

HOW CAN I GET RID OF BED BUGS?

Complete elimination of a bed bug infestation may be difficult without using a licensed, knowledgeable pest management company. It may take several treatments and methods over several weeks to gain control of an infestation.

Do-it-yourself measures sometimes cause problems because of misuse of pesticides or scattering of bugs. If you try to do it yourself, make sure product is for bed bugs and read the label completely.

SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Reduce clutter to eliminate hiding places and help with treatment.
- Vacuum areas where bed bugs have been seen, including mattresses and box springs. Dispose of vacuumed contents in a sealed bag.
- Cover mattress and box spring with zippered encasements, and seal any openings with tape so bed bugs can't get through.
- Wash bedding and clothing in hot water (120°F) and put in dryer for at least five minutes Store in sealed bags.
- Inspect any furniture being brought into your home for bed bugs.

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BED BUGS

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BED BUGS ARE BACK

You have probably heard the saying, "Sleep tight, don't let the bed bugs bite." Well, bed bugs have made a big comeback in the U.S.

Their name comes from their tendency to live between mattresses and feed on occupants at night. Bed bugs do not fly or jump, but move quickly over floors, walls, ceilings and furniture.

Bed bugs are wingless, approximately 1/4 inch in length with a flattened oval shape and rusty brown in color.

Newly-hatched nymphs are much smaller and somewhat lighter in color. Female bed bugs lay an average of 120 eggs in a lifetime.

A bed bug can survive at least several months without a blood meal, with a lifespan of up to a year. Since bed bugs are mainly active at night, frequent daytime sightings may indicate a heavy infestation.

HOW CAN I GET RID OF BED BUGS?

Bed bugs can seem to come from nowhere, but are being seen more and more in apartments, hotels, homes, shelters, dormitories and nursing homes. They are active travelers, usually transported in luggage, boxes, clothing, furniture and even hair.

Infestations are not tied to unsanitary living conditions; even world-class hotels have reported bed bug problems.

WHERE TO LOOK

Check for bed bugs on the seams, tufts, or folds of mattresses, bed frames and head boards. Bed bugs may also be behind baseboards, pictures, frames, windows, door casings, loosened wall paper, curtains, cracks in plaster and behind electrical wall plates.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE BED BUGS?

Usually the first sign of a bed bug infestation is the appearance of small rusty spots on your mattresses and bed linens. These are droppings from bed bugs that have taken a blood meal.

Bed bugs usually bite sleeping people at night by piercing through exposed skin. Red itchy welts may appear days or weeks after a bite, but not everyone will have a reaction.

Resist the urge to scratch the bites, as this may intensify the itching and cause an infection.

People who have a reaction to bed bug bites may need to seek medical assistance. Bed bugs have not been shown to transmit any diseases to humans.