

The bedbug is a bloodsucking parasite that feeds on humans, fowl and mammals. It has spread worldwide with mankind's help and can be found throughout Sweden.

Bedbugs – a vagabond that feeds on blood

BESIDES THE COMMON BEDBUG, *Cimex lectularius*, which is a parasite specialised on humans, people can also be bitten by bat bugs, *Cimex pipistrelli*, and swallow bugs, *Oeciacus hirundinis*. There are two other species in the tropics which are specialised human parasites.

AN ADULT BEDBUG MEASURES 4-5 MM, about the size of an apple seed, and has a flattened oval shape. The colour is light yellow/brown to reddish-brown after feeding. A bedbug which has not fed for some time is nearly translucent. The top of the bedbug's body is covered with short golden hairs, giving it a striated look.

THE FEMALE PRODUCES 1-5 EGGS A DAY, a total of 200-500 eggs per female in a lifetime. The eggs are a milky white colour and measure about 1 mm. They hatch within 1-2 weeks, and the newly emerged nymphs begin feeding immediately.

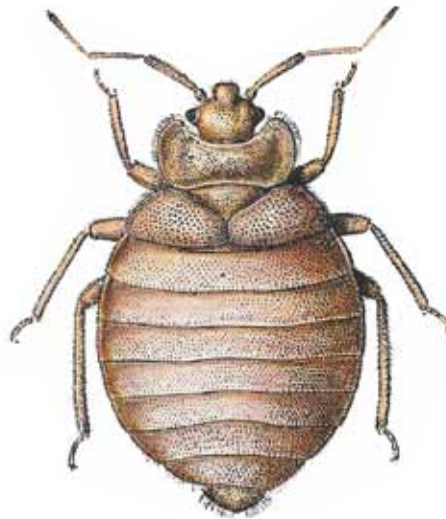
THE BUG HIDES IN CRACKS AND CREVICES during the day, and comes out at night to feed. It usually bites exposed skin and it is most active about an hour before dawn. Drawn by warmth and carbon dioxide, the bug seeks out a host (human) for a meal of blood. While feeding, it can be disturbed by the person's movements. It will then stop for a while and continue feeding elsewhere. This is why clusters of bites are not uncommon.

At a temperature of 15-20° C, the bug feeds on blood about every 8 days and more often at higher temperatures. It can go without food for extended periods. At room temperature, the adult bug can survive without blood for a couple of months, and about a year at 13° C.

THE BITE ITSELF IS NOT PAINFUL, but many people develop an allergic reaction to the saliva of the bedbug injected during feeding. Swelling and redness as well as some pain and itching are common symptoms.

THE BEDBUG HAS BEEN SUSPECTED of spreading diseases and pathogens, but there is as yet no convincing evidence of this. The bedbug is often incorrectly associated with filth, which has no impact on the bedbug's occurrence.

It can spread to a building when moving used furniture or belongings that are infested. Bedbugs can neither jump nor fly, they move only by crawling.



Bedbug (Cimex lectularius)



Visible signs of bedbugs under a bed frame. You can easily spot bedbug droppings.



Blankets, sheets, etc. are also common shelters for bedbugs.



Close-up of a bedbug.

Signs of a bedbug infestation

RELIABLE SIGNS include dark stains from droppings, remains from skin-shedding as well as live bugs in places where they creep in and hide. A crevice as thin as a credit card is enough.

BEDBUGS ARE TYPICALLY FOUND in cavities in the bed frame, mattresses, sheets and covers. Other common places are picture frames, bedside tables, upholstered furniture, baseboards, cracks in wood floors, behind loose wallpaper, electrical outlets, door and window frames, pipes, etc.

Professional treatment is required to eradicate an infestation of bedbugs. Please, contact your closest Anticimex office if spotting any of the signs noted above. For more information, visit www.anticimex.se.