

Bedbugs

Bedbugs are classified as insects, and the most common types seen are *Cimex lectularius* (common bedbug) and *Cimex hemipterus* (tropical bedbug). Although once considered to be practically nonexistent in the United States, these parasites have emerged within the last decade as troublesome and are often difficult to diagnose and eradicate. Mention is made herein primarily because of the secondary health problems that may occur as a result of their bites: infection, cellulitis, folliculitis, intense urticaria, impetigo, anaphylactic reaction, and sleep loss. However, in some cases the person may be asymptomatic ([Doggett, Dwyer, Peñas, et al, 2012](#)).

Bedbugs undergo various life stages, but the small ones are approximately 5 mm in length and are light yellow; once the bedbugs “feed” on blood, they enlarge and become reddish-brown. They tend to inhabit warm, dark areas such as bed mattresses, sofas, and other furniture and emerge at night to feed. There is reportedly no evidence that bedbugs act as vectors for disease transmission ([Doggett, Dwyer, Peñas, et al, 2012](#); [Haisley-Royster, 2011](#)).

The clinical manifestations of bedbug bites are outlined in [Box 6-6](#). The cutaneous manifestations of bedbug bites tend to be primarily on arms, legs, and trunk areas.

Box 6-6

Clinical Manifestations of Bedbugs

Cutaneous Reactions

- Erythematous papule
- Linear papules
- Red macular lesion
- Rash
- Wheal
- Vesicles