



Here are some tips to help keep bedbug free while wayfaring!

- 1) Do a little internet research before you go to brush up on what the bugs look like (from eggs to adult). In addition, take a look at pictures of fecal staining and cast skins. (I inspected a place in Kathmandu in which I did not find any adult bed bugs, but found hundreds of bed bug eggs tucked in the holes of the particle board which the mattress was resting on. This is to say, sometimes you will only see an egg, or fecal stains and not the adult bugs so it is important you know what to look for.)
- 2) Bring a flashlight! A simple LED will suffice to allow you to see into the small dark cracks in which bed bugs typically harbor.
- 3) Inspect every place you lodge. It doesn't matter if you're staying at an exclusive resort or a hostel catering to backpackers, it is better to be safe than sorry.
- 4) Unless the bed bug infestation is really bad, or there has been a chemical application recently (or you're just plain lucky), you are not going to find adult bed bugs out in the open. Here are the places I would start inspecting: behind the headboard (if possible), the ruffles, creases and divots in the mattress (this includes behind the tag and behind those little plastic things on the corners), the box spring (especially where the membrane is stapled onto the sides), and the bed frame. Typically bed bugs will harbor as near the host as possible, so if there are bed bugs in the room they will most likely be in the bed frame, the mattress/box spring, or on/in the wall somewhere close to the bed.
- 5) Keep your bags/luggage away from the bed. Being that bed bugs are expert hitchhikers, keeping your luggage in areas away from the bed is going to minimize the likelihood they will harbor amongst your belongings. The safest place to keep the bags is probably the bathroom, but along the wall farthest from the bed is fine. I would not encourage storing your belongings in the hotel dressers or nightstands, as those are also favorite harborages for bed bugs. Belongings that you are travelling with which cannot be laundered should be kept in a plastic bag in your suitcase. This will bar bed bugs from harboring in shoes, electronics, etc which are going to be brought back into your home following your return.
- 6) When you return from your trip, wash all your dirty clothes and put all your clean clothes in the dryer. Place your bag (or suitcase) in a trash bag and leave it outside in the sun or in your car for several hours during a hot day.

If these steps are followed it will greatly reduce the likelihood of bringing bed bugs back to your home when your travels have ended. If you have any questions please feel free to let me know!