Public Health Pests and Nursing Nightmares: 
Practical Strategies for Managing Bed Bugs and Other Creepy Crawlies 
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Summary: Bed Bugs (Cimex lectularis) are pests of public health importance that med-surg nurses may encounter at some point during their career. Identification of a bed bug problem is possible through an examination of the patient and their environment. A tiered approach to managing bed bug introductions in the hospital can reduce risks. Scabies is a skin infestation by the skin mite Sarcoptes scabiei var. hominis. which can be transmitted from person-to-person. Managing patients in the hospital with scabies includes the use of Standard and Contact Precautions and special care of the patient's environment.

Nursing Implications: 
• Nurses need to become familiar with bed bug identification and behavior. 
• An intact bug must be captured and placed in a specimen cup for testing. 
• Nurses need to become familiar with scabies infestation and modes of transmission. 
• Nurses will know consensus strategies for infection prevention involving patients with bed bugs, scabies, and other pests.

Key Takeaways: 
• Bed bugs are not known to cause disease transmission in hospitals – use standard precautions. 
• Bed bugs cannot fly, can walk fast, hide during the day (“feed” at night), prefer fabric (bedding and mattresses), wood, and paper surfaces, and can cling to surfaces. 
• With bed bugs, an exterminator must inspect a patient’s room to determine how long the room/area must remain closed. 
• Scabies is confirmed by skin scraping and microscope evidence.

Link: https://library.amsn.org/amsn/sessions/5253/view

References:
https://www.cuyahogabedbugs.org/
https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/index.html

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