

**BED BUG TIPS FOR TRAVELERS**

Contact with bed bugs can occur anywhere, especially when traveling. Many hotels and motels have developed bed bug surveillance programs to inspect rooms for evidence of bed bugs. However, even the most diligent surveillance may miss an infestation. Precautions can be taken to avoid sleeping in a bed bug infested room and to prevent transporting bed bugs from hotels, motels or other lodging to home.

**Preparing For Travel**

- If possible, use hard shelled luggage for traveling, which is less bed bug friendly than fabric luggage.
- Place shoes, electronics, books, jewelry, and toiletries, in sealable plastic bags (Ziploc® bags work well for this purpose). Keep these items sealed when not in use, especially during the nighttime hours.
- Pack large sealable bags for storing worn clothes and anything purchased during the trip.
- Pack heavy duty plastic bags, large enough to cover luggage, for the commute back home. Zippered luggage encasements can also be purchased for use at the hotel or while in transit.

**At the Hotel**

- Inspect the hotel room before bringing in luggage. Look for bed bugs and evidence of bed bugs, including: fecal spotting (dark brown or black spots/stains), shed skins from bed bugs, or eggs. Use a flashlight to inspect dark areas such as the closet, on drapery, the edges of the headboard, and in the crevices of furniture. Turn back the comforter, sheets and mattress pad. Check carefully along the visible edges of the mattress, under the mattress tag, and the edges and seams of the box spring.
- If evidence of bed bugs is found, immediately notify the management and request a room change. If possible, request a room on a different wing or floor. Thoroughly inspect the new room.
- Keep luggage closed and away from bed bug prone areas such as beds, upholstered furniture or in a closet. Do not place luggage on the bed or on carpeted floor. Store luggage on the luggage rack or on the bathroom floor.
- Keep clothes and belongings in the luggage whenever possible. Clothes may also be hung in zippered clothing bags. Do not unpack or place belongings in drawers.
- Store worn clothes in sealable bags. If possible, use a bag for light colored clothes, a bag for dark colored clothes, and a bag for dry cleaning.
- During the stay, if live bed bugs are found or if unexplained welts are discovered, notify management. Request a new room.
- Before packing to leave the hotel, inspect luggage for bed bugs. Place everything into plastic bags.

**Returning Home**

- Keep luggage in heavy duty plastic bags or luggage encasements while commuting home.
- When reaching home, leave the luggage in the garage or outside, if possible.
- If luggage must be brought inside the house, unpack the luggage in an area that is well lit and away from any furniture and sleeping areas. Take the bag that the luggage was removed from and discard it in an outdoor trash receptacle as soon as possible.
- Items that will not be immediately laundered should be kept in the presorted sealed bags.
- Heat kills bed bugs. Wash clothes at the hottest recommended setting. Tumble dry the clothes on high heat for 30 minutes (120°F or above). Keep clothes that require dry cleaning in a plastic sealable bag until dry cleaning.
- Items or clothes that cannot be washed should be tumble dried on high heat for 30 minutes.
- Items that cannot be laundered, but have been kept in sealed plastic bags throughout the trip, can be removed from the bags and inspected for signs of bed bugs. Discard the bags in an outdoor trash receptacle.



*Note: These guidelines include recommendations of the Central Ohio Bed Bug Task Force and Bed Bug Central*