

# Travel Tips to Avoid Bed Bugs

Bed bugs are great hitchhikers, and are not only found in hotel rooms, but are found in high-end clothing stores, movie theatres, schools and on public transportation. Whether traveling across the country or a few miles away, bed bugs are not something you'll want. With taking a few precautions can be helpful in reducing your chance of encountering these pests.



## PREVENTION TIPS TO AVOID BED BUGS

- If your travel plans include a hotel stay, check for recent bed bug complaints by previous guests in one of the hotel registries upon arrival. The Bed Bug Registry <http://www.bedbugregistry.com> is an online site where hotel guests can report bed bug infestations. Look for patterns in complaints, date of complaints and whether or not actual bed bugs were reported versus bites. The guest reports and hotel responses are not independently verified. Understand the limitations of the information posted.
- Know what bed bugs look like so you can properly identify them – usually they are dark reddish brown and look like spots on bed linens, mattresses or furniture. After checking in at your selected hotel, check for bed bugs in your room. A good flashlight can be helpful in inspecting for these pests. You will focus your inspection on the bed area. Stowe your luggage away from the bed until the inspection is complete, the bathroom is often a good place for luggage storage.
- At a minimum, check around the bed, nightstand, head board and bed skirt for signs of bed bugs. If possible, lift the head board off the wall to inspect behind it. Check under sheets, bed skirt, and underneath and behind the night stand. Look at the piping around the mattress. You will be looking for live insects, shed bed bug skins and peppery fecal spots which can be found in areas where the bed bugs congregate. Bed bugs are very flat and can be found in furniture cracks and crevices and folds of linens and bed skirts.
- If bed bugs are found, asked to be moved to another room. Preferably the room should be one that is not next to the room where the bed bugs were found. If you find bed bugs in your newly assigned room, ask to be moved to another hotel.
- If no bed bugs are found, it is a good idea not to move clothes into dresser drawers. Moving your clothes can increase the chance of being infested with bed bugs.
- Upon returning from your trip, consider keeping your suitcase in a garage and unloading clothes directly into your clothes dryer for a precautionary treatment. The heat of a clothes dryer is very effective at killing bed bugs. All stages of bed bugs can be killed by placing clothes in a dryer for a minimum of 20 minutes on the high heat setting. If clothes are wet when placed in the dryer, the 20 minutes of "heat time" starts after the clothes are dry. Continue to expose clothes to the dryer heat for additional 20 minutes past the time they are dry.
- Vacuum suitcases thoroughly before bringing indoors and storing away.

