

How

can I prevent bed bugs?

- Do not pick up any used furniture or mattresses/box springs.
- When purchasing second hand clothing, place all garments in a sealed bag until they can be washed and placed in a dryer on high heat for 15 to 30 minutes.
- When traveling, check all motel rooms thoroughly before bringing in your luggage.
- Do not sit on furniture where you think there may be a problem.
- While cleanliness is not a major factor in fighting bed bugs, it is a good idea not to have clutter in your home.
- Once bed bugs are in a building they often spread from room to room. Completely checking the problem is necessary so all areas can be treated to prevent spreading.

BED BUG FACTS

- Bed bugs can go months without food.
- A single pregnant female can start an infestation.
- Bed bugs hate light.
- Bed bugs can survive 120°F temperature for several weeks.
- Bed bugs do not fly but can move rapidly over floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces.
- Bed bug eggs (about the size of a speck of dust) are very sticky and difficult to remove, making them efficient hitchhikers.



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BED BUGS

What are bed bugs and how do you get rid of them?



What are Bed Bugs?

Bed bugs are small (about 1/4 inch), brown, oval shaped, flat insects which inhabit human dwellings. They hide during the day, and feed on people at night while they are sleeping. While the bugs are not known to spread disease, their bites can cause serious itching.

How do bed bugs get into your home?

Bed bugs are brought into a home by several means. An occupant can bring them home on used furniture. They can hitch a ride on clothing, bags, bedding, and toys when visiting an infested home. Visitors who live in an infested home can carry bed bugs to other homes. Bed bugs can travel through the walls from an infested unit in an apartment building to other units.

How do you know if you have bed bugs in your home?

It can be difficult to determine if you have bed bugs since these insects feed at night and hide during the day. While bed bugs can live in any area of the home, they are typically found in the bedroom.

Look for bed bugs in mattress seams, behind bed boards and frames, where carpeting adjoins the walls, in furniture and dresser drawers and in the seams of curtains that touch the floor.

Signs of an infestation may include:

- Itchy "mosquito" like bites
- Blood spots on sheets or mattresses
- Visible insects, shed exoskeletons (skin) and eggs or egg casings

How do you get rid of bed bugs?

Hiring a professional licensed exterminator is strongly recommended. The chemical treatment of a bed bug infestation is best left to a professional exterminator. Only a licensed exterminator has access to the restricted pesticides which are most effective. The pesticides available to non-licensed persons will probably not achieve effective control. Also, the indiscriminate use of pesticides can create an environmental hazard or health hazard and can cause pests to develop a resistance to pesticides.

If self treating, look for a pesticide labeled for use against bed bugs. A pesticide which is not labeled for use against a particular bug will not kill that bug. Insect repellents with DEET will not repel bed bugs. There is currently no known chemical safe for use on humans which will repel bed bugs.

Whether a professional exterminator is hired or not there are things that the occupants should do to control bed bugs. Infested items which cannot be treated must be discarded or sealed in bags and stored 12-18 months until the bed bugs die. After being treated with the appropriate pesticide, mattresses should be sealed in a plastic mattress bag. Bed bugs can be effectively eliminated from clothing, curtains, and bed linens by washing them in hot water and/or drying them for 15 to 30 minutes on the hottest setting. Upholstered furniture will likely require professional steam cleaning. Also it is important to eliminate clutter. Bedbugs will be nearly impossible to eliminate if there is clutter such as clothing and toys on the floor. The home should be vacuumed daily and the bag or canister discarded or emptied into a sealed plastic bag. Spraying bed bugs with 90% isopropyl rubbing alcohol will kill them on contact. Isopropyl alcohol should only be used for spot treatment to kill single insects. It should not be used for treatment of furniture or a home.

