

## Confirmation

If you cannot identify whether or not the pest you have is a bed bug, contact a local pest control company to have them identify the pest. Remember, it is easier to treat when you first notice the problem than to let it go on.

## Treatment

Getting a pest management professional involved as soon as possible rather than trying to treat the problem yourself is the most effective way to prevent further infestations.

***Be cautious during treatment!***

***You don't want to carry them with you!***

### Resources

Illinois Department of Public Health

[www.dph.illinois.gov](http://www.dph.illinois.gov)

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

National Pest Management Association

[www.npmapestworld.org](http://www.npmapestworld.org)

Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

OSHA

[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

## Common Bed Bug Myths:

**Myth:** You can't see a bed bug.

**Reality:** You should be able to see adult bed bugs, nymphs, and eggs with your naked eye.

**Myth:** Bed bugs live in dirty places.

**Reality:** Bed bugs are not attracted to dirt and grime; they are attracted to warmth, blood, and carbon dioxide. However, clutter offers more hiding spots.

**Myth:** Bed bugs transmit diseases.

**Reality:** There are no cases that indicate bed bugs pass diseases from one host to another.

**Myth:** Bed bugs won't come out if the room is brightly lit.

**Reality:** While bed bugs prefer darkness, keeping the light on at night won't deter these pests from biting you.

**Myth:** Pesticide applications alone will eliminate bed bug infestations.

**Reality:** Bed bug control can only be maintained through a comprehensive treatment strategy that incorporates a variety of techniques and vigilant monitoring. Proper use of pesticides may be one component of the strategy, but will not eliminate bed bugs alone.



**Public Health**  
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**Macon County  
Health Department**

# Bed Bugs



Macon County Health Department  
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Decatur, IL 62521  
(217) 423-6988  
[www.maconcountyhealth.org](http://www.maconcountyhealth.org)

## Bed Bug Biology

Bed bugs have been common in U.S. history. Although the bed bug population dropped dramatically during the mid-20th century, the United States is one of many countries now experiencing an alarming resurgence of bed bugs.

Bed bugs are very successful hitchhikers, moving from one infested site to furniture, bedding, baggage, boxes, and clothing. They are resilient and capable of surviving months without feeding.



### Bed Bug Bites

Keep in mind, not all bed bug bites look the same.

Bed bugs are small, flat insects that feed on the blood of sleeping people and animals. They are reddish-brown in color, wingless, and can range in size. They can survive up to 18 months without feeding.

Bed bugs are experts at hiding. They hide during the day in places such as: seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, dressers, tables, cracks and/or crevices, behind wallpaper, and under any clutter or objects around a bed.



They can be found in secondhand furniture, mattresses, bedding, clothing, and even retail stores.



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## Prevention

A few simple precautions can help prevent a bed bug infestation in your home.

Check secondhand furniture, beds (including box springs), and couches for any signs (i.e., feces along mattress or couch seams, etc.) of bed bugs BEFORE bringing them home.

Use a protective cover that encases mattresses and box springs which eliminates hiding spots.

Reduce clutter in your home to reduce the hiding places for bed bugs.

When traveling, check your hotel room prior to carrying luggage in by checking the mattress, curtains, wall outlets, and trim boards. Use luggage racks to hold your luggage when packing or unpacking rather than sitting your luggage on the bed or floor. Upon returning home, unpack directly into a washing machine and inspect luggage carefully.

*Bed bugs on a mattress seam (right);  
Bed bug feces on a mattress (below)*

