

Bedbug Fact Sheet for Out-Patient Dialysis

Bedbugs are on the rise nation-wide and dialysis facilities are sometimes faced with patients who are impacted by them. The situation can be more difficult to address because it originates from an environment outside of the facility. However, they are easy to manage.



Important to know:

- Bedbugs do not carry or spread disease.
- Bedbugs cannot climb smooth surfaces very well.
- High concentration (91%) Isopropyl Alcohol kills them on contact.
- The dialysis facility is not a hospitable environment for bedbugs. Infestation is unlikely.

Remember:

Involuntary discharge is not an appropriate response to patients who present with bugs.

The following steps are recommended:

- The Medical Director should be advised and involved.
- Cover dialysis chair with white paper to easily identify bed bugs. Confirm what the insect is. An entomologist confirmation is recommended.
- Review policy regarding items patients are bringing in/out or storing in the clinic. Limit what the patient brings into the clinic.
- Consult with your pest control agency.
- Use sticky mats around the patient's chair to prevent them crawling off.
- Educate the patient and staff. Provide instructions to patient for treatment of home and belongings.
- Consider investing in a heating box to treat the patient's belongings. All stages of bed bugs are susceptible to temperatures above 120°F.
- Require the patient to change out of their clothes before treatment and have them change into a disposable gown. A less embarrassing alternative would be to allow the patient to bring a spare set of clothes that can be kept at the unit and treated after each use.
- Isolate the patient as much as possible. Use a dialysis chair at end of a row. Restrict the chair for only that patient's use, if possible.
- Waiting rooms, common areas, and equipment such as wheelchairs should be regularly inspected for bed bugs.



Assisting the Patient

- **BE COMPASSIONATE.** Anyone would be mortified to be in this situation. It is possible that they are also suffering physically from itching and loss of sleep. Address the issue with as much delicacy, privacy, and expression of care as possible.
- Assess whether the patient is safe. Is s/he mobile and independent? Is s/he clean, well-cared for, and living in a safe environment? Does s/he live in an area where the bugs in question are prevalent? Has s/he undergone functional, financial, support or housing changes recently?
- Assist the patient in identifying sources of assistance for home fumigation. Provide community resources to assist the patient with home treatment (Dept. of Health and Dept. of Aging, Salvation Army or Goodwill, Church groups).



Assisting Staff

- While bed bugs do not jump, they are excellent hitchhikers. Staff handling patients may have bed bugs transferred to their clothing. Therefore, the staff should practice changing into clean scrubs and putting the old scrubs into a hot dryer for 30 minutes. Shoes can also be put into the hot dryer. Or permit them to use the hot box to treat their work clothes before leaving the clinic.

Be Ready for Bed Bugs

Bed bugs and other pests can disrupt care and cause stress for patients and staff. Scan the code to find practical tools that help your team spot, respond to, and prevent infestations.

