

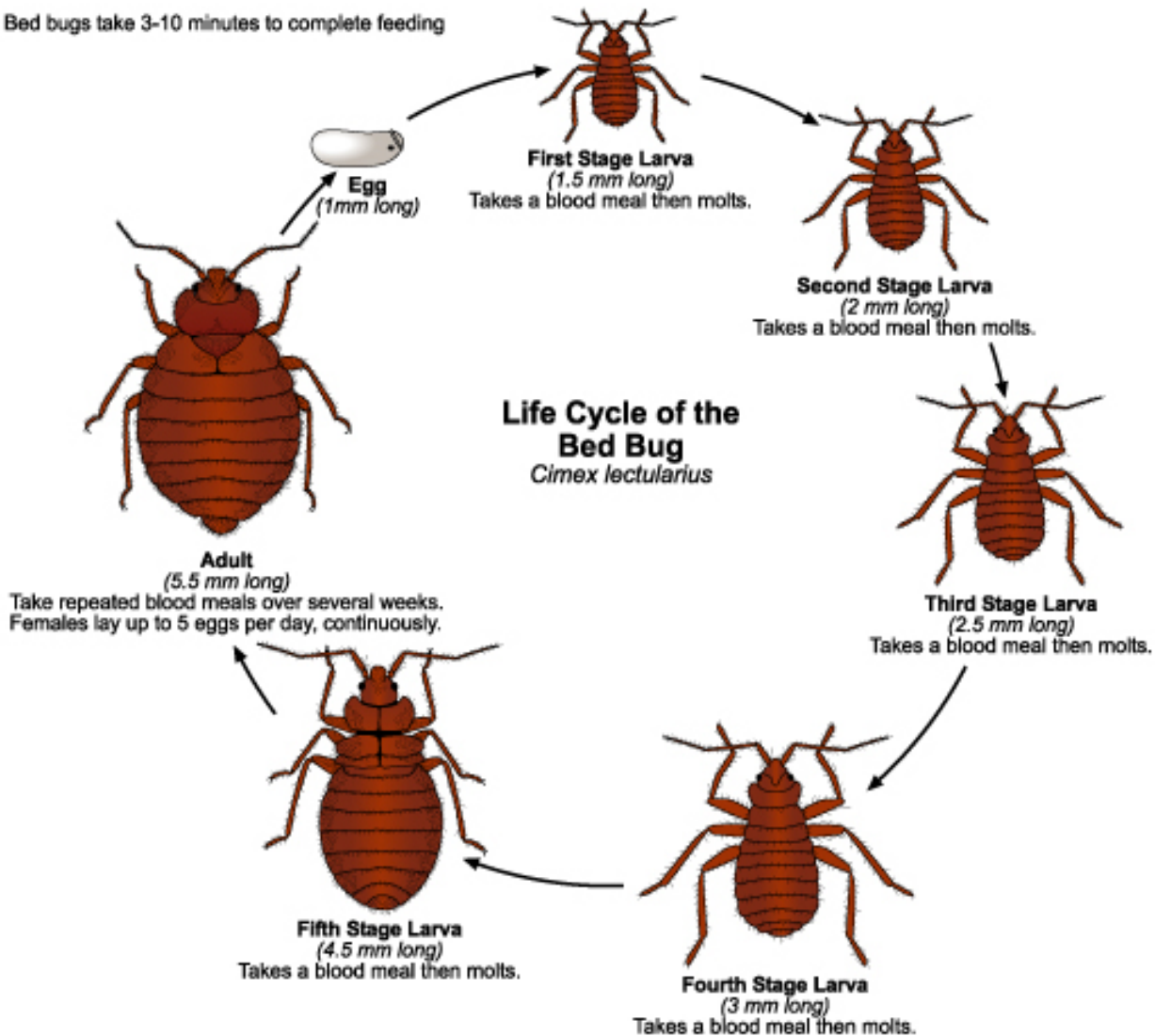


Mecklenburg County Health Department

BED BUGS

Bed bugs have become a common problem across the country. They have been found in homes, hotels, college campuses, businesses, and other places. Many people associate bed bugs with insanitary conditions, as often is the case with pests such as cockroaches. However, bed bug infestations can occur to anyone regardless of where they live or their income level.

Note: Bed bugs take 3-10 minutes to complete feeding



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<http://envhealth.charmeck.org>

What is the first Step in Bed Bug Control?

- Before doing anything else, verify the type of pest involved. There are numerous reports of bed bugs which turn out to be another pest which has better treatment options.
- If you live in a single family home, condominium complex, town home, or apartment complex, contact a Licensed Pest Control Operator (PCO) and have them verify you have bed bugs
 - After a pest control operator has verified bed bugs are present, follow the PCO's treatment recommendations.
 - The City of Charlotte Housing Code requires landlords to keep their homes in good condition. If you live within the city limits and your landlord is not being responsive to providing treatment, you can contact Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services. Phone Number: 311 or (704)336-7600
- If you are located in a Hotel/Motel, Nursing Home, School, Adult or Child Care facility, Group Home, Local Confinement, or Mental Health Institution in Mecklenburg County, contact Mecklenburg County Environmental Health at (704) 336-5100, to report a problem.

Protect Yourself from Infestations

You never know when and where you might pick up bed bugs. Higher priced hotels or vacation rental properties are no less vulnerable to getting bed bugs from a visitor, but they often have budgets that accommodate more proactive treatment approaches. Despite the best preventive efforts, almost any property can become home to these hitch-hiking pests. Here are some measures you can take to reduce the likelihood of a problem:

- Check your room carefully, particularly looking for signs of bed bug activity on the mattress or headboard.
- Keep luggage off the floor and check shelves before placing luggage on them. You can keep your luggage inside a trash bag during your stay for an added level of protection.
- Upon returning home, empty your luggage in your garage, bathtub, or on a sheet so you can check items carefully. Then immediately wash and dry the sheet and any infested items.
- Be careful about furniture and other items picked up at yard sales. Avoid buying used mattresses or box springs unless they have a tag showing that they were sterilized by a state-certified bedding sanitizer.

Other Resources

- North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Sleep Products Section: (919) 733-3556
- North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension: (919) 515-2813
- Center for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs