Bed bugs are blood-feeding insects that can live in your home. When they feed on you, they can create small, itchy bumps (like a mosquito bite). This guide will help to clear up misconceptions about bed bugs.

Bed bugs start as eggs the size of a grain of sugar and go through five stages of development before becoming adults.

- Poppy seed and bed bug egg. (1 mm)
- Sesame seed and bed bug nymph. (2 mm)
- Flax seed and bed bug nymph. (4 mm)
- Apple seed and bed bug adult. (6 mm)

Bed bugs cannot transmit diseases to people. Bed bugs feed at night because we are easy to get to and less likely to notice them, not because they fear light. Leaving lights on won’t stop them.

Bed bugs do not jump or fly, they can run and walk well though!

Bed bugs like to be near you in your bed but can also be found in a variety of other spots in your home.

- Nightstand
- Poster/picture frame
- Wall outlet
- Chair
- Mattress/box springs
- In a suitcase
- Pants cuff

They are good hitchhikers.

How do so many people end up with bed bugs?

Bed bugs like to be near you in your bed but can also be found in a variety of other spots in your home.

If you fear you have bed bugs, you should inspect all of the previously mentioned places for signs of bed bugs; including fecal spots, shed skins, eggs clusters, and live insects.

Words and photos by Extension Educators Jody Green and Jonathan Larson
Art and design by: Justin Stewart (justin3000.com)
STEP 1 - BAGGING ITEMS FOR TRANSPORT AND CONTROL
Collect your clothing, bedding, and items like stuffed animals and place them in a plastic bag. Do NOT throw them away.

STEP 2 - USING HEAT AND COLD
Transport your bags of collected items to your laundry room or laundromat. Remove items from bags and run them through the dryer on high heat for 30 minutes. Do not reuse the bags to transport your items as bed bugs may be loose in them.

If you have items that can’t be put in a dryer, you can freeze the item for 4 days at 0°F to kill bed bugs.

STEP 3 - MANUALLY REMOVING BED BUGS
Use an extra sticky lint roller and vacuum cleaner with a nozzle extension, paired with a pantyhose (assembly shown below) to remove all visible bed bugs.

Once finished, remove the pantyhose, tie it closed, and kill captured bed bugs.

STEP 4 - TREATMENT WITH INSECTICIDES
There are many insecticides on the market. If you want good control of your bed bug problem get aerosol products containing cyfluthrin & imidacloprid (example: Bayer Bed Bug and Flea) or resmethrin & imidacloprid (example: Bedlam Plus). Avoid products that are mostly made of alcohol. If you are treating wall voids or behind electrical outlets, a dust product containing silica dust will be most effective as opposed to diatomaceous earth.

STEP 5 - MONITORING FOR RE-INFESTATION
Use mattress encasements and bed bug interceptors to monitor for new bed bugs over the course of 6-8 months after you treat.

If persistent infestation occurs, contact a professional for help.
There are differences between treatments. Regardless of the type of treatment, consider Step 5 (front of this guide) to continue to monitor and remain vigilant. Bed bugs can find a way to hitchhike back into your home.

- Residual treatment in crack and crevices
- Risk of pesticide exposure
- Insecticide resistance
- Eggs are not susceptible
- Multiple treatments

- No residual or protection against bed bugs
- No chemicals or risk of insecticide poisoning
- No resistance
- Kills all life stages of bed bugs
- One treatment

Goal: to treat infested areas with contact and residual insecticide where bed bugs are hiding.

Goal: to bring infested areas up to lethal temperatures so bed bugs cannot live.