

**LAC+USC MEDICAL CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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Policy No. IPC-25	

Subject: Guidelines for the Prevention, Treatment, and Control of Bedbugs	Original Issue Date: 07/04/2011	Effective Date: October 2022
	Supersedes: 11/2014	
Departments Consulted: Nursing Environmental Services Pest Control Safety Office	Reviewed & Approved By: Paul Holtom MD, Hospital Epidemiologist Noah Wald-Dickler MD, Associate Hospital Epidemiologist Chair and Vice-Chair, Infection Control Committee	Approved By: Brad Spellberg, MD Chief Medical Officer

PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines for the prevention, treatment, and control of bedbugs in the Medical Center.

Several adverse health effects may occur due to bed bugs, including skin rashes, psychological effects, and allergic symptoms. Diagnosis involves both finding bed bugs plus compatible symptoms. Treatment is otherwise symptomatic.

BACKGROUND

The *Cimicidae* are a family of small parasitic insects – sometimes referred to as “**bed bugs**” The most common type is *Cimex lectularius*. The term bedbug usually refers to species that prefer to feed on human blood but can survive for several months without feeding. Bed bugs have not been shown to transmit disease to humans.

The name "bed bug" is derived from the insect's preferred habitat of houses and especially beds or other areas where people sleep. Bed bugs, though not strictly nocturnal, are mainly active at night but may be present during the day in stressed conditions. They are capable of feeding unnoticed on their hosts.

They have however been known by a variety of names including wall louse, mahogany flat, crimson Rambler, heavy dragoon, chinche (in Spanish), and redcoat.

Bedbugs have three basic life stages: egg, nymph, and adult. Young nymphs are the size of a poppy seed and mature adults are the size of an apple seed. Bed bugs tend to gather in places where a person sleeps. As bed bugs grow, they leave behind hollow amber colored shells that they shed. Fecal spots are the result of bed bug digestion and can be found on a person's clothes, linen and sometimes on wood or other surfaces. They may resemble a black magic marker dot.

Bed bugs can be found alone, but often congregate once established. They usually remain close to hosts. Harborage areas can vary greatly, including luggage, vehicles, and bedside clutter.

Bedbugs can also be found in:

- Seams in mattresses and chairs
- Under chairs, couches, and beds
- Between cushions and curtain folds
- Behind baseboards and around windows
- In televisions, purses, and clothing

PROCESS:

Patients should only bring necessary items into the hospital. Clothes, blankets, luggage, bags, and other possessions not essential during a patient's stay should be left at home. Items brought into the hospital should be placed in a plastic bag and family members should be encouraged to take them home.

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	Executive Director's Initials:	

Procedure to Identify Bed Bugs:

- Upon suspicion of bed bugs, staff will notify the unit Supervisor, Environmental Services, Safety, & Epidemiology
- Any specimens of suspect bedbugs should be collected in a sealed specimen container and presented to Pest Control or Parasitology for positive identification. The specimen container should include the patient's name and medical record number.
- Environmental Services manager will contact Pest Control

Management of in-patients

- Place patient in Contact Precautions.
- Place patient's purse and/or wallet in a tightly sealed plastic bag. Patient's personal belongings, clothing, blanket, etc. should be placed in a separate tightly sealed plastic bag and send home with family if possible. If the patient has no family, inform the patient you have separated his/her wallet and purse from other items and request permission to discard the other bag since the items may be infested with bedbugs. Inform the patient you will provide additional clothing. Contact the CARES Office at 323-409-6941 for replacement clothing when hospital discharge is imminent.
- Shower/bathe patient to remove any bedbugs then immediately transfer patient to another room. No further precautions necessary.
- Do not remove anything from the room before inspection or treatment
- Patient should be strongly discouraged from accessing personal belonging bag while in the healthcare facility.
- Patient is to wear hospital attire while in the facility.
- All belongings will remain in tied plastic bags until discharged.

Management of the Environment

- After patient has transferred out of room, Pest Control will treat the suspected infested area with appropriate pesticide agents and inform Nursing when the room is safe to be utilized for another patient.
- Environmental Services will follow Contact Precautions while providing terminal cleaning of the room.

Management of Bedbugs in Ambulatory Care areas

- Upon suspicion of bedbugs, notify Manager, Environmental Services and Epidemiology
- Any specimens of suspected bedbugs should be collected and presented to Pest Control or Parasitology
- Environmental Services Manager will contact Pest Control
- Remove all clutter from the environment
- Staff should be encouraged to minimize personal belongings being brought inside the room while providing care
- Staff with any suspect bites should notify their Supervisor/Manager immediately.
- All furniture identified as possibly harboring bedbugs will be treated to kill the bedbugs or placed in plastic bags, removed and treated outside the environment. If the item cannot be treated to eradicate the bedbugs, it will be picked up for immediate disposal.

Management of bedbugs in the Outpatient Clinics

- Upon suspicion of bedbugs notify Manager, EVS and Epidemiology
- Any specimens of suspect bedbugs should be collected in a sealed specimen container and presented to Pest Control or Parasitology for identification.
- The specimen container should include the patient's name and medical record number.
- Patient should be given a yellow isolation gown to wear over clothing and instructed to wear the gown as long as they are in the clinic.
- Any personal belongings such as purses, fanny packs and backpacks should be placed into and remain in a plastic bag until the patient leaves the building.

Reference:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention CDC) website, Parasites: Bed Bugs 2022.