



PEST PREVENTION TIPS FOR HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

BED BUGS

Facilities which are more residential in nature, such as nursing homes, are prone to infestations becoming established than in hospitals. Both are subject to bed bug introductions but infestations are more common in sites where patients reside on a long-term basis. Although bed bugs are not typically living on their human host like body or head lice, they will hitchhike on personal belongings including items of clothing, purses, backpacks and suitcases. They prefer to feed on their host and then retreat to a harborage such as a wheel chair, bed or personal item. It is important for facility staff to be vigilant in looking for the signs of bed bugs and bed bugs themselves in health care facilities. Early detection can be key in successful treatment.

Bed Bug

Color

Mahogany to red-brown

Shape

Flat, broad oval when unfed; swollen and elongated when fed.

Size

1/4" long

Region

Found throughout the U.S. and world



- ✓ Train staff to recognize and properly respond to bed bug sightings.
- ✓ Check patients and their belongings during the admittance process. Isolate items which have bed bugs on them by placing items inside sealable plastic bags. If staff is unsure about the identification, collect a specimen and call the pest management firm.
- ✓ Send patient bagged items home with the patient's family if possible.
- ✓ Do not move patients from room to room, if at all possible. This can contribute to the spread of bed bugs.
- ✓ If a piece of furniture, like a waiting room chair, is believed to have bed bugs, place a plastic bag or plastic wrap around it to prevent movement of insects off of the chair. Call the pest management firm.
- ✓ If bed bug introductions are frequent, consider purchasing a small heat treatment chamber for killing bed bugs on personal items brought into the facility. A clothes dryer can also be used.
- ✓ Vacuuming and or steam cleaners can be used to remove and kill bed bugs. If a vacuum is used, the contents of the vacuum should be placed immediately into a sealed bag after use. Steam cleaners designed specifically for bed bug control should be used and only used with proper training.
- ✓ When bed bugs are found in assisted living units or residential units, surrounding units must also be inspected by the pest management professional. Monitoring traps may be used in addition to visual inspections.