

MAVERICK HEALTH

A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO STUDENT HEALTH AT MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Bed Bugs: Unwelcome Bedroom Guests

Most young adults in the U.S. know about bed bugs from a cute little rhyme parents recite as a bedtime ritual: "Good night...sleep tight...don't let the bed bugs bite!" The majority of college students have never seen, much less been bitten by, a bed bug but that may soon change. Recent news reports of significant bed bug infestations signal that this insect is quickly becoming a common problem for many. A quick Google™ search produced over a million sites providing information, pictures of bed bugs, YouTube videos, and eradication information.

Bed bugs are tiny, wingless insects that feed on the blood of warm-blooded animals, primarily humans. According to the Harvard School of Public Health, hatchling

bed bugs are about the size of a poppy seed, and adults are about 1/4 of an inch in length. Bed bug color is determined by age of the hatchling and if the bug has had a blood meal. Bed bugs are primarily nocturnal, seeking to feed on human blood while the human host is sleeping. Bites from a bed bug are typically painless but repeated bites can cause allergic reactions that range from mild itching to a severe allergic response. Since other blood feeding insects can produce a bit similar to bedbugs, a bed bug infestation needs to be confirmed by the presence of live bed bugs. Other signs of an infestation include black, dark brown or reddish spots on bed linens, the mattress or box spring, dead bed bugs, and the presence of cast off bug skins (exoskeleton).

Rather than indicating a lack of personal hygiene, entomologists and pest control experts theorize the increase in bed bugs to be caused by an increase in travel, the banning of pesticides such as DDT, and the use of used or second-hand furniture. Bed bugs are excellent travelers, able to discreetly survive in suitcases, sports bags, or discarded sofas and mattresses for extended periods of time. Thrifty college students, always on the look out for free or low-cost furnishings, don't realize that bringing that discarded sofa found by the dumpster back to an apartment could unleash a costly bed bug infestation.



Managing a Bed Bug Infestation:

Managing a bed bug infestation is challenging but can be accomplished by following these recommendations:

- Contact a licensed pest control company with knowledge and experience in bed bug infestations. Effective bed bug control methods use chemicals that require specific knowledge for safe application and handling.
- Reduce clutter. Under-the-bed storage, closets stuffed to the ceiling and desks piled high with junk mail provide a lot of hiding places for bed bugs and makes control difficult.
- Thoroughly clean the infested room as well as other rooms in the residence. Dr. Richard Pollack, Harvard School of Public Health and Dr. Gary Alper, Harvard University recommend scrubbing infested surfaces with a stiff brush, using a powerful vacuum, dismantling bed frames, and removing and cleaning the insides and bottoms of drawers.
- Mattresses and box springs should be permanently encased within special mattress bags that seal bed bugs out. Pay special attention to the zipper. Seal any holes or tears in the mattress bag with permanent tape.
- Keep sheets and blankets tucked in and off floor. Move the bed frame away from the wall.
- Wash bed linens once a week in hot water and vacuum floors regularly.
- Treat, rather than dispose of, furniture that is useful.
- When returning home from travel, unpack luggage and bags away from sleeping areas (the garage is good!). Immediately place all of your clothing that can be hot-water laundered into the washing machine in the hottest possible wash cycle and finish laundering in the dryer on the hottest possible setting. Leave luggage in the garage, if possible.
- For online information, go to: www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef636.asp

Fast and Lean Meal Ideas

If you don't have much time to cook, here are some meal ideas that will help you choose better foods. It is important to stock your apartment or dorm room with healthy choices.

Breakfast Ideas

- Cooked oatmeal with skim milk
- Cooked cream of wheat made with skim milk
- Smoothie (yogurt, skim milk, fruit, rolled oats)
- Shredded wheat or unsweetened whole grain cereal with skim milk
- Granola and light yogurt mixed with fruit
- 2 slices 100% whole-grain toast or English muffin with jelly and peanut butter
- Granola bar with fruit and yogurt

Lunch Ideas

- Tuna salad made with light mayonnaise—served on lettuce with pita bread and a handful of tortilla chips, SunChips®, or baked chips
- Low-fat chili with a handful of tortilla chips
- Beans and rice with fresh fruit
- Whole wheat turkey wrap with low-fat slaw
- Sandwich (turkey, ham, cheese, peanut butter & jelly) with raw vegetables
- Grilled or roasted chicken breast (without the skin) and tossed low-fat salad

Dinner Ideas

- Taco with vegetables and whole wheat tortillas and fresh fruit
- Healthy frozen dinner (Healthy Choice®Lean Cuisine®, Smart Ones®) and steamed vegetables
- Pasta with red sauce and lean meat (ground turkey, 90% lean hamburger, veggie crumbles) and tossed low-fat salad
- Low-fat brown rice and veggie stir fry
- Bean and cheese burrito with steamed vegetables



For nutrition questions or comments contact Rebecca Gruenes, Nutrition Health Educator at 507-389-5689 or rebecca.gruenes@mnsu.edu

Looking for some Free or Cheap Fun on a Saturday Night? Try Mavericks After Dark !

Students looking to stretch their entertainment dollar don't have to look too far: Mavericks After Dark offers fun and free (or very cheap) things to do on Saturday nights (and some Thursdays, too!):

- Thursday, January 15, 2009: 10 pm to midnight—Pool Party at Highland Pool featuring the movie, "Jaws"
- Saturday, January 17, 2009: 10 pm to midnight—Ski/Tube at Mt. Kato
- Saturday, January 31, 2009: 9 pm to midnight—The Jumpoff: Stop Light Dance in the lower level of the CSU
- Saturday, February 14, 2009: 9 pm to midnight—Valentine's Day event
- Saturday, February 21, 2009: 10 pm to midnight—Mardi Gras Party at the Maverick Bullpen. Free beads!
- Saturday, February 28, 2009: 10 pm to midnight—India Cultural Night
- Saturday, March 21, 2009: 10 pm to midnight—Open Bowling and Billiards at the Maverick Bullpen
- Saturday, April 18, 2009: 9 pm to midnight—Open Bowling and Billiards at the Maverick Bullpen
- Saturday, April 25, 2009: 9 pm to midnight—Earth Day Event



For more details log on to www.mnsu.edu/afterdark/

Student Health Services MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

Your On-Campus Medical Clinic
Carkoski Commons—Lower Level

Appointments/Information

389-6276

Health Education Office

389-5689

Pharmacy

389-2483

Nurse Line

389-6710

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www.mnsu.edu/shs