

## How do I get rid of bed bugs?

Once you have identified a bed bug infestation, you probably will need the help of a licensed exterminator in order to eliminate the infestation. To help control the problem you should remove all clutter from the infested area.

Vacuuming will remove some bed bugs, but not their eggs.



You should concentrate on mattress seams, and around any buttons. Infested clothing, shoes and bedding should be placed in a dryer on high heat for 20 minutes to kill the pests and their eggs. Mattresses and box springs should be placed in a bed bug proof zippered cover, and the cover should remain in place for 1 year.

## Can I use pesticides?

Most pesticides are not effective against bed bugs. Those that are should be applied by licensed professionals. Improper use of chemicals can make the problem worse and can be dangerous.

# Licking County Health Department



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Contact the Health Department if you have any questions or would like any additional information regarding bed bugs. We are here to serve you and provide you with accurate information.

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## Bed Bugs 101



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## What are bed bugs?

Bed bugs are insects that feed on human blood. They can be found in or near sleeping areas. Most commonly they are found in the seams of mattresses, box springs, cracks and crevices in bed frames, and sometimes in gaps behind baseboards, pictures, wallpaper, and electrical outlets. They can also be found hiding on upholstered furniture such as couches and chairs.



They are effective hitchhikers, and can enter new locations without anyone living, working, or staying in places knowing they are there. In addition, they can be transported through used furniture and clothing, as well as in luggage.

## What do bed bugs look like?

Adult bed bugs are reddish-brown in color and are about the size of an apple seed (1/4-1/8 inch long). They appear flat from the side, which allows them to fit into small spaces. Newly hatched bed bugs are white



or yellowish, and their body shape resembles adult bed bugs, other

than the fact that they are smaller. Bed bug eggs are white and about the size of a pin-head (1/10 inch long). They are normally found in groups of 10 to 50 eggs.

## How can I keep from getting bed bugs in my home?

The most important thing to do is to avoid bringing items with bed bugs into your home. Inspect any new or used furniture before bringing it inside. Look at the tight spaces along all seams, around buttons, and under cushions. When traveling, look for evidence of bed bugs by looking for fecal spots or eggs in the seams of mattresses and other furniture before unpacking.



## Will bed bugs make me sick?

The latest information available indicates that bed bugs are not known to transmit diseases to humans. Bites are relatively painless and occur at night while individuals sleep. Bites



can occur anywhere on the body, but most often on exposed areas of skin.

Some individuals will not even know they have been bitten, while others may develop an allergic reaction to a bite. Often the bites resemble mosquito or flea bites and may itch for up to 2 weeks. You shouldn't scratch the bites because they may get infected. Wash the bite areas with soap and water to help prevent infection.

Bed bugs may not cause diseases, but they can cause stress, anxiety, and insomnia. All of these factors can negatively affect your health.