

- ◆ Reinspect the room periodically to ensure that bedbugs are gone.
- ◆ Make a visual inspection for bedbugs part of the staff's cleaning routine every time a room is vacated.

## ARE PESTICIDES NECESSARY FOR GETTING RID OF BEDBUGS?

The best way to get rid of bedbugs is to clean, disinfect, and eliminate their hiding places. Since bedbugs can live for several months without food and water, pest control professionals may recommend the use of a pesticide. Make sure your exterminator:

- ◆ Provides information on the pesticide to be applied.
- ◆ Provides information on how to prepare a room for treatment.
- ◆ Provides information on how to check a room after treatment.
- ◆ Advises your hotel staff to stay out of treated rooms until it is safe to re-enter.

Treat mattresses and upholstered furniture with pesticides only if necessary, and only by applying small amounts of pesticides on seams only. Pesticides should *never* be sprayed on top of mattresses or sitting surfaces.

## HOW CAN I KEEP THE BUILDING'S FURNITURE FROM SPREADING INFESTATION?

- ◆ Never resell or donate infested furniture.
- ◆ When you throw away an infested mattress, box spring, or other items:
  - Cut holes in it so it can't be reused.
  - Seal it in a large plastic bag to prevent spread of the bedbugs or eggs during transport.
  - Tape a sign to it that says, "Infested with Bedbugs".

This information pamphlet is supplementary to the Bedbugs information pamphlet, and can be photocopied for distribution. The listed action items may be applied to many types of dwellings and situations.

For more information:

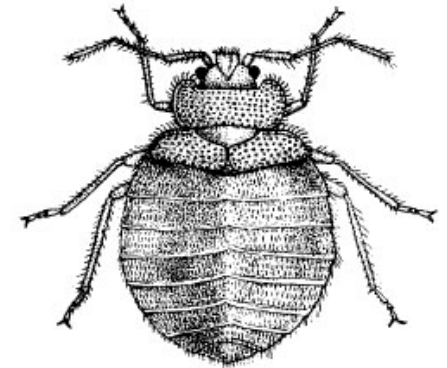
Visit [www.capitalhealth.ca](http://www.capitalhealth.ca) or

Call HealthLINK at 408-5465

Adapted from New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene pamphlet "HOTELS and BEDBUGS".

Public Health Division  
Environmental Public Health Services

# Travel Accommodations and Bedbugs



Public Health Division  
Environmental Public Health Services

**For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health Services office.**

Edmonton Main Office	(780) 413-7928
Capital Health Centre - South Tower	(780) 735-1400
Strathcona	(780) 467-5571
Spruce Grove	(780) 962-7509
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**Capital Health**  
EDMONTON AREA

## WHAT ARE BEDBUGS?

Bedbugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping.

Adult bedbugs have flat, rusty-red colored oval bodies. About the size of an apple seed, they are big enough to be easily seen, but often hide in cracks, in furniture, floors, or walls.

When bedbugs feed, their bodies swell and become brighter red. They can live for several months without food or water.

## WHAT DOES A BEDBUG BITE FEEL AND LOOK LIKE?

Most bedbug bites are initially painless, but later turn into large, itchy skin welts. These welts do not have a red spot in the center like flea bites.



**Actual size: approx. 3mm x 5mm**

## ARE BEDBUGS DANGEROUS?

Although bedbugs are a nuisance, they are not known to spread disease.

## HOW DOES A HOTEL OR OTHER TRAVEL ACCOMMODATION BECOME INFESTED WITH BEDBUGS?

In most cases, guests carry bedbugs into hotels unknowingly, in luggage, clothing, blankets, and pillows. Hotels with high occupancy turnover are especially vulnerable to infestation. There is little that can be done to prevent guests from bringing in bedbugs. No hotel is immune to a bedbug infestation.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF A ROOM HAS BECOME INFESTED WITH BEDBUGS?

Have an inspection plan in place so staff can identify a bedbug infestation before guests do. Train your employees to inspect rooms upon vacancy and whenever a guest complains about bedbugs. Your staff should look for living or dead bedbugs, small bloodstains from crushed insects, or dark spots from droppings. They might find bedbug remains on the linens, the mattress and its seams, the bed springs, behind the headboard, in the seams of upholstered furniture, or even between floor boards.

## HOW SHOULD A HOTEL RESPOND WHEN A GUEST COMPLAINS ABOUT BEDBUGS?

Have a plan in place to address bedbug infestations as soon as they occur, and train staff accordingly.

When a guest complains, hotels could use this suggested plan of action:

- ◆ Immediately offer a new room to the guest.
- ◆ Provide a fact sheet about bedbugs.
- ◆ Reassure the guest that bedbugs are *not* known to spread disease.
- ◆ Offer to launder the guest's clothes.
- ◆ Potentially infested clothing and bedding should be washed separately in the hottest water and dried on the hottest cycle that is safe for the materials.
- ◆ Bring in a licensed pest control professional for a complete inspection and treatment of the room.
- ◆ Don't use the infested room until a pest control professional certifies it free of bedbugs.

## HOW CAN ACCOMMODATIONS GET RID OF BEDBUGS?

Capital Health recommends that hotels hire a licensed pest control professional to inspect regularly and quickly address infestations when they occur. Work with your vendor to make sure the following steps are taken when you receive a bedbug complaint:

- ◆ Thoroughly inspect the guest's luggage and clothing, as well as the infested hotel room and the new room to which the guest was moved.
- ◆ If a room is infested, all machine-washable bedding, curtains, rugs, towels, and bathrobes should be cleaned separately in the hottest water and dried on the hottest recommended cycle. Dry clean materials if required.
- ◆ Scrub mattress seams with a stiff brush to dislodge bedbugs and their eggs.
- ◆ To remove some bedbugs and eggs, use a heavy duty vacuum on the mattress, bed frame, furniture, floor and carpet.
- ◆ Pay special attention to cracks and spaces.
- ◆ Discard the used vacuum bag in a sealed plastic bag before using the vacuum in another room.
- ◆ Place infested mattresses or box springs in zippered plastic covers and store them for at least one year before using them again.
- ◆ Securely bag all discarded materials to prevent further infestation.
- ◆ Repair cracks in plaster and loose wallpaper.
- ◆ Seal cracks around the baseboards of the room completely with caulking material.
- ◆ Treat the room with special cleaning products and/or pesticides, if necessary. (Commercial pesticides may only be applied by certified pest control operators – in Alberta these professionals are certified by Alberta Environment.)