) (please write bed bug in the subject box)

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Connecticut Coalition Against Bed Bugs

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

123 Huntington Street, P. O. Box 1106

New Haven, CT 06504-1106

Tel: (203) 974-8600 (insect inquiries)

# Bed Bugs

## How to deal with them

### Gale E. Ridge PhD



Photo: Mr. Michael Vasil

CCABB web address  
**WWW.CT.GOV/CAES**