

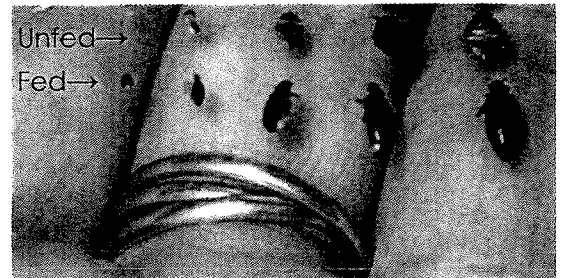
Bed Bugs: What Schools Need to Know

Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, but they are a public nuisance. Recently, Iowa and other states have seen an increased number of bed bug infestations. As bed bugs infest more and more homes, they may find their way into schools. When this happens, the school staff should take action to prevent infestation and stop them from spreading in the school setting. Students with suspected or confirmed bed bugs should not be excluded from school.

Could my classroom be infested?

Actual bed bug infestations in schools are uncommon. More commonly, a few bed bugs will hitchhike to school from an infested home by hiding in a student's clothing or backpack.

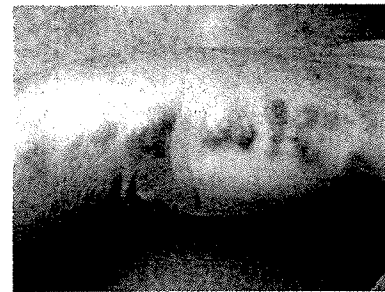
Bed bugs that hitch a ride into the school in one student's backpack could be carried home by another student, making the school a potential hub for bed bug spread.



Bed bugs at various stages of growth. Unfed bugs (top row) are lighter in color, shorter, and flatter.

What can I do?

- Remove clutter in the classroom. Clutter gives bed bugs a place to hide.
- Don't pile coats, backpacks, and other items that travel back and forth to school on the floor. This will make it easier for bed bugs to spread between students' belongings and be carried home.
- Educate yourself on bed bugs and be proactive to prevent infestations



Bed Bug bites on side of hand.
<http://bedbugbitepictures.com/>

What if I find a bed bug?

If a bed bug is found, it may indicate that the student has bed bugs at home. However, bed bugs can crawl onto or off of a person (or their belongings) at any time, so it is also possible that the bed bug was brought to school by someone else. If a suspected bed bug is found in the school setting, follow the procedures outlined on the School Response Flowchart at the end of this document.

What if one of my students has an infestation at home?

When a student is dealing with an infestation at home, it is important to be sensitive to their problem. Although bed bugs have nothing to do with cleanliness or socioeconomic status, there is still a stigma that can come with having bed bugs. As a result, parents may be hesitant to admit to having bed bugs, and students may not want others to know they have an infestation at home. Students living in an infested home may also feel anxious or tired during the school day.

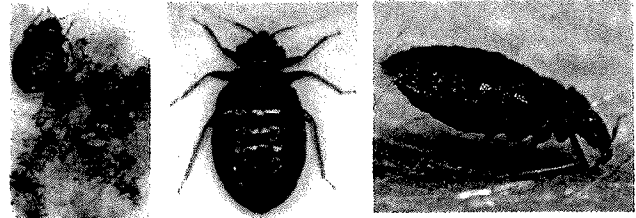
Additional Resources:

Iowa Bed Bug Resources-www.idph.state.ia.us, www.linncounty.org/health, www.cr.k12.ia.us, www.cdc.gov.

Bed Bugs

Properly identifying bed bugs:

- Adult bed bugs are flat with rusty-red-colored oval bodies, and are about 3/16" long or the size of an apple seed.
- A newly hatched bed bug is semi-transparent, light tan in color, and the size of a poppy seed.
- Bed bugs are most often found where people rest. Inspect mattress seams, sheets, upholstered furniture, crevices and cracks in furniture, and baseboards of walls for blood stains, droppings and eggs.
- For help in positively identifying bed bugs, contact the ISU Linn County Extension office at 319-377-9839.



(Above left) Bed bug eggs, nymphs and adult. (Center) Bed bug adult shown about 7 times actual length. (Right) Bed bugs are flat when viewed from the side.

Bed Bug Biology:



Unlike mosquito bites, bed bug bites often appear in rows. Welts usually appear immediately, but can take up to 14 days to appear.

- Bed bugs are nocturnal insects that feed only on blood; they are most active between midnight and 3am.
- Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease; however, their bites can cause large, itchy welts.
- A bed bug's saliva contains an anesthetic and an anti-coagulant, so the bite is painless.
- Generally, bed bugs seek a blood meal every 4-5 days, but can go months without feeding.

About the use of pesticides:

Bed bug infestations usually require the use of pesticides.

- For the most up to date information on EPA registered pesticides for use against bed bugs, visit www.epa.gov/bedbugs/productsearch.
- Chemical treatments used for other pests will **NOT** be effective against bed bugs and will only cause unnecessary chemical exposure to the person applying the treatment.
- To find out if someone is licensed by the State of Iowa to apply pesticides, go to: www.iowaagriculture.gov/pesticides.asp, (515) 281-5321 or consult your local Yellow pages
- ALWAYS FOLLOW THE PESTICIDE LABEL!

Things you can do to prevent bed bugs:

- Never bring bed frames, mattresses, box springs or upholstered furniture found on the street into your home.
- Check all used or rented furniture for bed bugs.
- Inspect the bed and furniture when traveling. Keep suitcases off the floor and bed, and inspect them before you leave.
- If you suspect you have been around bed bugs, immediately wash and dry your clothing on hot settings or store it in a sealed plastic bag until you can.

What you can do without a professional:

- Get rid of clutter in sleeping areas. Clutter gives bed bugs a place to hide.
- Wash all items in hot water (130°F) and dry on the highest setting for at least 20 minutes. For items that can't be washed, 20 minutes in a HOT clothes dryer will kill bed bugs. Steam heat is also effective against bed bugs and bed bug eggs.
- Enclose infested mattresses and box springs after treatment in a cover that is labeled "for bed bugs" for at least 18 months. Even if there are bed bugs (eggs, etc) still on the mattress, an effective cover will cause them to starve and die.
- Monitor for bed bugs by placing double-sided tape around the legs of your bed and in other areas. This won't stop all bed bugs.

To report or ask about pesticide exposures, call the
Poison Control Center 24 hours a day:
1-800-222-1212
For more information about pesticide products, call
the National Pesticide Information Center at
1-800-858-7378

Additional Resources:

