

# BITE BACK!

## YOU CAN CONTROL BED BUGS.

Here's what you can do to protect yourself.

### WHERE TO LOOK: BED BUG HIDING SPOTS

Bed bugs hide in cracks and tight spaces within 6 to 8 feet of the sleeping areas – above, under and around.

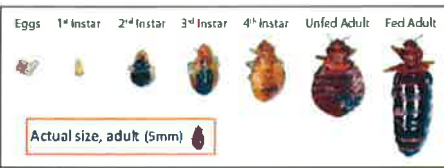


### WHAT TO LOOK FOR.

Dark brown or black spots



Bedbug life cycle



*Pictures courtesy of J.L. Obermeyer, Purdue University and Dr. D. Miller, Virginia Tech University*

### WHAT ABOUT BITES?

The only way to be sure that you have bed bugs is to find the bug. Why? Because their bites look like those of other insects or skin problems, and many people don't react to their bites at all.



**Dirty living conditions DO NOT attract bed bugs, but cleaning regularly and removing clutter will help you see and better control them. Always be aware of your surroundings and take action quickly when a problem is found.**

#### How You Get Bed Bugs



Travel



Used Furniture



Guests

#### Top 4 Things You Can Do To Stop Bed Bugs

- Reduce clutter, especially in bedrooms.
- Look often for signs in sleeping areas.
- Put bedding and other items in the clothes dryer using high heat for at least 30 minutes.\*
- Report problems quickly to landlord and/or an experienced pest control operator.

\* Heat is one of the best treatments for bed bugs because it kills all bed bugs, eggs to adults.



**IMPORTANT! Bed bug bombs and foggers do NOT work for controlling bed bugs.**



State of Illinois  
Illinois Department of Public Health

For Additional Information Contact:  
Illinois Department of Public Health, [www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/pcbedbugs.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/pcbedbugs.htm)  
Midwest Pesticide Action Center, [www.midwestpestidaction.org](http://www.midwestpestidaction.org)



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# Vacuuming Can Knock Down the Number of Bed Bugs in a Home

One thing we know for sure about bed bugs is that they like to live near where we sleep. This fact helps to focus where to look for bed bugs.

## What is a sleeping area?

Bed bugs don't care if you sleep on a mattress, the sofa, or a pile of hay. If someone sleeps or naps there regularly, that's a sleeping area. Even a chair used for long periods of sitting is a sleeping area to a bed bug.

**A vacuum can be a good weapon against bed bugs to knock down the numbers of bed bugs and makes other control methods more effective.** The key is to vacuum areas where bed bugs are likely to be hiding or where nests of bed bugs and eggs are found. Focus on: 1) cracks and crevices on and around the sleeping area or bed, and 2) upholstered furniture.

## How to make vacuuming work for bed bug control:

- ✓ Inspect around the sleeping areas and vacuum cracks and crevices. Focus on locations 8-20 feet around all sleeping areas. Don't forget the alarm clock, radio, or other items sitting nearby.
- ✓ Make the suction as strong as possible, but use gentle pressure to dislodge and suck up eggs and live bed bugs.
- ✓ Use vacuum attachments to get into cracks and crevices.

## Take Care when vacuuming for bed bug control:

- ✓ Vacuum slowly, carefully and thoroughly for best results. Be careful not to spread bed bugs and eggs around by pushing so hard that they are "flicked" off or otherwise moved from the surface.
- ✓ Use a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filtered vacuum if possible. These vacuums are available where most vacuums are sold and the filter will keep vacuumed dust from being released into the surrounding air.
- ✓ Make sure to empty the vacuum container into a zip-lock bag or throw away the vacuum bag after sealing in a zip-lock bag immediately after vacuuming. Bed bugs and their eggs can survive the vacuuming process and crawl back out of the vacuum and vacuum bag.
- ✓ Store the vacuum in a sealed plastic bag. Some bed bugs or eggs may get stuck in the suction hose and crawl back out. Careful storage is especially important if the vacuum is being used as part of a bed bug control program or you only suspect bed bugs are present but are not sure.

## What to do with a mattress if bed bugs are found.

Your first instinct may be to throw it out. Don't do it! Throwing out a mattress because of bed bugs and buying a new one will NOT fix your problem and can be expensive!

Many people believe that they must throw out their mattress if they find bed bugs on it. This is not true. In fact, throwing out mattresses and other furniture can actually spread the problem. Here are several steps that can be taken to de-bug contaminated furniture:

1. Inspect carefully and often.
2. Wash all bedding regularly and dry on high heat for at least 30 minutes – bed bugs and their eggs are killed by temperatures of 120°F or higher.
3. Vacuum carefully around bed, on the mattress, and nearby furniture.
4. Steam clean mattresses and nearby upholstered furniture. Make sure the steam heats to 220°F for best results.
5. Seal the mattress and box springs with bed bug proof covers which are also called "encasements" after vacuuming and steam cleaning. The cover traps any remaining bugs or eggs inside and prevents new bed bugs from getting in.

Remember, if you don't get rid of the bed bugs in other infested areas before bringing in a new mattress or other furniture, the new items will become infested. Bed bugs are attracted to you, NOT your mattress.

• *Disposed-of furniture should always be wrapped in plastic and labeled as bed bug contaminated before being taken to the curb to prevent the spread of bed bugs in other parts of the building and other unsuspecting people bringing the item into their home.*



## Laundering Items to Kill Bed Bugs

### Washing and drying clothes

- ✓ Tip each bag into a washer (or the dryer for dry-clean-only).
- ✓ When each bag is emptied, fold the bag opening into the center then wrap the rest of the bag around the opening.
- ✓ Immediately put empty bags into another clean bag and seal before disposal.
- ✓ Wash and dry the clothes on the hottest temperature the fabric can safely withstand.
- ✓ For dry clean clothes that are able to be placed in a dryer, put into a dryer on at least medium to high setting and run the dryer for at least 30 minutes. Then take dry clean clothes to a professional cleaner's for cleaning and pressing. Drying will kill the bugs but not clean the clothes.
- ✓ If you want to only kill bed bugs and do not need to wash your clothes, simply putting infested items in the dryer for 30 minutes on high heat will kill all the bed bugs.



High heat  
(greater than 120  
degrees F) for 30  
minutes kills bed  
bugs and their  
eggs

### Storing clean clothes

- ✓ Fold clothes as soon as they are removed from the dryer.
  - If you are doing laundry in a commercial laundromat or laundry facility in an apartment complex, place the clothes immediately into a new plastic bag. Do not set your clothes on a folding table unless you have inspected the table for bed bugs. Keep the clean clothes in bags until you arrive at your apartment.
    - If you have successfully controlled bed bugs in your home, take the laundry out of the bag and put away.
    - If you still have an infestation, keep the folded laundry in the bag and remove clothes only as needed.

## So You Think Your Neighbor Has Bed Bugs?

Here are a few steps to help protect your home and belongings from becoming infested.

- ✓ Pull your bed and other bedside furniture away from the wall.
- ✓ Remove any items stored under the bed and other clutter. Seal them in a plastic bag or bin if they can't be thrown away.
- ✓ Vacuum the bed, furniture, rugs and floors well and often. Seal and discard the vacuum bag as soon as possible.
- ✓ Buy a bed bug mattress & box spring cover – make sure it is well sealed so bed bugs can't get in or out.
- ✓ Wash and heat dry (>120 degrees F for 30 minutes) bedding and clothes as often as possible.
- ✓ Always be on the lookout for signs of bed bugs when changing sheets and cleaning.



Steps you  
can take  
NOW

# How to Make a Bed Bug Interceptor Trap

Bed Bug Interceptor traps may also be commercially available.

You can make a low-cost bed bug interceptor to detect bed bugs in your home. A trap may also be used to prevent additional bed bugs from climbing onto your bed when used together with a bed bug approved mattress and box spring cover to stop bugs from biting you and from escaping. (Covers should be kept on infected beds for at least a full year.) This keeps the bed bugs inside the cover and prevents new bed bugs from climbing onto your bed.

## Supplies needed:

- Rough surface tape (masking tape)
- Glue
- Two plastic containers for each trap (one container must be able to fit within a larger one)

## Optional supply items:

- Baby powder and a small brush

Apply baby powder to the inside of larger container and outside of smaller container. Don't touch container surface once powder is applied. This makes surfaces smoother so bed bugs cannot escape out of either container.



- Tile or plywood

On carpeted flooring, use a tile or plywood underneath the trap to prevent the weight of the bed from breaking the containers.



## Step-By-Step Instructions to Make a Bed Bug Trap:

1. Evenly space 4 pieces of tape to inside wall of the smaller container.
2. Use tape to completely and tightly cover the outside of larger container.
3. Glue the small container into center of the larger container.
4. All legs of your bed touching the floor should each have a trap.
5. Move bed away from walls and furniture. Bed or bedding should not touch floor, walls or other furniture.
6. Check traps daily and collect bed bugs in interceptor trap using a tweezer. Place in a sealed container with rubbing alcohol, or place the entire trap in a sealed, plastic zip lock bag and write "bed bugs" on the bag using a permanent marker before discarding.

## Sources:

(1) MidWest Pesticide Action Center. B.I.T.E. Back! Newsletter, Volumes 1-15.

<http://midwestpesticideaction.org/what-we-do/beating-back-bed-bugs/>

(2) University of Florida IFAS Extension Video: <https://youtu.be/Jjc4CD4U4uQ>

*This set of factsheets has been adapted and provided by Madison County Department of Health. Visit us at [www.healthymadisoncounty.org](http://www.healthymadisoncounty.org).*