

Bed Bugs

Inspection, Treatment, & Prevention



Inspection

Except for large infestations, bed bugs are usually

found within 8 feet of a bed. They are hiding in the seams of mattresses and the cracks and crevices of headboards, nightstands, outlet plates and moldings. Often, you may not see the bed bugs themselves but you can find the reddish brown stains from their feces. The adult bugs are flat and about the size of an apple seed.

There are many stages of growth before they reach adult size so eggs and the first and second stages are difficult to see. Bed bugs live for 12–18 months and can go without a blood meal for over a year. Hotels rooms are a good place to pick up bed bugs because



Treatment

Treating you

The best thing about bed bugs is that they are not know to spread disease.

Only 25% of the general public is sensitive to their bites, although closer to 50% of the elderly. If you are bitten it could be 8 hours to 2 weeks after being bitten for a reaction to occur. Bed bug saliva from the bite can make the area very itchy. Unfortunately, it is easy for infections to begin when scratching exposes your inside layer of skin to germs that normally reside on your outer skin layer. Use your favorite anti-itch cream to treat the bites or antihistamines to reduce that itchy burning feeling. If an infection begins you can treat the area with antiseptic creams or lotions.



Treating your home

There are a number of treatment options for you home. The best options are done by pest control companies because of their training and the number of chemical options they have that are not available to home owners. If there are small infestations or use of pest control is too expensive for your budget, you can try to eliminate bed bugs on your own

Be Aware, people are injured more by mis-using chemical treatments than by any bed bug

Mattress covers specifically labeled for bed bugs can contain bugs in the mattress as well as prevent them from infesting the mattress from other areas.

For clothes that may have been exposed, wash them in hot water, as hot as the fabric will allow and put them in a hot dryer for at least 20 minutes.

It can be time consuming to do this on your own but doing if you don't invest the time you will not have success. There is extensive information about bed bugs at <https://www.bedbugs.umn.edu>. Look for Bed Bug Control in Residences. You will need a vacuum, stick tape, flashlight, credit card, plastic bags, a cloth and soapy water. You will also need to establish a "clean zone" to put things that have already been treated.

Prevention

There are ways to help prevent the or control an infestation of bed bugs.



- Never bring used mattresses into your home. Do not take used furniture off the side of the road. If purchasing used furniture check to see if the store has done bed bug inspections.
- De-clutter your living space to limit bed bug hiding spaces., especially in sleeping rooms.
- Use a mattress cover labeled to prevent bed bugs. This works to keep existing bed bugs in as well as keeping bugs from infesting the mattress.
- If staying in a hotel, first put your bags in the room before inspecting the mattress and luggage rack for signs of bedbugs.

References

If you would like more information, check out these sites.

<http://www.bedbugs.umn.edu>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/bedbugs.htm>

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00489.pdf>



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