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### **Appearance and Habits**

The adult bed bug is 5mm long, reddish-brown in colour and flattened when not recently fed.

Most bed bug infestations are in bedrooms. They hide away in crevices for most of the time only coming out at night to feed on the blood of their hosts. Their hiding places will be close to where people sleep, usually the skirting board, bed head board, bed frame or mattress.

Signs that indicate that you may have bed bugs are bite marks on the upper body and arms caused by the bugs feeding on your blood during the night. There may also be small blood spots on the bedding in the morning and you may notice an unpleasant almond like smell.

Bed bugs are not regarded as carriers of disease, but their blood feeding can cause irritation in people. The bite often gives rise to a hard whitish swelling.

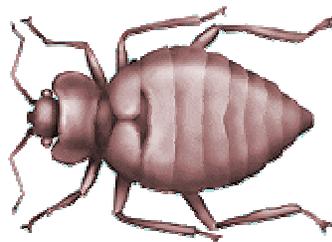
### **Life Cycle**

The female lays up to 200 eggs, at a rate of about 3 per day. They are cemented to the structure (often behind wallpaper). Nymphs hatch from the eggs and take around 18 months to reach maturity. During this time they appear very similar to the adults except smaller and paler in colour and feed in the same way as the adults.

### **Treatment and Control**

As bed bugs cannot fly, they must either crawl or be passively transported on clothing, second hand furniture or luggage. They can withstand several months without feeding.

Thorough vacuuming of mattresses, cracks, crevices and bed frames should help to remove some of the bed bugs, bedding should be hot washed. However, to eradicate the infestation insecticidal treatment will be required.



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