

# BED BUGS

Information to refugees

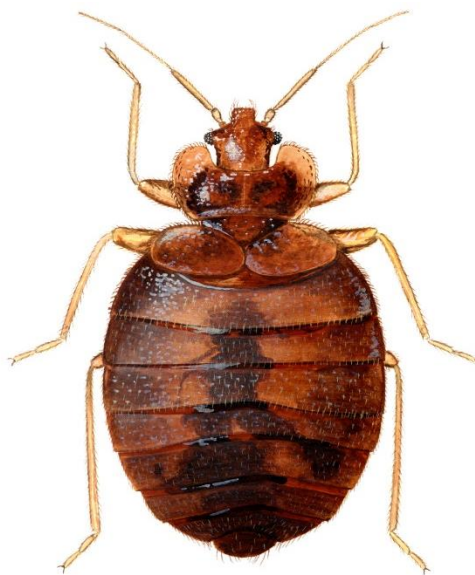


Norwegian Institute of Public Health

Bed bugs are active at night, feeding on blood when people are asleep. Their bites cause itching which result in disturbed sleep, stress and other problems. Bed bugs have become more common over the past 25 years. When people travel long distances and stay in many different places, like in a refugee situation, there is a risk that bed bugs can spread. They can crawl into suitcases and bags and be carried from place to place. There are probably less problems with the spread of bed bugs among refugees without longer stays at crowded accommodations during the journey.

At reception centers attention should be paid to whether there are signs that indicate bed bug establishment. These are insect bites on the skin as well as bed bug fecal spots and insects in beds. Please notify the staff at the center if you suspect that bed bugs are present.

If risk of bed bug introductions is considered high, it may be relevant to freeze or heat treat clothes and other belongings upon arrival at the reception centers. This prevents establishment of bed bugs. Bed bugs are not normally found on mobile phones, so these do not need to be treated. The treatment will also kill body lice, which can transmit disease. Thank you for helping us to keep the center bed-bug free.



Adult bed bugs are 5-6 mm long, reddish-brown, flat and wingless (illustration: Hallvard Elven, NIPH).

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Information about bed bugs from NIPH – April 2026

Read more at: <https://www.fhi.no/en/op/skadedyrveilederen/bedbugs/bed-bugs/>