Bed Bugs:
What are they?
How can I prevent?

Presented by:
Pendleton County and Kenton County
Extension Services and Three Rivers
Health Department
What is a bed bug?

- A blood-sucking insect
- Most active at night
- Usually feeds at night

Adult bed bug feeding on a human
What do bed bugs eat and drink

Blood......
History of bed bugs

Bed bugs have been around for thousand of years.

- Their original origin in unclear
- Originally it was a problem associated with wealthy
- Problem was enhanced by fire and heated homes
- Can be found in literature dating back as far as 400 B.C.
Are bed bugs a health hazard?

Bed bugs do not transmit disease, but they:

- Cause secondary infections after people scratch their bed bug bites
- Result in stress, loss of work, loss of sleep, and financial burden
- Are unwelcome in our homes and workplaces
Bed bug life cycles

Bed bugs at various stages of growth
How big are bed bugs

Adult bed bugs are $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long.
Bed bug behaviors

• Hide in cracks and crevices, often in groups
• Cannot fly, jump, or burrow into skin….they crawl
• Hitchhike on bags, furniture, wires, or pipes.
Common sites they hide
Bed bug life cycle

[Diagram showing the life cycle of a bed bug, including stages such as egg, 1st instar, 2nd instar, 3rd instar, 4th instar, 5th instar, and adult fed and unfed. The diagram is labeled with stages and includes a scale of 5mm.]
One bed bug, Half a year....

Stopping one bed does a lot!

January

One pregnant bed bug

March

May

June

500

9,600

31,700
Signs of bed bugs

• Bites
• Blood spots
• Shed skins
• Dead bed bugs
• Live bed bugs
Bites.....
Can be confused with…..

- Ticks
- Cockroaches
- Other bug bites
Blood spots......

- Blood spots are bed bug droppings
- Bed bugs cannot be confirmed by blood spots alone
- Live bed bugs must be found
Shed skins....
Dead Bugs......
Life bed bugs .......

A group of bed bugs feeding

Crawling back to hiding full
So now what......

“You want a piece of me?”
PREVENTION BEGINS WITH YOU!
Keeping Bed Bugs At Bay

Behavior modification is ESSENTIAL!

- Housekeeping
- Travel
- Clothing and Furniture Shopping
- Visitors
- School
- Work
- Laundromat
- Movies
Changing How We Live

Reduce clutter
Eliminate items under beds.
Use white storage bins.
Launder bedding regularly and inspect mattress and box springs.
Use a HEPA vacuum utilizing attachments for hard to reach locations and discard bag in a sealed plastic container or wash canister.
Vacuum regularly—it may help you detect a problem early.
Prevention when Traveling

Use a Flashlight to check:

- Mattress
- Headboard, nightstands, dressers
- Baseboards and floor
- Nail or screw holes
- Closet
- Luggage rack
Find Evidence?

- Report it to the management
- Ask for another room in another part of hotel
Modify Behaviors

- Use luggage stand
- Place your bag on the stand away from the wall.
- Keep luggage in your bag
- Do not place your suitcase on the bed
- Place your shoes in an open area
- Launder all clothing.
Don’t take any HOME!
INSPECT the Luggage
Upon Returning Home

- Unpack immediately on a hard surface and directly into plastic bags or washing machine
- Launder all clothing in HOT water and dry on High
- Place any luggage that can be laundered in the dryer
- Vacuum and seal luggage in a bag - place in a hot car (above 125 or in below freezing temps for 30 days—stay off carpets! Suitcases should be carefully inspected and vacuumed—freeze if possible.
SHOPPING

• Avoid bringing used furniture into your home.
• If purchasing new furniture do not have it delivered to your home.
• Launder all garments immediately after purchasing
• Keep shopping bags out of the bedroom
Visitors to Your Home

• Be conscious of who visits your home and where they are coming from.
• Provide an area (or container) for visitors to store belongings.
• Inspect and thoroughly clean areas where visitors stored their belongings once they leave.
• Ask that backpacks and luggage be kept off of carpet.
School

- Inspect child's backpack
- Do not allow backpacks to be placed in bedrooms, on upholstered furniture, or on carpeted areas
- Limit cloth materials taken into the facility. (blankets, stuffed animals and backpacks)
- Launder cloth items upon their return to the home immediately.
- Store shoes in white plastic tubs
Working in Bed Bug Ripe Conditions

- Wear dedicated clothing and shoes that can be bagged in the vehicle
- Do not sit on the couch or lay a hand bag or backpack on furniture.
- Inspect your clothing and the bottom of our shoes immediately after leaving but before you get into your vehicle.
- Keep hand bags and personal items in a desk drawer
- Hang jackets on a hanger in the office or cubicle.
If You Find a Bug in Your Office

• Catch it in a plastic bag for positive identification.
• Be discrete (bed bugs can cause mass hysteria in an office)
• Contact the building maintenance personnel immediately.
At the Laundromat

• Use white plastic baskets to transport clothing
• Do not set your laundry basket on the floor or on top of the washer when it is not in use
• Inspect laundry basket before putting clean laundry into it
At the Laundry

Do not set your basket anywhere near the seating areas or trash cans.

Inspect any chairs in the seating area of the Laundromat before sitting on them.

Fold your clean laundry at home or inspect folding table prior to use.
Public Building Concerns

- DO NOT become a hermit!
- Limit items that you carry with you into public places.
- Do not set coats or bags on the floor or upholstered furniture.
- Upon returning home- shoes may be inspected before entering and clothing can be laundered immediately.
Prevention and Detection is Crucial!

• Complete a thorough inspection of each room or hire a pest management company to do an inspection.
• Purchase high quality mattress encasements for your mattress and box springs.
• Catch the bed bug and preserve it in a plastic bag for positive identification.
• Try to isolate the location.
DO NOT PANIC!
Resources


Resources continued


• ENTFFACT-636~Michael F. Potter, Extension Entomologist, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture