

A Bug's Life

Chiggers

Family: Trombiculidae

Fun facts

- Chigger season is June and July
- Bites can occur until first frost
- Do NOT burrow into skin or live inside body or feed on blood
- Feed on digested skin cells after chigger injects digestive enzymes
- Nearly invisible to naked eye

Identification

Chigger: Immature stage of red harvest mite, orange body, 6 legs
Bites: Small red bumps or blisters, intensely itchy, great discomfort, located on body where clothing is tight (sock lines, waist bands, and underwear)

Management

- Wear loose-fitting clothing
- Use DEET insect repellent on skin
- Wear permethrin-treated clothing
- Put clothes in hot clothes dryer
- Take hot shower to dislodge mites
- Insecticide treatment to known spots in turf may reduce bites

