

# Let's Beat the Bug!

## *Bed Bug Basics*

- Bed bugs are a small insect, about the size of an apple seed. Adult bed bugs are flat, oval and reddish-brown in color.
- Bed bugs feed on human blood and can live for up to a year without a meal. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping.
- Some people do not react when bitten by a bed bug. Others who do react have a small bump or a large itchy welt depending on the severity of their reaction. Marks from these bites may appear in hours or days after being bitten. Bites usually occur on skin that is exposed during sleep and sometimes occur in lines on the skin.
- If you think you have bed bugs check for the bugs, blood stains, droppings, eggs and shed skins
  - Where you sit and where you sleep
  - In mattresses, box springs, bed frames and bedding
  - In cracks and crevices in bedroom furniture, floor boards, base boards, windows, door frames and electrical outlets

Remember, bed bugs are very small, flat and fast.

**For more information contact the bed bug hotline at 612-624-2200, 1-855-644-2200 [bedbugs@umn.edu](mailto:bedbugs@umn.edu), or visit [www.bedbugs.umn.edu](http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu)**

## Inspecting Your Hotel Room for Bed Bugs

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When staying in a hotel it is a good idea to inspect your room for bed bugs as soon as you arrive. You do not want to unpack or settle in until you have checked to see if there are bed bugs in your room.

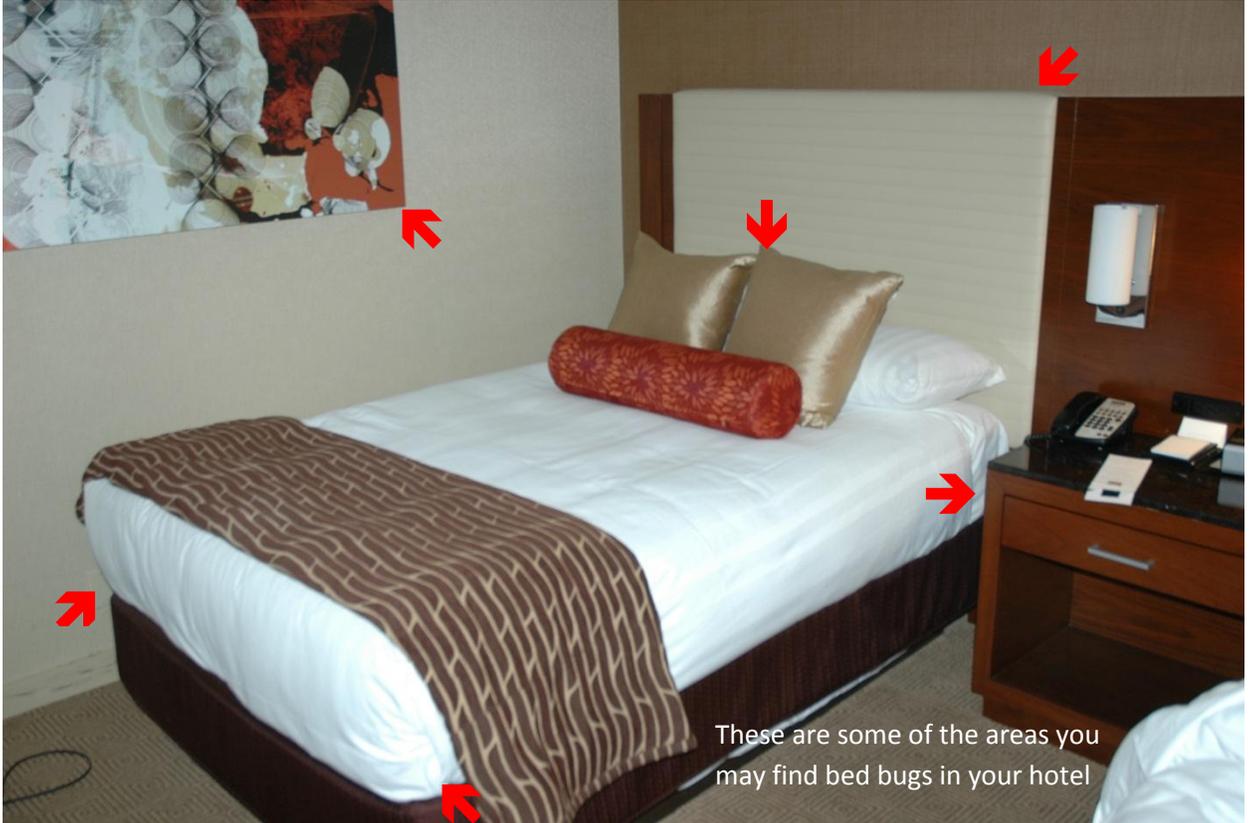
Bring a flashlight with you when going to stay at a hotel; this will make it easier to inspect your room. As soon as you arrive put your suitcase and bags on a hard surface like a dresser, or in the bathroom. These areas are less likely to have bed bugs. Never put your suitcase, clothes or personal items on the bed as this is the most common way to get bed bugs in your possessions and transfer them to your home.

Start your inspection with the mattress, as this is the most common area for bed bugs. Gently remove the sheet and mattress pad inspecting along all edging, seams and other small areas a bed bug might hide. Continue your inspection with the headboard. In most hotels the headboard is attached to the wall. Use your flashlight to look in the crack between the wall and the headboard. You may want to blow into the crack as your breath may make the bed bugs come out of hiding.

Next inspect the furniture around the bed, and any pictures hanging on the wall. Bed Bugs are known to hide behind framed pictures and around or on furniture. Make sure you inspect all the cracks and crevices of the night stand, including screw holes, joints and in the drawers. Once you have insured that these areas do not have bed bugs move on to other furniture in the room, especially upholstered chairs. As you are inspecting pay special attention to seams.

Another important place to inspect for bed bugs that is often overlooked is the luggage rack or valet. Once again, inspect carefully, concentrating on cracks and crevices. Bed bugs are often found on the luggage rack because they have come in on other travelers' luggage.

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If you find bed bugs in your hotel room notify the front desk immediately and ask to be moved to a new room, which is not next door to the room where you found bed bugs.

If you stay in a hotel room and are worried about bed bugs take these precautions when you return home to reduce the risk of bringing bed bugs into your home:

- Immediately launder all the clothing you brought with you, or seal inside a plastic bag until it can be laundered. See the factsheet "*Laundering Items to Kill Bed Bugs*" for more information.
- Vacuum your suitcase, inside and out. Once you have finished vacuuming your suitcase immediately discard the contents of the vacuum in a plastic bag which can be sealed tightly shut and then put in the trash. The suitcase can then be sealed inside a large plastic bag or box to insure that not bed bugs can move from your suitcase into your home.
- Shoes can be wiped down with a cloth and hot water to reduce the risk of them being infested with bed bugs.

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this information is available in alternative forms of communication upon request by calling 651/201-6000. TTY users can call the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 1-800-627-3529.

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