



The Facts on Bed Bugs



Q: WHAT ARE BED BUGS?

A: Bed bugs are blood-feeding insects. Bed bugs are oval-shaped insects with no wings. They are brownish in color, but turn a dark reddish-brown once they've fed. Before feeding, the adult bed bug is about ¼ inch long and flat. Once engorged with blood, it swells in size.

Q: WHERE DO BED BUGS COME FROM?

A: Bed bugs can't fly, so they either crawl or are carried from place to place. There has been a recent resurgence of bed bugs in hotels, motels, and hostels.

Bed bugs or their eggs can hitchhike in a traveler's suitcase or clothing. Business people now routinely travel to and from countries where bed bugs are common even in finer hotels. The offspring of just one pregnant female can infest a room, and eventually other rooms nearby. Their flattened shape allows them to easily slip into narrow places in mattress seams, bed frames, headboards, bedside furniture, behind pictures and switch-plates, behind baseboards, under buttons on mattresses and in box springs.

Q: WHAT DO BED BUGS DO?

A: Bed bugs feed about once a week, usually at night and for several minutes, usually on a sleeper's exposed skin. The bite is nearly painless and goes unnoticed by most people. Some people have no reaction however others could have their bites turn into large, itchy skin welts that itch for days. Most bed bug bites eventually go away by themselves and don't need treatment. Bed bugs can survive for several months between feedings. Although bed bugs feed on human blood, there has been no evidence that they spread disease.

Q: HOW DO I PREVENT BED BUGS FROM ENTERING MY HOME?

A: Although the cleanest homes and hotels can have bed bugs, regular inspection and house cleaning, including vacuuming your mattress, can help prevent or discover an infestation in its early stages. Clean up clutter to help reduce the number of places bed bugs can hide and to make inspection easier. Seal cracks and crevices with caulking, even if you don't have bed bugs. This will help prevent bed bugs and other pests from entering your home.

Be careful when buying used furniture or clothes. Make sure to inspect the used items, and feel free to ask if the items were checked for bed bugs. **NEVER** bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, upholstered furniture or electronics into your home. These items may be infested with bed bugs.

When traveling, inspect the room and furniture and look for blood spots, droppings or live insects. Request a different room if you find evidence of bed bugs. Inspect luggage when you return home, preferably before you bring your luggage into the house, and wash clothing in the hottest water possible followed by 30 minutes in a hot dryer immediately after returning from a trip.

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT BED BUGS

LOOK FOR:

- ✓ Speckles of dried blood excrement
- ✓ Examine the backside and cracks in bed headboards closely. Use a flashlight to help.
- ✓ Remove bed linens to examine the folds and seams closely on the mattress, cover and box spring. Look for adult and nymph bugs as well as the tiny whitish eggs.
- ✓ Examine wallpaper and/or moldings around headboards.
- ✓ Remove all unnecessary clutter and dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned in a tightly sealed bag or container.
- ✓ Schedule a professional inspection by calling Preferred Pest Control at 816-279-2000.