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Are Bed Bug Bites Something to Fear? by [Jeff Freebold](#)

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Bed bugs are a member of the Hemiptera family, meaning that it has a mouth capable of piercing and sucking blood. While some bed bug relatives feed off animals, the bed bug is not partial and will feed off humans or animals. The number of bed bug infestations is growing at alarming rates worldwide. The situation is no different in this country where bed bug control is becoming a primary job of many pest extermination companies.

When feeding, a bed bug can inject substances into the skin, which result in a variety of reactions, depending on the person. Those who are repeatedly bitten are likely to develop an allergic reaction. The site of an individual bite also runs the risk of infection. Though the bite, itself, is painless, the after effects can be far less tolerated.

Who will be bitten? This is not always an easy answer, but, in truth, those in closest proximity are the most likely candidates. Though some types of bed bug will feed on other mammals and even birds, others prefer humans almost exclusively. They are attracted by the warmth and vibration of breathing. Furthermore, odor is a major attractant. That means that anyone “regardless of sex, age, or race” can be the target of a hungry bed bug.

Generally bed bugs will feed just before dawn and the whole meal lasts less than fifteen minutes. It is commonly known that this species of insect can live for three months or longer without a meal. In fact, some studies have suggested that they can live up to a year without food. Given this factor, it is very difficult to get rid of bed bugs once they have moved in. For this reason, it is a good idea to rely on Gulfstream Environmental Services instead of trying extermination on your own. Each female will lay approximately three hundred eggs over the eighteen month span of her life. It takes just ten days for the egg to hatch and six weeks later the new member of the colony is ready to feed on humans.

Though the bites are generally harmless, causing little more than an allergic reaction in those who are most susceptible, there is risk of infection, as mentioned before, and it is also believed that bed bugs are possible carriers of diseases such as hepatitis B and Chagas disease. Hepatitis B, known also to be a form of STD, is an infection of the liver. It can cause a person to feel fatigued, run a fever, have headaches, lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches, skin rash, and jaundice. This infection generally clears up in a relatively short time and those with the chronic variety demonstrate few symptoms. Chagas disease, on the other hand, is a parasitic disease and can be present for years, demonstrating the more severe symptoms related to the heart and digestive systems long after the initial onset. In the worst case scenario, it can lead to congestive heart failure.

It is important to remember that severe complications from bed bug bites are very rare. Nevertheless, it is vital to speak with a West Palm Beach pest control company as soon as you suspect infestation.

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