OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: RESIDENT STUDENTS
FROM: OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE & HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER
SUBJECT: BEDBUGS
DATE: SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

The Office of Residence Life and the Health and Wellness Center would like to communicate some important information regarding bedbugs. As you may have noticed, there has been much information in the media regarding the resurgence of bedbugs in the United States. They are now often found in homes, apartments, hotels, shelters and residence halls. This may be partly because more people are traveling internationally and bringing bedbugs back in their luggage or on their clothes. Also, pesticides that got rid of bedbugs in the past have been replaced with milder chemicals that don’t harm bedbugs. This has allowed the bedbug population in the United States to grow.

So what are bedbugs?

Bedbugs are oval-shaped, wingless parasites that have 6 legs and are about 1/5 of an inch long. They range in color from white to brown, although they may look dark red after feeding. Bedbugs feed on blood during the night and hide during the day. They prefer to feed on human blood, but they will also feed on other mammals, such as dogs or cats.

Bedbugs can be a terrible nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease.

Where do bedbugs live?

Bedbugs live in dry, dark crevices, such as mattress seams. Because bedbugs feed at night, mattresses are an ideal place for them to live. But bedbugs don’t just live in mattresses. They can also live in crevices in your furniture, walls or floors and crawl into your bed at night.

How do I know if I have bedbugs?
The best time to search for live bedbugs is in the middle of the night when they come out to feed. Other signs that you have bedbugs include the following:

- Small bloodstains on your sheets
- Dark flecks of bedbug feces in areas where bedbugs might live
- A sweet odor that indicates the presence of a large number of bedbugs

**How do I know if I have been bitten by a bedbug?**

Bedbug bites show up as small, swollen, red bumps that may or may not have a bite mark in the center. These bites are very itchy. It is common to have several bites at a time, often in a straight row on your skin.

**If you suspect you may have been bitten by a bedbug or have seen them on your clothing or bedding please contact the Health & Wellness Center immediately. You may call 610.568.1467 or stop by the H&W Center in Veronica Hall.**

Alvernia works with a professional pest control company to identify and address any suspected cases of bedbugs on our campus. However, here are a few tips, if your room is identified as having bedbugs present:

- It's important to take care of the problem before the infestation gets worse and/or spreads. The process to eliminate bedbugs is lengthy and requires your full cooperation.
- Wash your clothes in hot water or place them in a dryer on high heat for 30 minutes. Bedbugs can be killed in less than a minute or two by heat over 120 degrees.

**What NOT to do:**

- Do not try to get rid of the bedbugs yourself. It takes a long process to get rid of the infestation and by treating it yourself; you may actually make the situation worse.
- Do not immediately throw away belongings. Furniture, clothes, and other belongings can be treated.

**Can bedbugs be prevented?**

Insect repellent does not keep bedbugs away, so the best way to prevent them is to avoid bringing them into your home. When you travel, be sure to inspect your bed for signs of bedbugs before you sleep in it. And, check your luggage when you get home to make sure no bugs have hidden in your bags or clothing. Inspect secondhand furniture thoroughly before bringing it into your home. If you buy secondhand
clothes, bring them into your house in plastic bags, and wash them right away in hot water.

Finally, try to keep bedrooms free from clutter, which can give bedbugs more places to hide.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Residence Life at 610.796.8320 or the Health & Wellness Center at 610.568.1467

Source: familydoctor.org