

# Bedbugs

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## Identification

Bedbugs are small nocturnal insects that live by feeding on the blood of humans and other warm-blooded hosts. Bedbugs are reddish-brown insects with an oval shape. They are about 5mm (1/5") long. Their body is flat from top to bottom. It is flattened from top to bottom, with an oval body that is well adapted for hiding in narrow crevices. The body may become greatly enlarged and blood-red during a blood meal, but it subsequently turns a dirty brown. Bedbugs lack wings and cannot fly, but they are very mobile.

Their head is noticeably smaller than their abdomen. Immature bedbugs (nymphs) look like the adults except that they are much smaller in size. Eggs are clear to opaque white, which besides size, is what makes them hard to find. The female bug "glues" them into cracks and crevices. Eggs are only 1 mm long. Female bugs can lay between one and five eggs per day (maximum of twelve) with 541 for a lifetime (NPCA Field Guide, Smith & Whitman).

Bites consist of a raised red bump or flat welt, and are often accompanied by intense itching. The red bump or welts are the result of an allergic reaction to the anesthetic contained in the bedbug's saliva, which is inserted into the blood of the host. Unless you see the insect doing the biting, there is no way anyone can say what did the biting.

## Health Effects

Bedbugs do not carry or transmit diseases to humans. However, some individuals can get secondary skin infections and scars from scratching bites from allergic reactions. While bedbugs are not regarded as a vector of transmissible diseases, they may be a significant source of stress, alarm and/or distress. With some individuals, it may precipitate mild to moderate cases of delusional parasitosis.

## Suspected Bedbug Infestation

***If a bedbug infestation is suspected, contact the Plant Operations Call Center (734) 647-2059.*** It is imperative that inspection and treatment of any instance of bedbugs be as soon as possible. Practice of rumor control and confidentiality should be held to. Most reports of these situations are not bedbugs, but cases of other misidentified insects. A Pest Control Specialist will evaluate the situation and determine if there is indication that additional inspection and/or treatment is necessary. ***It is not advisable for tenants to attempt to treat for bed bugs.***

Most of the necessary insecticides are only for sale to and use by licensed professional pest-management personnel. If residents try to control these bugs with over-the-counter products, the bed bugs likely will become dispersed, resulting in a more difficult treatment required at a later date.

Contact OSEH Operational Safety & Community Health at (734) 647-1142 for planning guidance and assistance.

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**Source**

University of Michigan Housing

University of Michigan Plant Operations

**More Information**

<http://www.bedbugcentral.com/>

<http://www.housing.umich.edu/>

<http://www.plantops.umich.edu/>