



TOP TEN TIPS ABOUT BED BUGS

1. **Which websites should I trust?** You can rely on information obtained from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) because all three promote scientific recommendations for dealing with bed bugs.
2. **Silver lining to a cloudy horizon.** There is no evidence of disease transmission (i.e., HIV, hepatitis) following the bite of a bed bug. Since April 2009, DHSS has received 60 complaints of bed bugs in lodging establishments. Of those 60 complaints, 32 were substantiated.
3. **Easy-does-it!** Overexposure to do-it-yourself pesticides or other remedies used to control bed bugs is possibly the most serious health risk related to bed bugs. The EPA has a [bed bug product search tool](#) you can use to identify pesticides registered for use against bed bugs in various locations.
4. **Too much pesticide?** If you think you or a family member has been affected by a pesticide used to control bed bugs, ACT NOW. Call the **Missouri Poison Center Hotline** at 1-800-222-1222 or 1-314-772-5200 (St. Louis).
5. **Mistaken identity.** Bed bugs are easily confused with other small household insects, including fleas, carpet beetles, spider beetles, and newly hatched cockroaches. If you find an insect that might be a bed bug, contact the University of Missouri Extension Service [insect identification program](#).
6. **Modern problems.** Traditional approaches to bed bug control that rely on pesticides are no longer effective. Pesticides are only one tool in a large toolbox of other control measures. Modern bed bug infestation requires a multifaceted approach, which is called Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
7. **Look before you leap.** DHSS recommends that homeowners hire a pest control professional licensed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) to evaluate what type of pest is present, and to exterminate them. MDA maintains an on-line list of [Missouri licensed pesticide applicators](#).
8. **Lodging a complaint.** You can report an infestation in a Missouri hotel/motel to the state health department at: **573-751-6095**. Any suspected infestations at long term care facilities should be directed to the facility administrator.
9. **Safe and effective?** If you want to know more about the health effects your pesticide applicator is using, you can call the department's Bureau of Environmental Epidemiology at: **573-751-6102**.
10. **That icky, itchy feeling.** Feeling significant emotional distress is normal, causing anxiety and loss of sleep. You will feel better when the bed bug infestation is controlled.

