

Bed Bug Awareness Tuesday

HOW FAST DO BED BUGS SPREAD? 3 WAYS THEY MOVE AND MULTIPLY

Contrary to what you may think, bed bugs don't have a preference between a spotless space or a filthy environment. As long as they have access to a food source, they can live anywhere, so claims that bed bugs are attracted to dirt and debris are simply unfounded. That being said, clutter does make it easier for these insects to hide, which may fuel the misconceptions. Their ideal environment is warm and provides access to a blood meal. Given those conditions, you may be wondering how fast bed bugs spread? Let's look at some of their travel habits and what you need to know about how quickly they can make themselves at home.

I. How Fast do Bed Bugs Spread From Room to Room?

Every day, bed bugs can lay between one and 12 eggs, and anywhere from **200 and 500 eggs in a lifetime**. Those numbers should speak for themselves if you're wondering how long it takes to get an infestation of bed bugs. It doesn't take long for a problem to grow out of control, so the sooner you contact a pest control professional for inspection and treatment, the better off you'll be. Bed bugs need to take blood meals from warm-blooded hosts — typically humans — to survive, and they'll hide near their sources until ready to feed. How fast bed bugs spread from room to room depends partly on how long it takes to move an infested piece of furniture, clothing, luggage and/or other household item from one room to another. They can also move throughout the house in search of other hosts. If the conditions are favorable, they'll continue breeding wherever the item (or items) is moved.

2. How do Bed Bugs Spread From House to House?

The rate of how bed bugs spread from house to house increases the more time you spend traveling. They're great hitchhikers, and hotels, hostels, airplanes, cruise ships and public transportation are ideal places to pick up these uninvited guests.

- **Movement of items:** Bed bugs can move from one site to the next by traveling on luggage, clothing, bedding, boxes and furniture. They're prevalent anywhere that has a **high rate of overnight guests**, including universities and hospitals.
- **Crawling:** Bed bugs don't fly, but they can crawl at a pretty high speed with six legs. **Traveling three to four feet per minute on most surfaces, it's the equivalent of the average adult sprinting**. This makes it easy for bed bugs to travel between floors and rooms, and quickly tuck into a new hiding spot before being seen.
- **Breeding:** After feeding, bed bugs head back to their hidden locations to digest and mate. If the conditions are right, an egg can mature into an adult in as little as a month and a half, and each bed bug could live anywhere from four months to over a year. Bed bugs are focused on feeding and breeding and will invade and multiply at lightning speed as a result.

3. How do Bed Bugs Spread From Person to Person?

Bed bugs need blood meals to survive and blood to breed, but they don't live on human hosts. In fact, how bed bugs spread from person to person really doesn't have anything to do with people themselves but the movement of infested items. For example, houseguests could unknowingly bring them into your home from their travels, and kids could bring them back on their backpacks from school.

Bed bugs are opportunistic, hiding and waiting until it's convenient to feed. And if their areas are disturbed, they'll find a way to move to a neighboring location, which can make the situation much more difficult to inspect and treat. How fast bed bugs spread is really up to you.