

# BED BUG BITES

## WHAT DO BED BUG BITES LOOK LIKE?

Bed bugs usually bite at night, and will bite all over a human body, especially around the face, neck, upper torso, arms and hands.

Individual responses to bed bug bites will vary. Some people do not react to bed bug bites. But for those who do, bite marks may appear within minutes or days, usually where skin is exposed during sleep. They can be small bumps or large itchy welts. Because the bites may resemble mosquito and other insect bites, a bump or welt alone does not mean there are bed bugs.

The most common rash is made up of localized red and itchy flat sores. Often bed bug bites appear as a group of three, which people sometimes call “breakfast, lunch, and dinner.”

Small raised red swelling bites are also common. In rare cases, some people may develop large raised, often itchy, red welts.



## ARE BED BUG BITES A THREAT TO MY HEALTH?

Although bed bugs and their bites are a nuisance, they are not known to spread disease in humans. Bed bug bites can be very itchy and irritating. Most welts heal in a few days but in unusual cases, the welt may persist for several weeks.

The most significant health effects appear to be the psychological, including stress, anxiety, depression, and fatigue caused by the presence of bed bugs in the home. Anxiety about being bitten can lead to sleeplessness, which can affect one's wellbeing. Properly and effectively responding to bed bugs helps to reduce anxiety.

## HOW DO I TREAT BED BUG BITES?

Most bed bug bites go away by themselves and don't need treatment. Keep the skin clean and try not to scratch. Usually an anti-itch ointment will help, but if bites become infected, you should see a doctor. If the bites are very itchy, your doctor may prescribe cream or antihistamines to relieve the itchiness. Oral antibiotics may be prescribed for any secondary skin infection from excessive scratching.

